

LLANDRINDOD WELLS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Remote Meeting held on Tuesday 19th April 2022 at 6.30pm

Present: Cllr L Weerdmeester-Price, W Curzon, S Sims, K Brelstaff, K Evans, K Nicholls, S Meredudd, J Shaw, B Williams, Jamie Jones, Jonathan Jones, M Morgan

Apologies: Cllr S Thomas

TC 44/22 Declaration of Interest

TC 52/22a Cllr S Meredudd

TC 45/22 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th March 2022 were approved.

TC 46/22 Clerks' Report

The Clerk presented the following report:

“As this will be my last Clerk’s report of this administrative term, it is important that I reflect on the past term which extended to 5 years from 2017 – 2022.

This term has seen many difficulties, particularly with leadership and personnel which led to the resignation of a Chair who instigated an investigation into the Town Council and Clerk with regard to financial governance and practices. Although this investigation was lengthy, it was extremely thorough and resulted in this council being judged as well-run and a council which operates within the strict financial legal governance implanted by myself as Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. The unfortunate result of this investigation was the additional work placed on myself as Clerk; the unnecessary anxiety and most importantly the significant cost to the rate payer. Thankfully now the Council moved on, initially under the leadership of Cllr Steve Deeks-D’Silva and subsequently Cllr Laurence Weerdmeester-Price.

The term has seen a large turnover in membership, mainly due to the leadership for a 3- year period, thankfully this settled down from 2020. The council saw 20 members leave the Council during this term, however, it is inevitable that there will be some changes in membership resulting to personal circumstances.

Over 5 years the council has implemented many new projects and supported lots of town initiatives providing practical and financial support to local groups for the benefit of the residents.

The council should be proud of its achievements to date and I feel is very much focused on moving forward to bring even bigger and better things to our town and for our residents.

The responsibilities of a councillor has changed greatly in the last few years and requires a significant commitment to participate in project planning, implementation and operation. It is no longer sufficient to just attend a monthly meeting; the council needs every member’s input to ensure that it continues to progress with the times.

In the past 2 years, I have produced a “What We Have Done” list which has been published on our website and Facebook page; this is a written statement of the council’s achievements. As Clerk I intend to continue with this practice for the length of my employment with this council.

Finally, as this is the last meeting of this council and all seats are up for election in May 2022, I would like to thank all those members who have supported me throughout my employment both past and present – the role of Clerk is a difficult one, managing personalities and often having to intervene in difficult situations. However, it is a role I enjoy and, although it isn’t a role to win friends; its’ really not about that; its’ about ensuring the legal operation of the council as a corporate body for the benefit of its residents.

I hope to see those of you who intend to stand for re-election at the Annual Meeting in May and to those who will not be returning, many thanks for your work on behalf of the council and the residents of Llandrindod Wells.”

TC 47/22

Chairs Report

“I am now approaching the end of my term as Chairman of the Council and Mayor of Llandrindod Wells for 2021/22.

I have really enjoyed this time, despite it being a challenging year for me personally.

I have met lots of new people and broadened my knowledge of things that go on in Llandrindod. There really is so much to participate in and I attended some lovely events and engagements as Mayor, even though curbed by Covid.

During the year, I still managed to attend some very interesting and enlightening events such as:

- The opening of the Nurture Our Nature Pollinator and Sensory Garden;
- The snap happy event in August;
- A tour of the Hive and the Food bank;
- Attended the Royal British Legion on Remembrance Day;
- Judged the Christmas card competition at Trefonen and Cefnlllys schools;
- Visited the roller skating event at the Pavilion;
- Opened the Christmas lights with the Ice rink;
- Visited the International Women’s Day Art Exhibition at the Museum;
- Visited the Fair trade event;
- Awarded certificates at the Credu event at the Metropole;
- Worked with partner groups and enjoyed discussing future ideas such as town twinning events.

Although there will be elections on 5th May, the Town Council seats are uncontested. Members will remain in place until 9th May and will then sign their declaration of acceptance of office forms for the new council term.

I would like to thank all of the Town Councillors, Town Clerk and my Family for their support throughout the year.”

Here are some of the things the Council has done since May 2021:

- Completed and opened the Nurture Our Nature Pollinator and Sensory Garden in July 2021
- Installed Defibrillators at the Lake Boathouse, KDM Newsagents, Brookland Road Kiosk, The Hive, The Samaritans building.
- Funded Defib cases for the Outdoor Bowling Club, Football/Rugby Club
- Provided grants to local organisations to support events and activities - Examples of these are funding the purchase of Hi Vis Jackets for the Ysgol Trefonnen Walking Bus Scheme. Awarded grant to Royal British Legion Club for Children’s Platinum Jubilee Party.
- Worked with the primary schools on a project to celebrate 73rd Anniversary of NHS, providing Community Notice Boards
- Installed 2 new noticeboards at Lake Park
- Obtained land for New Skate Park – this is an ongoing project with partnership groups
- Continue to work with TLT and Pace on the Climate Emergency Project
- Campaigned for additional NHS dental cover in Llandrindod Wells. This has now been funded.
- Established Banking Group and Community Survey and continue to work on ensuring that direct bank services remain within Llandrindod Wells
- Worked with The Hive to enable Barclays Bank to provide an in person service every Tuesday
- Campaigned Against Bullying of Clerks by asking all Town and Community Councils in Powys to write to their MP’s
- Provided the first Ice Rink in Powys in November 2021 which was subsequently funded by the Winter of Wellbeing Grant.
- Arranged additional Christmas lights for 2021
- Researching Britain in Bloom to establish a Llandrindod in Bloom Project

- Developed and concluded a study in support of the Sports and Wellbeing Project. Now identifying the development of a Sports Association and supporting grant applications for sporting/leisure facilities.
- Funding the Platinum Jubilee Street Party in partnership with Fuelled by Cake.

