

MAELOR SOUTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 3rd June 2025 at Bettisfield Chapel

Present:

Cllr. Alwyn Reay (Chair), Cllrs. John Griffiths (JG); Jackie Tomkinson (JT); Keith Owen; John Blanchard, Nick Ringrose

Apologies for Absence:

Cllrs. Michelle Edge, Simon Huxley, Ian Burdett.

In Attendance:

The Clerk – John Gallanders

Cllr John McCusker – County Councillor (part meeting)

01.06 Police Update (no Officer present)

The Council reviewed the latest police report. A sexual offence in Hanmer was noted; clarification is being sought as to whether this poses any wider community concerns. Other matters included:

- Cannabis cultivation identified on Penley Industrial Estate.
- Shed burglary reported in Hanmer.
- Ongoing concern regarding police engagement with agreed priorities: school parking, youth engagement, and speeding. The PCSO's inability to attend the Youth Club due to shift patterns was noted. It is hoped another officer could attend to develop relationships.
- The lack of GoSafe activity in Penley remains a serious concern.

Action: Council resolved to request a meeting with the Inspector and PCSO, including a school visit, to properly address concerns and establish visible police action prior to the summer holidays.

02.06. Community Open Forum

No formal public forum took place. However, ongoing concerns were raised regarding:

- Bettisfield drainage ditches remaining full and stagnant near the Nags Head field boundary, now attracting environmental health concerns.
- The Council awaits clarity from Wrexham Council on enforcement deadlines following the 28-day notice period served on the Bettisfield landowner.

03.06. County Councillor Report – Cllr John McCusker

3.1 Drainage and Flooding in Bettisfield

- Ongoing drainage issues were reported, with particular reference to blocked and silted ditches causing stagnant water and potential environmental concerns.
- Cllr McCusker confirmed that enforcement notices had been served on landowners regarding drainage maintenance responsibilities.

- He reported that in a comparable case elsewhere, enforcement had led to Council intervention after seven weeks, if the landowner failed to act.
- The Council agreed to continue monitoring the situation and liaising with County Council officers to ensure timely resolution.

Action: Cllr JM to seek clarity from WCBC officer re update on proposed actions.

3.2 Community Event / Youth Club Promotion

- A successful community litter pick event was held, organised by the Youth Club with support from youth leaders and volunteers.
- The event raised awareness of youth engagement in the community.
- Flyers promoting the forthcoming Youth Club / Community engagement event on 14th June.

3.3 Planning and Enforcement

- Cllr McCusker reported on planning matters, including:
 - The ongoing tree preservation and drainage issues affecting certain developments.
 - A delay in action following the serving of enforcement notices, and clarification being sought from County Council officers.
 - The role of enforcement in relation to property maintenance, including cases of derelict properties and environmental health interventions where rat infestations have been reported.
 - Broader planning concerns regarding Ellesmere Lane developments, lighting obligations not being signed off by officers, and issues around road safety and street lighting linked to approved developments.

Action: Members agreed to raise these matters with the planning department and pursue clarification over enforcement timelines.

3.4 Speeding and 20mph Zones

- Cllr McCusker reported frustration with the GoSafe process, noting that Penley remains a priority site for speed enforcement.
- Despite repeated requests, resourcing issues continue to prevent increased monitoring.
- The Council noted ongoing public concerns and agreed to continue pressing for targeted enforcement action.
- WCBC have started to change back some roads from 20 mph to 30 mph – no changes in MSCC area.

3.5 Penley Hospital

- Cllr McCusker provided an update that Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board intends to commence public consultation on the future use of the Penley Hospital site.

- It was noted that any proposals will not likely come forward until late 2025 or 2026, and that parts of the site are at risk of deterioration.
- The Council reiterated the importance of full community consultation to explore viable community and health-related uses for the building.
- It was noted that BCUHB have still not responded to any correspondence from MSCC.

Bettisfield

- Rat problem Cadney Lane – a property that is being renovated has had rat sightings.

Action: Environmental Health involvement will be sought following reports of rats on the derelict property.

- Planning: MSCC highlighted the lighting shortfalls on the Ellesmere Lane development remains unresolved due to administrative errors in planning conditions to approve the lighting plan.

Action: Clerk to provide information received from WCBC Officers to Cllr JM

04.06 Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th May 2025 were approved (proposed: Cllr. JG; seconded: Cllr. JT). Matters arising:

- Tree Officer: MSCC still awaits written feedback following the inspection of trees near Madras School and along the public footpath.
- Drainage Issues: Sufficient evidence exists to identify the drainage problem. Delays around preservation orders on trees with roots in drainage channels are noted.
- Betsy Cadwaladr Health Board: No formal consultation correspondence has yet been received regarding Penley Hospital. Council remains committed to ensuring full public consultation on the site's future.
- Penley Hospital: Discussion reaffirmed the importance of consulting the community fully, especially given the prolonged closure and deterioration of the site.

Community Update

Bettisfield

05.06. Office Field and Environmental Projects

- The two replacement fruit trees planted in the Office field last year have failed other more recent plantings are starting to fruit.
- Concerns continue about the quality of grass following the CRT work. The Canal and River Trust will be asked to consider further action, potentially using slot seeding to improve coverage. Cllr JG offered his personal knowledge.
- Hedge laying remains under investigation. A contractor has been approached for advice; initial feedback suggests phased management over several years may be necessary.

Action: Cllr KO to pursue options from local College / contractors

Penley

05.06. Community Information and Engagement

- Council agreed to produce a small run of printed newsletters (initial estimate: 30 copies) for the forthcoming community event. The Clerk will obtain quotations from local printers.
- Discussions took place around future wider circulation, potentially using the annual report as a basis for general community updates.
- Refreshments for the information event will be organised. Cold drinks to be provided. Clerk to arrange for thermos flasks from AVOW.
- New play equipment installation scheduled for mid-June at Penley Play Area. Official opening event to be arranged to coincide with school summer holidays.
- Updated defibrillator signage has been installed at both Penley and Bettisfield locations.
- Training dates for community defibrillator awareness sessions will be identified before the upcoming event on 14th June 2025. (Cllr. NR)

05.07 Finance

The Clerk presented the financial report and payments schedule:

Payments Approved:

- Wrexham CBC – Street lighting inspection: £125.04
- Reimbursement to Cllr. Nick for defibrillator signage: £10.98
- Mike Sadowski – Grass cutting (May): £260.00

Insurance Renewal:

Zurich Municipal insurance renewal approved for payment up to £2,000 (final invoice awaited).

Balances:

- Current Account: £598.20 (after payments)
- Deposit Account: £36,789.11 (committed funds £15,000 – available balance £21,789.11)
- Total funds: £37,387.31

Outstanding invoices for April grass cutting remain under review.

9. Any Other Business

No items

Date of Next Meeting:

Tuesday 1st July 2025 (venue to confirmation- Madras School is a possibility)

Meeting closed at: 21.17