**Wrexham Town and Community Council Forum - 8th December 2016**

Attended by Katrina Chalk (Clerk)

**Virgin Media network**

Virgin Media will expand its fibre optic network to 24,000 homes and businesses in Wrexham and surrounding areas by the end of 2017 as part of its £3bn Project Lightning programme.

This is the first time Virgin Media has expanded its network in Wales under Project Lightning, giving many residents and business owners access to the fastest widely-available broadband speeds.

Fibre optic cables will be connected directly to premises in Wrexham (known as fibre to the premise - FTTP) offering ultrafast, future-proof connectivity with speeds of 200Mbps for consumers and 300Mbps for businesses and home workers.

Wrexham will be the first town in North Wales to receive FTTP connectivity.

The work has started in the Acton Park area and will extend to Wrexham Industrial Estate, Wrexham Technology Park and also include the villages of Llay, Rossett, Coedpoeth and Gwersyllt as well as Wrexham town centre.

Local residents can find out more details about when their homes will be connected by visiting [**virginmedia.com/cablemystreet**](http://virginmedia.com/cablemystreet) and registering their interest. The more people that register for an area, they more likely they are to consider connection to the network.

**Wrexham Public Service Board**

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is about “improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It will make the public bodies listed in the Act (local authorities are one of the public bodies listed) think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. This will help us to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future.”

Community Councils with precepts under 200k are not required to adhere to the Act, however they can volunteer to become involved with it.

The consultation on 'The Wrexham We Want' has now closed and initial results showed that those who responded were concerned about empty shops in the High Street in Wrexham and the knock on effect this has on remaining businesses, tourism and community cohesion. Respondents were also noted the decline of the Butcher's Market, General Market and People's Market . Cllr Hugh Jones - Communities and Partnerships - advised that the £4.5m overhaul of Wrexham’s indoor People’s Market is to begin in January. Some traders are relocating their stalls to the Butcher's Market to avoid any disruption. It is hoped the refurbishment will lead to an increase in business once the work is completed by 2018.

**Improving Volunteering at a Local Level**

It is recognised that certain services currently run and organised by WCBC will be reduced or cease over the next few years. It will be necessary for community councils to consult with the electorate to see if they want these services to be continued as they are or if they are services which people even want/use. These services could be run by volunteers and community councils, if viable. AVOW would be able to supply support and information regarding setting up and maintaining volunteer groups. There may be a need to 'encourage' people to volunteer in order to get 'fresh blood' into these essential local levels.

Best practice was discussed and the need for community councils to work together when it comes to exchanging ideas, procurement power (clustering of community councils when purchasing) the same item). Consider setting up a Facebook page to exchange information and get involved with other community councils projects if useful .