

# Penyffordd, Penymynydd & Dobshill

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR

### 2022/23 (May 2023)



Hello and welcome to all of our residents.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, introduced as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year, that a community council must prepare and publish a report (an “annual report”) about the council's priorities, activities and achievements during that year. This is our first report which we hope you will find of interest.

There are 13 members on Penyffordd Community Council. Councillors are office holders who sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office upon their election or appointment - they are therefore part of the local government structure of Wales. Although they carry out many community activities on a voluntary basis, they are not volunteers.

At the head of the Council is the Chairman, who is elected annually from amongst its serving Councillors. The Chairman for 2022/23 was Councillor Roy Wakelam and the Vice-Chair was Councillor Pat Ransome.

The council has the opportunity to appoint two Youth Representatives. We currently have one active member, Natasha Boleyn who was appointed in September 2022 and also one vacancy. A Community Youth Representative represents the youth sector and is a ‘voice’ on the Community Council for local issues affecting young people

The council is supported by three members of staff. The Clerk - Sarah Hughes, Street Operative - Glyn Davies and the council appointed our first Village Groundsman – Chris Jones in June 2022.

We meet formally on the second Wednesday evening of the month at 6.30pm in the Committee Room of Penyffordd War Memorial Institute and offer the facility to join remotely. These are very structured meetings with very full agendas. Anyone is welcome to observe and there is an opportunity at the start for public questions, but it is a working meeting rather than a public presentation.

The council has a number of current projects so in order to be more proactive, we meet in between in 'Working Groups' to deal with specific areas/projects.

### **Your Community Councillors for the Year 2022/23 were as follows:**

Pat Ransome - Independent

Roy Wakelam – Independent

Jeff Priddin - Independent

David Williams - Independent

David Walker – Welsh Labour

Paul Blackman – Welsh Labour

Alasdair Ibbotson - Welsh Labour

Andy Sloan – no political affiliation

Susie Williams – Independent

Mark Rothero (co-opted) – Independent

Lisa Overington (co-opted) - no political affiliation

Oliver Thompson (co-opted) - no political affiliation

Julie Jones – Independent

### **Elections May 2022**

The 2022 Welsh local elections were held on 5 May 2022 to elect members of all twenty-two local authorities in Wales and Town and Community Councils. Following changes in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 all legal residents of Wales who are aged 16 or over on polling day are eligible to vote in the local elections (16 and 17 year-olds and EU Citizens and citizens of other countries).

There were 10 nominations received for the 13 available seats which resulted in the 10 members being elected unopposed. The remaining 3 seats were filled by co-option.

## **Your Community Council**

The Community Council are responsible for some street lighting, CCTV / crime prevention, street furniture, community buildings, Christmas lights, open space and the Millstone play area (we also offer some financial and work with Flintshire County Council on other playgrounds) and are a statutory consultee for many local authority and government issues including planning.

## **A Message from the 2022/23 Chairman – Cllr Roy Wakelam**

How fast the last 12 months has passed!

We celebrated a very Royal Jubilee with food, song, laughter and a toast to the Queen, we mourned the Loss of our Queen, a sad day that reached around the world, we built a beautiful nature area, saw our Penyffordd Lions promoted to the big leagues and also lost a few friends on the way.

Learning to live life after the pandemic has been a challenge, the world has changed, some of it to the good and some not so.

I was honoured to be chosen as Chair of the Council and will cherish the memories and experiences I have gained in past year.

## **Budget/Precept**

The Council's budget for 2022/23 was £189,882 (not including money held in reserves for specific projects) and the precept requirement was £116,851. Here is a brief explanation of how the precept is calculated:

The total forecast expenditure for the Community Council was £164,882. In addition to this, we have to allow for having a £25,000 buffer in the bank, so the total we needed to raise is £189,882. By the end of the financial year (31 March 2022), we did not expect to have spent everything that was budgeted for in the previous year and so we were left with money in the bank of £49,731, plus the estimated VAT which will be reclaimed of £23,300. These two figures are taken away from the total we need to raise, leaving a balance of £116,821 to be raised via the precept. The Tax Base for the 2022-23 financial year of equivalent Band D properties is 2171 and the cost per Band-D property: £53.82.

Taking into account monies held in reserves for specific projects, at the end of the financial year 31 March 2023 the council had actually only spent £145,953 which is £103,297 under budget. The three main expenditure items for the underspend were due to projects either not starting or not being completed; Millstone Pump Track/Skate Ramp project, the Memorial Garden project and Community Centre asset transfer.

