

LLANDRINDOD WELLS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Hybrid Meeting held on Tuesday 19th December, 2023 in the Pavilion Mid Wales

- Present:** Cllr M Morgan, W Curzon, P Smith, Jamie Jones, D Markinson, L Weerdmeester-Price, Jon Jones, K Nicholls, N Bastow, S Deeks-D’Silva, S Sims.
- Apologies:** Cllr S Meredudd, B Williams
- TC 186/23** **Declaration of Interest**
None.
- TC 187/23** **Minutes.**
The minutes of the meeting held on 21st November 2023 were confirmed and signed subject to amendment.
- TC 188/23** **Clerks’ Report**
Llandrindod Wells Active Travel Phase to Llandrindod to Howey
The Welsh Government and the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent (NMWTRA) are progressing plans to deliver a shared-use walking and cycling path from Llandrindod to Howey. The Town Council has sent in a submission to the Consultation.
- Cllr Jamie Jones had approached the Clerk about publishing the response. The Clerk asked the Council for authorisation to do this.
- Resolved:** to publish the response submitted by the Town Council.
- Cllr Jamie Jones went on to say that it was particularly disappointing that only 2 members had fed into this response. Cllr Nicholls stated she had responded as an individual. Cllr Jamie Jones thanked her for doing this.
- Christmas Party & Switch On**
Both events went very well and the feedback for the Children’s Party and Christmas lights has been wonderful. 441 people attended the Christmas Party and members and volunteers who attended received some great feedback. The room was buzzing with children’s laughter. Well done to everyone involved.
- The Parade and Switch On also went well and we have received really positive comments about the new lights and tree.
- Car Park Review**
I represented the Council at the Powys County Council Car Park Review which was attended by County and Town Councillors and Clerks. The focus of my group was – Enforcement, Service, Improvement and Innovation. This was a really active discussion and a follow-up meeting will be held in January. We were asked not to feedback any discussions until the final review is completed.
- Cllr Deeks_D’Silva had approached County Councillors for Llandrindod Wells to see if they have been invited to attend Town Council meetings, they confirmed they had not.
- Resolved:** to invite the 3 County Councillors to attend and report at each full Council meeting.
- TC 189/23** **Chair’s Report**
24/11/23 – I had been invited to the Welsh 2 Day Enduro end of year get together and presentation of donations. This event was well attended, many local charities received generous donations and a great evening was had by all.

Thank you to the Wesh 2 Day Enduro for holding the event in our part of Wales as it puts us on the map and attracts business and tourism to our town.

25/11/23 – A very busy, exciting and special day for Llandrindod Wells. I attended the Lantern Making Workshop in the morning to see how the children were getting along making their lanterns for the parade in the evening – they all looked amazing and I was glad that it wasn't me judging them.

Then it was time to go to The Pavilion to get everything set up for the Local Community Children's Christmas Party. The Pavilion had put up a beautiful Christmas Tree which really added to the occasion. We had Bertie's photo booth which was very popular with everyone and some lovely photographs were taken and put on Facebook. There was a bouncy castle, traditional party games, refreshments served and the fabulous Children's Entertainer Mr Bamboozle keeping everyone entertained with his magic tricks. Over 400 people attended the party and everyone had a great time. I don't think I have ever seen so many excited children enjoying all the fun! Some of the adults have contacted us since saying that their children had had a fantastic afternoon and had not wanted to leave. The Town Councillors who are on the Festive Lighting Committee, the Town Clerk and the volunteers all agreed that the party was a total success. I must thank the volunteers who willingly gave up their afternoon to help, we simply couldn't have done it without them. We had a visit from the High Sheriff for Powys and two of our great PCSO's Josh and Liz.

The time went very quickly and then it was time to move across to the Bandstand to get ready for the Parade and Switch-on of the Festive Lights. It was a magical evening and everyone seemed to like the new lights and tree in town. The Town Silver Band kindly played carols to get everyone in the festive mood, the Round Table Santa and sleigh were amazing and there was a wonderful atmosphere at the Bandstand. Thank you to everyone who took part in and supported this event, I certainly won't forget it!

1/12/23 – Another Switch-on of lights, this time at our beautiful lake organised by Lee and Jenni Percy. Thank you to Lee and Jenni for inviting me to do the countdown. It was such a lovely evening with great new Christmas decorations and lights, Santa arriving, beautiful singing by local artists, mulled wine, delicious food and great market stalls. What an amazing turn-out by residents with the High Sheriff also in attendance.

2/12/23 – A cold morning to open the Christmas Market in town, there were lots of great stalls but I don't know how the stall holders managed to keep themselves warm – well done everyone!