The Council continues as a strong, pro-active and effective team for the benefit of Llandrindod Wells and its residents.

The Chair thanked everyone once again for their support.

TC 48/22

Public Speaking

None.

TC 49/22

Correspondence

a) PCC – Tree Planting Project

Request for council to apply for tree pack for use by PCC on a piece of land on Golf Links Road.

The council fully supported this idea and agreed to work in partnership with PCC to obtain the trees for this site.

Cllr Sims felt this was a project that the Friends of the Lake could work on and asked members if they wished to be part of this group to contact him to obtain the relevant forms.

Resolved: to work in partnership with Powys County Council to obtain the trees for this site.

b) One Voice Wales – Free Trees for Communities

Further information on the project brought forward by Cllr Shaw to council at the previous meeting.

As Cllr Shaw had brought forward a similar project to the council this was noted.

Cllr Shaw explained that it seems that it will be possible for local land owners to request trees as part of the “Plant a Tree for Me” scheme. The council awaits further information on this. The Clerk will gather a list of possible sites for planting.

c) Dyfed Powys Police - Independent Advisory Group

Notification of an independent advisory group being set up by the Police made up of people from throughout the force area to act as critical friends to the force.

Members agreed to express an interest in having a representative on this group; this will be decided at the Annual Meeting.

Resolved: to request representation on this group.

TC 50/22 **Planning Applications**

a) 22/0332/FUL

Grid Reference: **E:305851 N: 261329**

Proposal: Repair of existing front elevation sash window to include replacing clear glass panes with slimline double-glazed units, and installation of secondary glazing to existing stained glass units. Existing timber frames to be retained. Site Address: Unit 2, The Old Police Station, Waterloo Road, Llandrindod Wells, Powys.

Resolved: No objection.

TC 52/22 **Applications for Financial Assistance**

a) **Spa Town Trust**

Cllr Meredudd declared an interest in this application and left the room whilst discussions took place.

Application to support the cost of a Taiko Drumming Group Workshop.

Some discussion took place on the small grants application process, criteria and feedback, and it was agreed to re-look at this at a future meeting.

Resolved: to award a grant of £250 to support this event.

TC 53/22 **Finances**

a) To approve the payments for March 2022

Resolved: to approve the payments.

b) Annual Accounts 2021-22

Cllr Williams felt the council is in a particularly strong position and had decreased its reserves, but had still managed to budget for new projects. The Clerk was thanked for her hard work. The council will now be reporting on an income and expenditure basis due to turnover.

Resolved: to approve the accounts for 2021-22

c) Internal Audit Report

The internal auditor had identified no issues and commented on the accurate and well organised presentation of accounts.

Cllr Jamie Jones congratulated the Clerk on her work, despite the previous challenges made on the council financial processes.

Resolved: to accept the Internal Audit Report.

d) Annual Return

The Clerk presented the completed annual return form for discussion and approval. She ran through the full report for the benefit of all members.

Resolved: to accept this completed form.

The Chair thanked the Clerk for her work on the council's finances ensuring that the council remains in a strong financial position.

e) 2022/23 Budget

The Clerk presented the council with the budget which included the individual earmarked reserves for each budget heading. This was received.

TC 54/22

Council Projects

a) Climate Emergency – Update

Cllr Brelstaff updated members of the 20-Minute Community Project which he had been working on with Deio of R4C.

The idea of the project is for communities to be able access everything needed within a 20-minute active travel area.

A questionnaire has been launched which is being shared within the community - <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Llandrindod20>

3 communities have been selected to participate in this project and Llandrindod Wells is the larger community, along with Llanfyllin as a medium community and 2 other smaller community councils in the north of the county.

This will involve carrying out a mapping exercise of facilities and a wish list for our community. There will be 2 meetings held with Trawsnewid Llandrindod Transition to carry out this work, which will be open to the public.

Resolved: Clerk to share the link to questionnaire on social media, and send the link to the meetings to members.

TC 55/22

Policy Review

a) **Social Media Policy – re-approval**

Resolved: to re-adopt this policy

b) **Pension Policy – re-approval**

Resolved: to re-adopt this policy

TC 56/22

Training Plan

Town and Community Councils in Wales now have a legal duty to produce and publish a Training Plan for members and staff from May 2022. The Clerk had drafted a plan for discussion.

Resolved: to adopt this plan for 2022/23

TC 57/22

Storage Container

The Clerk reported the need for a new storage container to be purchased for Oxford Road. She had obtained a quote for £3750.

Cllr Williams felt the council should be looking for a property to use as offices and storage space. The Clerk confirmed this has been ongoing for some time.

Members supported the requirement for a new container and will meet on site to discuss its location.

Resolved: to purchase a new container as quoted. (Cllr Williams voted against this.)

TC 58/22

Annual Meeting 2022

In view of the legislation with regard to in-person meetings the Clerk had arranged for the Annual meeting to be held remotely with the presentation of Chains of Office and photographs at the Metropole following the meeting.