## **Audits**

Each year an Internal and External Audit is undertaken.

### **Internal Audit**

The Internal Audit for the Year 2022/23 was completed 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023 with only one recommendation of 'Staff costs includes a tax free allowance paid to the Clerk for home working of £312 and mileage payments totalling £24.30. The annual return has been updated this year to clarify that only taxable allowances are to be included within the staff costs. The annual return should be amended as follows: Staff costs £39,656 and Total other payments £106,298. These amendments were implemented by the Clerk prior to the certification of the annual return.'

### **External Audit**

The External Audit undertaken by Audit Wales for 2021/22 was not completed and returned to the council until March 2023. There were no recommendations or comments.

Once every three years Audit Wales will undertake a 'full' (in depth) audit on all councils. Penyffordd Community Council will be receiving a 'full' audit for the year 2022/23. Dates are yet to be confirmed.

## **Activities during the Year 2022/23**

### ***Wildlife Garden***

The area of land to the rear of West View/Alyn Drive is now under a lease with the Community Council until 2031. The idea was to improve the diversity of trees and plants in the area, provide some fruit trees, and to improve the accessibility of the area. The council appointed WoodWorks CIC to manage the site they have undertaken a substantial amount of work and received funding support from Transport for Wales.

Cleared the brambles and litter and established a clear pathway around the site. Worked with local volunteers, the local primary school and Scouts. Approx. 400 trees of a number of varieties were planted together with wildflower plants and seeds.

An End of Project Event was held in March to acknowledge and celebrate the work that has been undertaken with the funding received from Transport for Wales. Children and representatives from the local schools, volunteers, TfW and Councillors attended.

### ***Old School Site***

Unfortunately, there had been no progress during the year due to delays from Flintshire County Council. However, early 2023 open discussions have commenced and it is hoped there will be more to report in the next Annual Report.,

### ***Place Plan***

The council were intending to undertake a full review of the Place Plan, however, it was decided that this was not required at this time and therefore the council are now working towards a smaller scale review. The council will now be looking to produce a progress report on the existing place plan, which shall be appended to the current plan and available as a standalone document.

### ***Memorial Garden Project***

The area in front of the clock is known as the Memorial Garden. The area is currently one of the focal points of the village. The council has secured planning permission from Flintshire County Council but there have been issues and delays regarding the existing Flintshire assets e.g street lights, bins, electrical box. Work is still ongoing.

### ***Play Area Improvements***

*Melwood* – the improvement works to the drainage and play area were completed in 2022.

*West View* – following the improvements to the play area and issues arising with neighbours, the council did meet with residents and considered a number of options, however, with the majority vote, the council resolved that they will not be undertaking alterations and/or relocation of the play equipment.

*Millstone* – the council appointed a contractor to trial compacting one of the skate ramps to ascertain if this assisted in reducing any of the noise level. Work has been ongoing to obtain designs and costs for the installation of a pump track. It is hoped that this will be a welcomed addition to the play area and that the usage between the two items will also assist in reducing the frequency of noise from the skate ramps.

In 2021 the council received a National Lottery Grant of £9,999 for the Millstone, however and unfortunately due to delays with the scheme, the funding had to be returned in 2022 as was not spent within the 12 months.

With thanks to the Co-op who have kindly donated 2x waste bins which have been installed in the play area.

*Dobshell* – the council approved a budget for 2023/24 to allow for improvement works to the play area by installation of a pathway around the site.

### ***Tree Planting***

A big thank you again to the many residents who have supported the 'sponsor a tree' initiative again. This started three years ago and is hopefully going to be a rolling programme that will be a real feature of the village.

### ***Village Planters***

Positive and welcome additions to the village environment have been the flower planters that can be found at the entrances to the village and at various locations. They brighten the village and are often commented on by residents.

A number of oak barrel planters continue to be sponsored and maintained by local businesses.

### ***Best Kept Communities Competition***

The council made a number of entries to the competition for: Best Kept Village with a population over 1000; Best Kept Senior Citizens Social Housing Estate and Best Kept Community Area. Judging was undertaken in July 2022 and it is with pleasure to report that the council was awarded Silver in Category B - Best Kept Village with a population of over 1000. This is testament to the work and commitment of those involved in improving our village environment for all to enjoy.

### ***Circular Walks***

We have four Circular Walks around our community allowing you to explore the area on foot highlighting the amazing countryside we have on our doorstep. The leaflets detailing to routes also provide information about points of interest on the walks. These have proved extremely popular in the community and have been to reprint several times. Further walks are planned for the future.

