

## LLANDRINDOD WELLS TOWN COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the Annual meeting held at 7pm on Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2013 in Committee Room A, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells.**

**Present:** Cllr J Green, P Hill, H Macaulay, C Bailey, S Dorkenoo, G Price, A Bridgman, W Francis, R Houghton, R Coleman, S Millington, E Worgan, S Meredudd, C Rouse, D Gambles

**Apologies:** None

The Chairman welcomed all members to the first meeting of the new Llandrindod Wells Town Council.

#### **AGM 01/13 Chairman's Report**

Firstly I want to thank all my fellow Councillors. It has been an incredible year, and we have made great strides forward considering we started with only eleven Councillors. If you remember, we had go through the process of co-opting on an extra four members to bring us up to full strength again.

Once we decided to engage more with the residents and canvass their views, the town questionnaire was born and after much consultation was sent out to every home. Your willingness to circulate amongst your own constituents and support the project has given us real credibility and more importantly, a mandate to work on behalf of residents to bring improvements in and around our town.

Thank you for your support throughout the whole process for without your co-operation, it would not have been the success it as become. With new and experienced Councillors working together, and especially Elaine and Ron, who were continually working with me to sort out the problems, we have now set up a system that can be duplicated throughout Wales. After our presentation One Voice Wales asked if they could include our questionnaire project proposal forms on their website as a vital tool to allow other councils to re-engage with their communities, to which of course, we have said 'yes'.

As your Chairman, I believe I need to lead from the front, and in the light of that, this year I have had close to 60 press articles printed in local papers. On the back of that, I have been invited by Cardiff Radio and Premier Radio to talk about what we are doing here in Llandrindod Wells for the town and as you know, I use every opportunity to promote our great town. I believe consistency is vital and no-one can be in any doubt about my passion to see this town grow, and prosper as it ought.

Indeed the Business Minister on her visit last week to open the Metropole's new Rock Spa is very excited about what she is seeing going on here as a town and stated, 'If you can't make a success of things here, there's no hope for anywhere else.' That is not to sound pessimistic, merely to be an acknowledgement that we have so much going for us here, that we must make a success of the assets we have. Then we will be an encouragement to other towns dealing with many of the same issues we are. We must talk up the council, the town and what we can offer. People don't want to hear what we can't do, they need to be inspired by our vision.

Before you know it, if you say it often enough, people start to believe it, and we must see the people of this town believe in themselves, their abilities and the positive future for this town to benefit us all.

This year, I have also focused my energy on working with some key organisations within the town and community area. Llandrindod Wells Twinning Association is a perfect example of a group of people willing to work with the Town Council and widen their appeal to be all inclusive. They opened up their trip to Bad Rappenau next month for the Europfest to residents of Llandrindod Wells who have never had the opportunity to visit our twinned town in Germany. I know Shanaz is excited to be taking her two children to enjoy the wonderful German hospitality and see this super town. We ourselves took a week out of our own business, not just to have a holiday as a family, but to show that the Twinning trips are wonderful chances to teach our children about other cultures, peoples and traditions. We were blown away with how kind, generous and welcoming our hosts were. The Twinning Association showed that they are willing to encourage as many as possible to participate by hiring a 50 seater coach to make it fun, easy to travel and provide an opportunity to build new friendships with our local Welsh friends as well as our German hosts.

The Bowling Club has also received a lot of my attention this past year not only being their centenary, but also the fact that they have a wonderful facility in a stunning location that attracts the best, not just from the UK, but worldwide. It is without doubt one of the best clubs in the UK. As many of us have experienced, each and every business and organisation has been affected by our financial crisis in one way or another and without the positive support from the Town Council, such a club as good as it is, will face challenges.

They too have shown they are willing to work with us and to adapt and change as demonstrated with their recent Open Day on the 6<sup>th</sup> May to encourage those who have never bowled, to give it a go. Ray, the President and I estimated about a hundred people involved in one way or another. Clubs such as these need our support and just popping in for a hour, having a burger and chips, throwing the kids out onto the green to have a go can give them a boost. They know we care.

Other significant events this year included the International Tug of War which attracted 300 participants to the town and was deemed a great success and of course the Tour of Britain, gave us a great spectacle and some international exposure. I was pleased to find out that the Welsh 2 Day had all their routes approved for this year again and we would love to build on this lucrative event. I hope to see the town continue to focus on event led tourism as I believe these kinds of initiatives will bring long term growth.

Of course, not everything has gone to plan this year. The skate park is no closer than it was last May and we're still waiting to put boats back on the lake. The repeated difficulties we are facing have highlighted for us the key problem, and that is one of ownership. As a Town Council, we can have great ideas, be willing to do the work, find the money as we have done – we have £20,000 in our bank to fund town projects on behalf of the people – but unless we have ownership of the town's assets, we will continually come up against a brick wall.

This year, I believe we should be addressing the issue of self-determination. I would like to see the lake, the jewel in our crown, and the common come back into town ownership.

We should be able to manage the lease for the Lakeside restaurant, oversee a thriving boating business on the lake and build the skate park which the youth have been promised for over 20 years, on the ground near the lake which we would like to own. Unless this happens, we can be thwarted at every turn.

I have been very proud to represent Llandrindod Wells Town Council this year, and I have endeavoured to be a town champion to anyone who would stand still long enough to listen. We need to believe in ourselves, in our combined skills and abilities to make things happen and to see the opportunities with fresh eyes. We need to continually improve and by identifying who will work with us on various projects, we will be able to bring about the changes needed. I am very encouraged that the Welsh Assembly has instructed Justin Baird-Murray and his team to tackling some of the issues of our town from an economic and business perspective and as we have seen from the recent success of the Transition May Fair, if we can just meet with others, respect what they can contribute, and build relationships, this year will be the first of many great years for our town.

**AGM 02/13 Election of Chairman/Mayor 2013/14**

The Chairman relinquished the Chair and Cllr Meredudd took over for this item. The following members were nominated for the position of Chairman/Mayor:

Cllr Jeff Green  
Cllr Trish Hill  
Cllr Ron Houghton  
Cllr Gary Price

Following a series of ballots – Cllr Jeff Green was elected as Chairman of the Council and Mayor of Llandrindod Wells.

**AGM 03/13 Election of Vice Chairman/Deputy Mayor 2013/14**

The following members were nominated for the position of Vice Chairman/Deputy Mayor:

Cllr Elaine Worgan  
Cllr Trish Hill

After a ballot of members – Cllr Elaine Worgan was elected as Vice Chairman of the Council and Deputy Mayor of Llandrindod Wells.

Cllr Gambles left the meeting at this point following the Election of Officer.

**AGM 04/13 To appoint members to serve on Council Committees:**

**Resolved:** to defer this matter to the June meeting.

**AGM 05/13 Financial Regulations**

As no relevant changes needed to be made the Financial Regulations were reviewed and agreed by members.

**AGM 06/13 Standing Orders**

The following addition was made to Standing Orders:

12 (d) Following a recommendation from the Independent Remuneration Panel the Council will pay members out of pocket expenses of up to £100 per annum. Payments will be made annually in retrospect and are subject to Income Tax. Members should notify the Clerk in writing if they do not wish to receive these expenses.

**Resolved:** To make this addition to Standing Orders