I then popped to give some words of support to Cllr Jake Berriman and Richard Vellacott (Tesco) for their very brave fund-raising 24 hr Sleep-out in aid of The Great Tommy Sleep Out and Help Our Homeless Wales. Well done both, you couldn't have picked a colder night – massive respect for what you did.

5/12/23 – Time to judge the shop windows in town on their recycled themed Christmas Window decorations, not an easy task! I was joined by Cllr Jonathan Jones, Chair of the Festive Lighting Committee and Cllr Laurence Weerdmeester-Price.

7/12/23 – I was very honoured to attend the 579 (Llandrindod Wells) RAF Air Cadets Awards Evening with Carols. What a lovely evening with special guests presenting the Awards. I was very impressed with the cadets from the minute I was welcomed at the front door. The cadets are respectful, confident, very smartly dressed and have great social skills which will serve them well for the future.

I so enjoyed chatting to them afterwards finding out about their future plans. The town should be very proud of our cadets, they are a credit to everyone who encourages and supports them at 579.

8/12/23 – Time to put up the new Town Council Tree of Remembrance at the Holy Trinity Church for the Christmas Tree Festival. Many thanks to Cllr Wade Curzon as, although I was there, he is responsible for the beautiful tree, I simply followed his lead in putting it together and handing him the lights! Cllr Curzon also donated £50 to the funds for the Tree Festival on behalf of the Town Council and its residents.

9/12/23 – The day started with myself and Cllr Laurence Weerdmeester-Price presenting the prizes to the winners of the Christmas Shop Window Competition. Thank you to all the shops that took part – all the windows look lovely and really add some Christmas Cheer to our town. Winners: 1st – Bradleys, Joint 2nd – The British Red Cross and The Bracken Trust, 3rd – Doves and Dandy's.

The evening saw Cllr Wade Curzon and myself attending the Holy Trinity Christmas Tree Festival Community Service. We had both been invited to take part in the service with Cllr Wade doing a biblical reading and myself reading 'T'was the Night Before Christmas'. It was a beautiful service with lovely readings, carol singing and, of course the twinkling Christmas Trees.

Donations have been given to:

579 (Llandrindod Wells) RAF Air Cadets

It is now time to enjoy the Christmas period and to look forward to the New Year. The Seed to Feed Bird Photographic Competition is underway, the Town Council will continue to work on existing projects and will be looking at new ideas for the town.

I wish you all a lovely Christmas and a happy and successful New Year

TC 190/23

Public Speaking

None.

TC 191/23

Correspondence

a) Powys Resident – Dementia Matters in Powys Funding

Letter from Powys resident who expressed concern at the lack of funding allocated to Dementia Matters in Powys.

Some discussion took place on this matter and it was agreed to write to the Health Minister expressing the Council's concern at the decline in services within our area and highlighting DMIP and Denistry, this to be copied to the MP and MS for the area. The Clerk was asked to acknowledge receipt of this letter from the local resident and advise them of the Town Council actions on this matter.

Resolved: to write to the Health Minister with copies to the MP and MS and the resident. Cllr Smith & Weerdmeester-Price voted against this.

TC 192/23

Planning Applications

a) 23/1700/FUL

Grid Reference: **E:305413 N: 260763**

Proposal: Change of use from a barn to a farm-workers dwelling including the reinstatement of the demolished part of the barn - Site Address: Rhydllyndu , Park Lane, Llandrindod Wells, LD1 5NN

The Council would wish to echo the recommendations with regard to the provision of swallow boxes and inclusion of native trees.

Resolved: No objection subject to the inclusion of swallow boxes and native trees. Cllr Deeks-D'Silva abstained from the vote.

b) **23/1757/CAC**

Grid Reference: **E:305858 N: 261150**

Proposal: Conservation Area Consent for demolition of an existing garage

Site Address: Tudor Lane Garage, Tudor Lane, Llandrindod Wells, LD1 5ET

Resolved: No objection. Cllr Deeks-D'Silva abstained from the vote.

TC 193/23

Applications for Financial Assistance

a) **Spa Town Trust**

This matter had been deferred from the previous meeting and further supporting information had been supplied.

Resolved: to award a grant of £250 for these events.

b) **Llandrindod Wells Junior Football Club**

Application to purchase a replacement shed for the Oxford Road Field.

Members discussed this matter and it was agreed that a more permanent storage solution, such as a metal container would be more suitable. Screening would also be possible. The Clerk explained that this would fall outside of the Small Grants Fund. The Clerk was asked to explore options in conjunction with the Football Club and residents. This matter was deferred.

Resolved: Clerk to explore further options.

c) **Fuelled by Cake**

Application for a grant towards the Big Battle and Big Lunch event in June 2024.