Walk 1 – Border Views    Walk 2 – Penyffordd Streets    Walk 3 – Into The Woods    Walk 4 – Bilberry Woods

### ***Litter Picks***

This continues to remain a key agenda item with future plans to have our own litter hub based in the village. We are very fortunate to have our Street Operative Glyn Davies, who works extremely hard every week to keep our village free of litter. We are most appreciative of all Glyn does but litter is an ongoing scourge and needs support from the community.

In conjunction with Flintshire Keep Wales Tidy we have linked with our schools, the community and other McDonalds to tackle litter.

Our last Litter Pick was part of the Great British Spring Clean on the 18<sup>th</sup> March 2023 with over 40 bags collected.

### ***Community Changing Rooms***

The units were installed nearly three years ago, however after experiencing numerous problems we are pleased to report that the facility, with the enormous support from Penyffordd Football Club, is now open and running.

We are now in the process of forming a Voluntary Management Committee for the facility and are seeking support from the community. It may be that you are part of a club or organisation that may wish to use the facility or are just an interested volunteer willing to help. If you are interested in standing for this Voluntary Management Committee, please contact the Clerk..

### ***Queens Jubilee***

The council and community really came together for the Queens Jubilee Celebrations which was a wonderful weekend enjoyed by many.

We produced a printed an Events Booklet to ensure residents were aware of what events were being held over the weekend. On Thursday 2nd June we held the Lighting of the Community Jubilee Beacon at Vounog Hill which included poem reading, Bugler and Choir and Friday 3rd June we planted a Royal Oak and installed a welsh slate plaque at the Millstone Park attended by representatives from the Beavers, Brownies, Youth Club and ex Councillor Ms Cindy Hinds.

### ***Street Lighting***

The Council own and are responsible for a selection of street lights throughout the villages and are in a long term scheme to have these columns upgraded and transferred back to Flintshire County Council.

Any issues or faults with all street lights should be reported to Flintshire County Council, Streetscene on 01352 701234 or [streetscene@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:streetscene@flintshire.gov.uk). Alternatively, you can report by downloading the [Flintshire App](#)

### ***Annual Grant Applications***

The council sets a budget annually to be able to offer financial assistance to local groups and organizations. This year we are pleased to report that we helped 17 local groups/organisations to the sum of £5400 and a further £4000 to the Penyffordd War Memorial.

The council also donated a total of £600 for grants to community groups to assist with funding their events.

### ***Death of HM Queen Elizabeth II***

On 8 September 2022 at 3.10pm, Queen Elizabeth II, the longest-reigning British monarch, died at Balmoral Castle in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, at the age of 96. Her death was publicly announced at 6.30pm. The council had ensured advanced preparations were made. The Queens portrait and condolence book was made available in The Royal British legion the following morning. A condolence book was also circulated around the local schools; arrangements for the flags; the website updated including a statement from the Chair; and Council business postponed until after the period of mourning.

There were a significant number of messages recorded in the Condolence Books which have now been transferred to the Hawarden Records Office and the Queens portrait was gifted to Penyffordd War Memorial.

### ***Summer Playscheme***

In conjunction with Flintshire County Council and Welsh Government, the council financial supports the provision of a 4 week summer playscheme held at The Millstone Play Area.

### ***Christmas Lighting***

There are a total of 47 bracket Christmas lights around the three village. The council purchased two Christmas trees located at Dobshell and Penymynydd and together with our own tree in Penyffordd were decorated and lite. No additional lighting was purchased other than 3 of which required replacing this year.

### ***Hanson Cement***

Hanson Cement have been involved with a number of community engagements during the past 12 months:

- Approval and reinstate of the Monitoring System at the Bowling Green
- Supplied the stone for the Melwood play area improvements
- Supplied the stone for the War Memorial Institute car park
- They also supplied some very good prizes for the Craft Class
- Hanson are committed to removing carbon dioxide emissions through the HyNet project and undertook a number of consultations on their plans to install carbon capture technology at the Padeswood cement works – the UK's first net zero cement facility. It has been announced by Government to move forward in decarbonising their operations creating an entirely new Carbon Capture sector in the North West of England and North Wales.
- They also have the quarterly Liaison Committee Meeting and residents from the village are most welcome to attend.

The council appreciate the community engagement and support of Hanson Cement.

### ***Warm Hubs***

Unfortunately, this year saw a Cost of Living Crisis. The community was fortunate to have volunteers from TeamRed & PACA and Trinity Chapel who provided Warm Hubs for our residents at the Youth Club and Trinity Chapel. The council received a total request of £250 financial support for these Warm Hubs, which the council fully supported.

