

CYNGOR CYMUNED LLANDDAROG COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the January 2023 Meeting of Llanddarog Community Council held at Llanddarog Village Hall on 11/01/2023 at 19.00.

178/2022-2023 Present.

Councilors: R Jones (Chair), M Rees, K Waters, J Williams O.B.E, S Herridge, M Griffiths, T Evans, R Owen.

County Cllr A Davies.

Clerk.

Translator: C Llwyd.

179/2022-2023 To receive apologies.

Councilors: County Cllr H Jones, R Newell, R McFarlane.

180/2022-2023 To receive declarations of interest.

None.

181/2022-2023 Opportunity for the public to address the Council on agenda items.

None.

182/2022-2023 Policing and Road Safety Matters.

None.

183/2022-2023 County Council matters - County Cllr A Davies.

County Cllr A Davies wished all council members a Happy New Year.

County Cllr A Davies reported that during December she had attended numerous Christmas concerts, fairs and services.

County Cllr A Davies informed Council members that the Budget Consultation 2023 is now open, and Carmarthenshire County Council are inviting local residents, businesses, community or voluntary organisations to take part by completing an online survey before 29/01/2023. The current amount reduced in the budget is 27million, therefore, to ensure the retention of 'front line Services' the county council will need to cut back on other non-statutory services which may include libraries, leisure facilities, etc.

The Carmarthenshire County Council LDP (Local Development Planning) consultation will be available online before the end of January 2023 for a period of 8 weeks and they will be inviting local residents, businesses, community or voluntary organisations to take part by completing an online survey. Considering the number that attended the EGM in Porthyrhyd on 24/11/2022 to discuss the potential development at Wern Fraith Farm, it is clear that the residents of the area are keen to voice their opinion, so please take advantage of the opportunity to discuss. Of everyone that kindly responded personally to County Cllr A Davies regarding the potential development, 18 were against (12 x families, 2 x from the same household) and 4 were in favor.

County Cllr A Davies stated that the Welsh Government are moving forward with regards to the phosphate issue and are considering the adoption of Sir Gar's plan from the calculator and the mitigation on how to deal with Phosphate. There is a meeting in Cardiff next month and more information will be available soon.

The Urdd Committee 2023 has reached its goal of £8000, and County Cllr A Davies thanked the community council for their contribution. Current total is £8700.

County Cllr A Davies announced that Llanarthne Village Hall had cancelled their Warm Hub on Thursdays (13.30 – 16.30) afternoons as only 1 person was attending. Funding had been received to maintain the “Warm Hub” until the end of March 2023.

County Cllr A Davies reminded council members that refuse collections within the county were changing from 23/01/2023 and asked the Clerk to place a notice within the community notice boards stating the specific collection days. **Resolved** for the Clerk to obtain the rota and place in the community notice boards.

County Cllr A Davies requested with the Chair's permission to place on the February agenda the topic of the Hot Tar Box and where it is required within the community to effectively repair the numerous potholes. **Resolved** to note.

184/2022-2023 Chairman's Report.

Cllr R Jones wished all council members a Happy New Year.

The Chair informed council members that he was unable to attend the Community & Town Council Liaison Forum meeting on 19/01/23 at 18.00 and asked Cllr S Herridge to attend instead. Cllr S Herridge confirmed that she would attend.

185/2022-2023 Confirmation and signing of the Minutes of the Council Meeting 14/12/2022.

It was **resolved** to confirm the minutes for 14/12/2022. Proposed by Cllr M Rees and seconded by Cllr S Herridge.

186/2022-2023 Matters arising from the above minutes.

The Clerk informed council members that all matters to **resolve** had been actioned and if correspondence had been received, a copy of the Email had been sent to each member for information.

The Clerk reported that 3 x flags had been ordered.

187/2022-2023 To note correspondence or to list for consideration at a forthcoming council meeting.

(All relevant correspondence is emailed to council members at the time of receipt and only brought before the meeting if necessary or specifically requested by members or the Clerk).

The Clerk reported that he had received notification from Red Dragon Flagmakers stating that they had made the decision not to continue with flagpole related work. However, the engineer had taken over the flagpole related division of the business and he would be dealing with Loler inspections and maintenance issues. A quotation for £189.00 + Vat was received for the Loler inspection. The matter was discussed, and it was decided for all flagpoles to be inspected once every three years as suggested by Red Dragon Flagmakers in January 2022 (Minute 190/2021-2022). The flagpole in Porthyrhyd to be inspected first. **Resolved** for the Clerk to arrange the Loler inspection.

