

LLANDRINDOD WELLS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Remote Meeting held on Tuesday 21st December 2021 at 6.30pm

Present: Cllr L Weerdmeester-Price, W Curzon, S Deeks-D'Silva, S Sims, K Nicholls, K Brelstaff, J Shaw, Jamie Jones, S Meredudd, J Jones, S Thomas, B Williams, K Evans

Apologies: Cllr M Morgan

Absent: None.

TC 178/21 **Declaration of Interest**
TC 184/21 a Cllr S Thomas

TC 179/21 **Minutes**
The minutes of the meeting held on 16th November 2021 were approved.

TC 180/21 **Clerks' Report**
None.

TC 181/21 **Chairs Report**
The Chair had attended the following events:

19th November – Awarded prizes for the Christmas Card Competition to pupils of Ysgol Trefonnen and Ysgol Cefnlllys. Well over 200 entries were received, and the standard was incredibly high. He awarded some extra prizes due to the high standard. However, due to Covid 19 he was unable to award the prizes himself. He thanked everyone for such a magnificent effort.

19th November – Awarded a donation of £100 to the Foodbank whilst they were collecting at Tesco.

27th November – the Chair helped with the Ice Rink, which was an amazing event. It was a magnificent achievement, bringing so much cheer and joy to the local community. Special thanks to the Clerk, former Cllr Jase Hawker for operating the booking system and all members who helped throughout the two-day period.

27th November – Christmas Lights Switch On, his favourite time. He gave special thanks to the Llandrindod Wells Silver Band for keeping everyone entertained, he felt it seemed like the whole town was out to join in. Another show of community togetherness and spirit. One of the highlights for him was the magnificent show of the handmade lanterns and handing out prizes. Thanks to the judges and everyone who helped.

15th December – the Christmas Shop Window judging took place which had been delayed due to Covid. He was joined by the Mayors of Builth Wells and Rhayader. There were so many great displays so it was a close competition with the following outcome:

1 st Prize	Junk 'n' Disorderly
2 nd Prize	Kelx Cutz
3 rd Prize	Haydn Lewis Financial Services
Most Humorous	Haydn Lewis Financial Services.

He thanked everyone for participating and designing some wonderful displays making the town look so special. The prizes had been awarded on the 21st December and everyone agreed they love doing the displays to help make the town look really festive.

The Chair thanked Cllr Nicholls for installing the Tree of Remembrance in the Holy Trinity as part of the Tree Festival and anyone else involved.

The Chair has committed to supporting a competition at KDM Gaming Hub which has now been postponed until February 2022. He will be sponsoring the under 16 element and will provide further information at a future meeting,

TC 182/21 **Public Speaking**
None.

TC 183/21 **Correspondence**

a) Powys County Council – Middleton Street Planters

Email from PCC Highways seeking the council's opinion on the removal of planters in Middleton Street and their relocation.

Following a suggestion from the Clerk, members agreed to approach Transport for Wales about relocating 2 planters to the station platform and PCC about siting the remaining planter opposite cemetery corner.

Resolved: to approach TFW and PCC.

b) Severn Wye Energy Agency – The Hive

Email from Dave Gittins, Head of Sustainability and Climate Change as follows:

"I just wanted to drop you an email to say what a great evening we had last Saturday night. It was so nice to see the town busy and alive. We had a lot of positive feedback from families about how much they loved the skating rink and what a great day out they had. We also had feedback from the Herb Garden that it was one of their busiest days of the year, so it's great the benefits were felt across the town.

It gave us a great opportunity to promote the work of The Hive and generate some funds to help run it as well.

A big thank you and well done to you and the rest of the TC"

This was noted.

c) Resident – Planting, Oxford Road Field

Approach from resident about the possibility of planting fruit bushes around the edges of the Oxford Road field.

Members discussed this and there was some concern about the lack of visibility from the road side ensuring the safety of children playing on the field. Also, the area behind the goal posts.

Resolved: to contact the resident and ask them for more detailed plans and information and point out the concerns highlighted.

TC 184/21 **Planning Applications**

a) 21/1940/FUL

Grid Reference: E:305479 N: 261732

Proposal: Residential development comprising 79 residential units, formation of vehicular access, roadways and all associated works. Site Address: Land East of Ithon Road, Llandrindod Wells, Powys. Clr Thomas declared an interest in this matter and left the room whilst discussions took place.