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

TC 184/23

Finances

a) **To approve the payments for November 2023**

Resolved: to approve the payments for November 2023.

b) **Income/Expenditure to 30.11.23**

This was noted.

c) **Audit Wales – Annual Return 2022/23**

The Audit return for 2022/23 was presented to the Council and no issues were raised resulting in an Unqualified Audit.

Resolved: to approve the completed Annual Return for 2022/23

d) **Annual Budget – 2024/25**

The draft budget was presented to the Council for final ratification.

Resolved: to set a budget of to set a draft budget of £ 215,823 based on Band D Product of £ 2553.08 equating to £84.53 per household per year for 2024/25 equating to a 10.91% increase on 2023/24.

The Clerk reminded members that the budget set for the current year, 2023/24 was decreased when set by 5.41%.

TC 186/23

Review of Policies

The Policies and Procedures Committee recently reviewed these policies and procedures which have been amended for presentation to full Council.

a) Bank Payment Policy

Resolved: to adopt this new policy.

b) Health & Safety Policy & Appoint Responsible Member

Some amendments were recommended. It was agreed to defer this to the next meeting so amendments could be made.

Resolved: Defer to the January meeting.

The One Voice Wales Health & Safety Training and subsequent draft policy suggested appointing a member to assist the Clerk with the responsibility for Health & Safety within the Council.

Cllr Jamie Jones commented that he had offered in the past to assist the Clerk with Health & Safety matters and risk assessments, however he had been rebuffed at the time by the Clerk.

The Clerk responded that if Cllr Jamie Jones felt this, he should have requested this matter to be placed on an agenda for full Council discussion.

Cllr Jamie Jones, went on to say, in view of the Clerk's issues with her micro-management, *(a matter which the Clerk had reported confidentially to the Personnel Committee and with the full Council at a meeting under confidential matters)* he wanted to get the Clerks comments on the appointment of a member to assist with Health & Safety matters.

The Clerk confirmed that this had been advised by One Voice Wales.

Resolved: to appoint Cllr Nicholls as member responsible for Health & Safety.

Cllr Nicholls responded by stating she felt she was well qualified to undertake this role as she had been responsible for Health & Safety of many sites within her working role and holds relevant qualifications.

c) Social Media Policy

This policy was discussed and it was agreed to accept this.

Resolved: to adopt the policy. Cllr Markinson abstained from the vote.

Cllr Markinson expressed concerns about members personal information being published on the Town Council website as a previous victim of identity theft. The Clerk responded by stating that it is a requirement for a form of contact to be made public for members. On induction, all members complete a form to indicate which information they wish published.

Cllr Smith also commented about the lack of a central facility to publish local events. It was stated that most local events are promoted heavily on social media. He felt this is something that the Town Council could look at.

d) Small Grants Terms & Conditions & Application Form

The amended Terms & Conditions and Application Form were discussed and all amendments were agreed.

Resolved: to adopt these documents.

TC 187/23

Appoint Members to Staffing Appeals Committee

There are 3 vacancies on the Staffing Appeals Committee.

Resolved: to appoint Cllr Bastow to this Committee.

TC 188/23

National Association of Councillors

The Clerk had been in contact with the Secretary of the NAC and had established the fee of £22 per councillor (based on 15 members) which equates to £330.

Cllr Jamie Jones read out a lengthy statement stating his reasons for the Council to join this association. Prior to this matter being put to the vote, Cllr Jamie Jones started to read out a pre-prepared statement with regard to a complaint made against him to the Public Services Ombudsman.

The Chair asked him to stop, he continued and was asked on several occasions to stop. He went onto say that he had asked the Clerk to place the matter on the agenda for this meeting and she flatly refused. The Chair then asked Cllr Jamie Jones to leave the meeting. He continued to address the meeting with a raised voice. The Clerk stated she had received advice from One Voice Wales on behalf of the Council. The Clerk was shut down at this **point (Advice received from One Voice Wales - this is not a matter for the Council but between 2 members.)** Cllr Jamie Jones carried on by accusing the Chair of being a liar.

Cllr Nicholls and Cllr Weerdmeester-Price took exception to these comments.

The Chair then suspended the meeting.

The meeting was then closed due to the disruption caused by Cllr Jamie Jones and further agenda items were deferred to the January meeting.

TC 189/23

Green Gen Towy Usk – New Information

Not discussed. Matter deferred.

TC 190/23

Wales Air Ambulance – New Information

Not discussed. Matter deferred.

TC 191/66

Resolution – Confidential Matters - “ resolved that the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 as there would be disclosure to them of confidential information relating to contractual, legal and personnel content.

TC 192/66

Confidential Matters (Contractual, Legal or Personnel Related.)

a) **Job Evaluation – Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer**
Not discussed. Matter deferred.

b) **Administrative Assistant – Job Application Form - Timeframe**
Not discussed. Matter deferred.