### **Telephone Kiosk**

The council approved for the refurbishment of the telephone kiosk located on the corner of Alyn Drive. This will be utilised as an internal noticeboard and will also have a seasonal book exchange during the warmer months.

### **CCTV**

The council provides and maintains CCTV cameras at The Millstone Play Area and Hawarden Road, Penyffordd. The CCTV images are only accessed and viewed by North Wales Police.

### **Street Operative and Village Groundsman**

Glyn and Chris work tirelessly striving to make our community a clean and tidy environment to live and socialize in. Here are some examples of the work they do: routine litter picking in areas of Dobshell, Penymynydd and Penyffordd; weeding & hedge trimming; maintaining planters; cleaning street signs; clearing side pathways and repairs to street furniture.

### **Civility and Respect Pledge**

Along with many other councils across the country, Penyffordd Council took the Civility and Respect Pledge:

the council supports and signs the Civility and Respect Pledge:

- Our council has agreed that it will treat all councillors, clerk & all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.
- Our council has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff
- Our council has signed up to Code of Conduct for councillors
- Our council has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.
- Our council will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.
- Our council will commit to calling out bullying and harassment when it happens.
- Our council will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council e.g., via the Local Council Award Scheme
- Our council supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate

### **Community Engagement**

- Queens Jubilee Planning
- West View Nature Area Volunteers sessions
- Annual Report 2021/22
- Community Litter Pick

### **Police**

Community Council have always maintained strong links with North Wales Police and our Police Community Support Officers and we regularly review the crime statistics for our area which are relatively low.

The current PCSOs for our area are:

- PCSO Rachel Duddle - [RACHAEL.DUDDLE@northwales.police.uk](mailto:RACHAEL.DUDDLE@northwales.police.uk) - mobile t.b.c
- PCSO Lucy Davies - [Lucy.Davies@northwales.police.uk](mailto:Lucy.Davies@northwales.police.uk) - mobile t.b.c
- PC Natalie Williams [Natalie.Williams@nthwales.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Natalie.Williams@nthwales.pnn.police.uk) - 07817148417
- PC Chris Myles - [Chris.Myles@nthwales.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Chris.Myles@nthwales.pnn.police.uk)

## **A Message from the incoming Chairman for 2023/24 – Cllr Pat Ransome**

In May this year I was elected Chair of Community Council for the coming year and I am pleased to have the opportunity to introduce myself to all in the community. It is with humility and commitment that I thank Council and say I hope to represent you fairly and with consideration during the next twelve months.

In a few short sentences it is impossible to reflect the full extent of the role and responsibilities of community council as the first line of governance. We are representatives of the community and you are the community. As the lead for the Community Engagement Group, working effectively with you is important and one of my main objectives is to work together as a council, with our county councillors and community to ensure our voice/your voice is heard and the issues that matter most to us in Penyffordd, Penymynydd and Dobshell are addressed.

We do this most effectively by listening, showing respect for all opinions and importantly working as one to effect change. Challenging – yes. frustrating – yes but together we are stronger.

In the coming year we will continue to build on and develop the many projects we already have in place or those already agreed to in Council. All these are to further improve services and enhance the areas in which we all live whilst being mindful of the current cost of living constraints experienced within the community. Our links with outside support agencies is especially important.

There will be much to consider as we work collectively towards the development of the old school site and the revision of the Penyffordd Place Plan.

We are here to represent you so please do contact any of the Council or Clerk with any queries.

## **Key Council Objectives for the Year 2022/23**

### *What are the plans...*

- To form a Management Committee for the Community Changing Rooms
- More street lighting upgrades
- Have a stall and council presence at the 2023 Penyffordd Carnival
- Installation of a pump track at Millstone play area
- Installation of a pathway around Dobshell play area
- Memorial Garden (Millennium Clock)
- Continue to work on the Place Plan review
- Work with Flintshire County Council on the development of the Old School Site
- Continued investment at the Nature Area, including improved pathways
- Installation of an additional CCTV for the Millstone play area.
- Support the Kings Coronation celebrations

### *What is the budget....*

The Council's precept for 2023/24 is £119,521 and the budget for 2023/24 is £252,640 which includes money held in reserves for specific projects.

For more information about the council, council business and to see regular updates please view our website: [www.penyfforddcouncil.org](http://www.penyfforddcouncil.org) and follow us on facebook: Penyffordd Community Council.

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