The Council supported this application and asked that consideration is taken into the following points which were fed back to Asbri Planning at the pre-planning stage.

We ask the Planning Committee to consider these points prior to making a decision on this application:

In line with the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration the following recommendations are made:

- We fully support housing developments that reflect the Green Agenda i.e, that there should be solar panels fitted as standard and that construction methods be evaluated against their carbon footprint to build and to maintain. This a recommendation for inclusion.
- If trees are removed to make way for construction, we request that two trees should be planted: appropriate carbon enriching varieties native to the area on a 'right tree right place' basis and either planted on site or within the town boundary
- We expect all heating systems be moved from carbon based oil and gas to methods such as air or ground source heat pumps.
- We expect stringent insulation standards should be applied to any construction for human habitation that ensures minimal use of energy.

The following comments were also agreed:

- This appears to be an overdevelopment of the site, dwellings appear to be crushed in.
- Also concerns over the size of the dwellings in relation to growing trend for home working.
- The proposed new access to the site placing additional pressure on the busy Ithon Road.
- There is no inclusion of a play area.

- Additional pressure to be placed on schools and concerns over the lack of school placements available.
- The existing infrastructure in Llandrindod Wells with regard to emergency, health and other services is already stretched. This is a major concern.
- Concern was expressed over the lack of street lighting on the approach road. Consideration needs to be taken on the installation of additional lighting.

The Chair left the meeting. Cllr Curzon chaired this item.

b) 21/2030/HH

Grid Reference: **E:306151 N: 261254**

Proposal: Installation of a platform lift to provide wheelchair access to the front door of the property and replacement door. Installation of a concrete ramp access at the rear entrance to the garden area and replacement door - Site Address:

Broadway House, Garden Flat, Broadway, Llandrindod Wells, LD1 5HT

Resolved: to support this application.

The Chair returned to the meeting.

TC 185/21

Applications for Financial Assistance

a) Spa Town Trust – Christmas Tree & Lights

This application was received following the November meeting. The Clerk confirmed that a tree had not be installed and lit for 2021. Following a recommendation from the Clerk it was agreed to not award a grant but to offer the group the opportunity to reapply in the next financial year.

Resolved: to offer the group the opportunity to reapply in the next financial year.

b) Llandrindod Wells Outdoor Bowling Club – Defibrillator Case

Application for £500 to replace the 24-hour public access defibrillator case at the outdoor bowling club.

Resolved: to award a grant of £500.

TC 186/21

Finances

a) To approve the payments for November 2021

Resolved: accounts were approved.

b) Expenses/Budget to 31.11.21 – for information.

Resolved: received.

TC 187/21

2022/23 Budget

a) To approve Minutes of Meeting on 7th December 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2021 were approved and signed.

b) To approve Budget for 2022/23

The Clerk presented the budget for 2022/23 to the Council which had been produced in two recent meetings.

The draft budget has been increased to support existing and new projects for the benefit of the town and its residents. The Clerk felt the council has set a robust and forward-thinking budget.

Resolved: agreed the budget of £205,711 based on a Band D product of £2469.68, and increase of £7.52 on the 20/21 budget.

TC 188/21 **Climate Emergency**

Written proposal from Cllr Keith Brelstaff:

"Llandrindod Town Council in the spirit of its own declaration of a climate emergency, and in the light of discussions at COP26, will support lobby groups such as Powys Action Climate Emergency, (PACE) and Trawsnewid Llandrindod Transition (TLT) in their efforts to ensure that Powys County Council fulfils its obligations under its own declaration of a climate emergency".

This includes for example, the setting up of a stakeholder group promised by PCC in its declaration, and support for the climate bill referred to.

If agreed it will allow me as a TC representative on these bodies to engage with them in this activity and do so under the banner of the town council."

Resolved: this motion was agreed unanimously. Cllr Brelstaff was also given delegated authority to represent the Town Council on the Stakeholder Group should he be asked.

