



# Higher Kinnerton Community Council 2021-22 Annual Report

## **Cllr. Chris Upton – Chair of Higher Kinnerton Community Council**

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of Higher Kinnerton Community Council (HKCC) for the year ending 31 March 2022.

HKCC is essentially a non-political Council and comprises of up to nine Community Councillors although throughout 2021-2022 two vacancies arose which have not been filled. As of April 2022, the following Councillors were members of HKCC all of whom are residents of Higher Kinnerton:

- Cllr. Chris Upton (elected as Chair at the meeting in October 2021)
- Cllr. Martin King (elected as Vice Chair at the annual meeting in May 2021)
- Cllr. Mike Allport
- Cllr. Jason Mortimer
- Cllr. Carroll Nugent
- Cllr. Jane Liddle
- Cllr. Josh Swash

Cllr. Kat Griffiths and Cllr. Adam Flannigan stepped down in September 2022

The Clerk to the Council and Responsible Finance Officer is Liz Corner, 13 Deans Way, Higher Kinnerton, Flintshire, CH4 9DZ Email: [liz@higherkinnerton.org.uk](mailto:liz@higherkinnerton.org.uk) Tel: 01244 660277

## **BUDGET AND FINANCIAL OVERVIEW**

The Council's only significant source of income is the precept. This is the amount that Flintshire County Council collects from Higher Kinnerton residents for HKCC as part of its Council Tax arrangements. The precept in 2021-22 was £31,278 which meant a charge of £35.55 for an average band D property. The precept is calculated in accordance with a detailed budget prepared by HKCC and the agreed budget is then reported to Flintshire County Council who arrange for the budget to be supported by the precept which residents contribute to via Council Tax payments.

The Council's income of £33,133.55 derived mainly from the precept of £31,278 and allotment receipts of £225.00. The village event takings in the sum of £1629.25 were donated to the Countess of Chester and Wrexham Maelor hospitals.

Receipts from newsletter advertising in the sum of £1290.00 were offset by the cost of producing the newsletter in the sum of £1468.73.

Expenditure for the year totaled £31,842.00 which is £9,047.29 less than budgeted. In terms of projects, the largest item of expense undertaken was the Park Avenue Play Area improvement which was assisted by match funding from Flintshire County Council.

Other significant items of expenditure included grants and donations to support village organizations and local community groups and the provision of the summer playscheme

There were areas of underspend against budget due to Covid restrictions such as the Village Christmas and Village Competitions which were not held.

A further £6,841.83 was spent from the Environmental Grant to improve and enhance biodiversity in the village with main items of expenditure being the cost of additional and replacement hedging in Park Avenue Play Area and Bennett's Lane Corner, wildflower and bulb planting and enhancements at All Saints Church and Park Avenue Play Area, the provision of bat boxes, and the publication and distribution of a nature rangers booklet with the village newsletter.

A full breakdown of income and expenditure is included in the Annual Accounts which are summarized within the Annual Return on HKCC's website.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY GROUPS**

The Council works closely with the local Flintshire County Councillor, Mike Allport, who is also a member of HKCC. The Clerk and Councillors also have a positive working relationship with officers of Flintshire County Council which has been fostered over many years and facilitates good working relations across many services.

HKCC has a close working relationship with the Village Hall Management Committee and with the Scouts and the groups provide mutual support to each other with collaborative working including organization of the village day and Christmas events.

HKCC has an effective working relationship with the local Police and Community Support Officers who are invited to and, where possible, attend HKCC meetings to provide updates and information regarding crime statistics and police initiatives such as North Wales Community Alert

## **TRAINING PLAN**

All Community Councillors attend training courses as appropriate and HKCC is a Member of One Voice Wales which undertakes most of the training needs of local Councils. A Training Plan will be published later in the year.

## **ACCOUNTS & AUDIT**

Proper accounting practice for community councils is set out in legislation and the Governance and accountability for local councils in Wales – A Practitioners' Guide. The Practitioners' Guide requires that community councils prepare their accounts in the form of an Annual Return which comprised the annual accounting statements and the annual governance statement.

Accounts ending 31 March 2022 will be subject to a comprehensive internal audit by a qualified accountancy firm and to a forensic external audit by the Audit Wales. The outcome of all audits including previous year's audits are published on the HKCC's website.

In terms of the latest report for year ending 2021, the internal concluded that HKCC's system of internal controls are in place, adequate for the purpose intended and effective. In the opinion of the external auditor the Annual Return had been prepared in accordance with proper practice, relevant legislation and regulatory requirements and is consistent with the Council's governance arrangements and the Council does has proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources.

## **KEY OBJECTIVES FOR 2021-22**

- To organize and host the village day celebration which had been postponed for two years due to the Covid pandemic.
- To facilitate the provision of a Dragon Sports summer camp for children in the village aged 4 to 11.
- To upgrade the Christmas lighting – in response to resident's comments and noting the existing lights were no longer fit for purpose the Community Council has committed to replacing the lights with effect from 2022
- To continue to support village organizations and local community groups via donations and grants
- To scrutinize planning applications and the emerging Local Development Plan and to make comments where appropriate. Members were pleased to note the Welsh Minister's decision to dismiss the appeal by Elan Homes against the decision of Flintshire County Council to refuse grant of planning permission for residential development of 95 dwellings at Kinnerton Meadows, Kinnerton Lane, Higher Kinnerton

## **ACTIVITIES AND ACHIVEMENTS**

2021-22 was a period affected by the covid pandemic which meant it wasn't possible for the Council to support as many activities as it would normally do. As referenced in the key objectives, in August 2021 the Community Council organized the first village day celebration for two years due to the Covid pandemic. The event was a huge success and with the formation of the independent Village Day Raffle Group a total of £4762 was raised for the Countess of Chester and Wrexham Maelor hospitals via the raffle.

The Council facilitated the provision of the Dragon Sports summer camp which was a great success with positive feedback and comments from parents.

The Council arranges for publication of the monthly village newsletter which is distributed via a network of volunteers whose contribution is invaluable.

The Council has provided support to a team on volunteers who have helped throughout the year with village enhancements.

Throughout the year various environmental initiatives and enhancements have included hedge planting in Park Avenue Play Area and Bennetts Lane Corner, wildflower and bulb planting the distribution of pollinator friendly bulbs to residents, the donation of hedgehog homes and food and bat boxes to residents and the distribution of a nature rangers' booklet to all residents. HKCC are continuing to work with Flintshire County Council to further enhance biodiversity in the village.

## **SUMMARY – by Cllr. Chris Upton – Chair of Higher Kinnerton Community Council**

HKCC has focused on achieving what was possible during this past year. For a small sized council, Higher Kinnerton Community Council achieves a great deal on behalf of its residents including publishing and arranging for distribution of a comprehensive monthly newsletter, organizing annual events (Covid permitting!) and the summer sports camp, facilitating several village enhancements including biodiversity enhancements and play area improvements, responding to residents concerns and suggestions for improvement including tackling dog fouling and upgrading the Christmas lights, managing the allotments and supporting a team of volunteers who provide an invaluable contribution to the village.

In recent years Community Councils have faced challenges in the form of County Councils cutting back on traditional services to local communities and changes to the role Community Councils are expected to perform all of which has potential budgetary implications. The above provides an overview of the Community Council's activities, achievements, and budgetary processes during 2021-2022. Further information relating to the Community Council including financial and governance information can be found on the Higher Kinnerton Community Council website.