TC 189/21 **Governance and Financial Management – Self-Evaluation Toolkit for Community and Town Councils in Wales**

The Town Council has been selected to work as a pilot council to work through the toolkit. It has been assigned Theme 2 – Leadership and People. The Clerk had circulated a copy of the full toolkit to all members and asked them to work through Theme 2 prior to attending a remote meeting to provide feedback to the Clerk. The Clerk will then attend a focus group meeting with One Voice Wales and the SLCC to provide feedback. It was agreed to hold a meeting on Tuesday 25th January 2022 to enable members to give the Clerk feedback.

Resolved: members to work through Theme 2 and provide feedback to the Clerk in writing, to be followed up at a remote meeting on 25th January 2022.

TC 190/21 **Bullying of Clerks: MP to raise question in Parliament**

Cllr Deeks-D'Silva begun by reminding members of the bullying of the Clerk in the past and he asks the Clerk to keep him abreast of anything that happening regarding bullying of Clerks.

His personal experience of going through the Public Services Ombudsman process is that the PSO seemed to think the bullying of clerks was a Pandora's box which he refused to take the lid off. The Clerk had informed Cllr Deeks-D'Silva that an MP was taking up the cause of the bullying of Clerks and he then asked for this matter to placed on the agenda for the December meeting.

Cllr Deeks-D'Silva found it quite shocking to hear about the amount of councillors that bully clerks.

Fortunately, he felt this council has moved on and it has made a tremendous difference to this council, going from a very reactive fighting council to a proactive, let's get things done by working as a team council. It took a report to the Ombudsman to stop that. Unfortunately, not every Town and Community Council will have members which will say that this is wrong and actually stand up to it. Now, it seems the clerks have a champion in the form of Dr Julian Lewis MP who is putting forward an Early Days Motion as follows:

Early Days Motion 691

Conduct of councillors towards town and parish council clerks
EDM (Early Day Motion)691: tabled on 25 November 2021

Motion text:

That this House notes with deep concern convincing evidence collected by the Association of Local Council Clerks showing that, far from being untypical, the toxic behaviour by Parish Councillors in Cheshire exposed online in December 2020, is endemic in a significant minority of Town and Parish Councils; deplores the departure from their roles of dozens of part-time and full-time Clerks, as a result of bullying by Councillors who face negligible sanctions for such misbehaviour; regrets the anguish thus generated and the substantial cost to the public purse arising from settlements following breakdown in employer and employee relations; and calls on the Government to establish an appropriate and effective sanctions mechanism, including financial penalties, to deal with local Councillors found guilty of such misconduct.

Link - <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/59182>

Cllr Deeks-D'Silva pointed out that if a particular member is being put before the Standards Committee or Adjudication Panel, if they are a member of a County Council they would also be suspended from that role and public office. This then often leads to that members resignation. He felt this was the coward's way out, and commented that this council has seen it. He stated this was a disgrace.

Cllr Deeks-D'Silva proposed that council should support the Clerks and their association by supporting the Early Days Motion. He continued that this is a council that no longer suffers bullying, however, there may be others in Powys that do. He also proposed to forward this to all Town & Community Councils in Powys, we trust your council does not have a bullying problem, but there are councils that do and they need your support. This was supported unanimously.

Resolved: to support the Early Days Motion and approach Powys Town & Community Councils

TC 191/21

Chair's Update

The Chair announced that he would be running a music quiz following the meeting for anyone who wished to participate. The prize will be a donation of £100 to the winners chosen local charity or group.

TC 192/21 **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 and personnel content.

The Chair closed the open meeting and thanked everyone for attending and wished everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

TC 193/21 **Confidential Matters (Contractual, Legal or Personnel Related.)**

a) Recommendations from Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee had discussed the Terms of Reference for the Committee and made suggested amendments which were presented to the Council by Cllr Deeks-D’Silva

Resolved: to amend the Terms of Reference for this committee.

b) Winter of Well-Being Fund

The Clerk had applied to the above fund retrospectively for the Ice Rink. She had recently been notified that the application had been successful.

Members congratulated the Clerk on her initiative.

In view of this, Cllr Deeks-D’Silva proposed that the Ice Rink be booked provisionally for Christmas 2022. This was agreed.

Resolved: to make this provisional booking.

c) Britain in Bloom

Cllr Jamie Jones asked the Council to consider entering this competition. The Clerk suggested that this matter be put on the agenda for the January meeting. This was agreed.