188/2022-2023 Planning.

None.

189/2022-2023 Payments.

The below payments were certified in the December monthly meeting and **ratified** in the January monthly meeting. Copies of invoices sent to all members electronically prior to payment for authorisation. Proposed by Cllr S Herridge and seconded by Cllr M Rees.

Method of Payment	Date	Suppliers & Details	Sum £ inc VAT
Online	28/12/2022	J.G Evans – December Payroll	356.74
Online	28/12/2022	HMRC PAYE – Period 9	93.40
Online	28/12/2022	Mynyddcerrig Welfare – Christmas Tree	50.00

190/2022-2023 Receipts.

Carmarthenshire County Council – Precept 3.
29/12/2022 - £7085.26.

191/2022-2023 To receive the report of the Internal Financial Examiner for period 01/10/2022 - 31/12/2022.

Each member had been provided with a written report and a copy of the 2022 – 2023 accounts prior to the meeting. A full verbal report was provided by Cllr R Jones. The report confirmed the accuracy of the bank reconciliation and statement of accounts provided to the Council. It also confirmed the accuracy of the current budget report provided. During the previous examination in October it was pointed out that one payment had been made which did not accord with the invoice. The actual payment was for £9.45 less than the invoice amount. It is confirmed that this has now been corrected by the payment of the difference. It was proposed by Cllr J Williams O.B.E and seconded by Cllr S Herridge to accept the report. Members thanked Cllr R Jones and the Clerk for their work.

192/2022-2023 To discuss asset transfer of land at Cwm Catti.

Cllr J Williams O.B.E reported that no updates were available regarding the project, but sponsorship had been received for the value of £150.00. Cllr J Williams O.B.E asked for assistance from another council member to assist with the project. Cllr K Waters volunteered to assist. It was also confirmed that no asset transfer from the County Council to the Community Council will be required, as noted in minute **170/2022-2023. Resolved** to note.

193/2022-2023 To discuss Community Awards.

The Clerk informed council members that the certificates had been completed and proofed by Cllr R Jones. The Clerk asked council members whether the certificates were to be presented to the establishment or to individual persons. The matter was discussed, and the following was decided.

Llanddarog Village Stores – Business.

Porthyrhyd Post Office – Business.

White Hart – Business.

Butchers Arms – Business.
Prince of Wales – Lesley Morgan.
Abadam Arms – Emma Wright.

194/2022-2023 To develop and finalise the precept 2023 - 2024.

a) Review of income and expenditure for period 01/04/2022 – 31/12/2022 – All members had received a copy of the report prior to the meeting along with a copy of the bank reconciliation up to 31/12/2022. The statement balance on 31/12/2022 was £27,207.03.

b) Projected balance at 31/03/2023 – Cllr R Jones and the Clerk discussed and formatted the figures based on current spending trends and expenditure for the same period in 2021 – 2022 (Please see table 1 below).

c) Report and recommendations in relation to 2023 – 2024 budget – A draft expenditure report was sent to all members prior to the meeting totaling £25,738.00. A draft income figure was presented to the members from VAT refund for £775.00.

d) Confirmation of the 2023 – 2024 budget – The budget is presented in table 2 below.

e) Confirmation of the special project's programme and the Council's other reserves. The reserves are found to be on track albeit with some easily identifiable differences. The memorial stone project is yet to be finalised but Cllr J Williams O.B.E is confident that sponsorship from local businesses will help fund the project.

f) Report in relation to 2023 – 2024 budget – All members received a copy of the report prior to the meeting. The Band D Council tax base figure for Llanddarog Community Council 2023 – 2024 is **559.65** and all members were required to evaluate the presented "options" (Please see table 3 below).

g) 2023 – 2024 Precept Demand - All Council members considered the options provided for the 2023 – 2024 precept. A council needs to hold some reserves to make sure it can pay for unexpected events and to make sure it has enough money to pay bills until it receives income. Unless it has specific plans for future spending, councils should only hold reserves to provide a reasonable balance. The Clerk reported that the reserve percentage was on track last year but with uncertain times ahead regarding inflation and utility charges, it would be advisable to remain cautious. Cllr J Williams O.B.E proposed the reduction of the Council Tax Band D as reserves would still be within the recommended amount. All council members agreed to the proposed 10% reduction and that the precept demand would be £19,363.89 with a Council Tax Band D of £34.60.

h) To ratify the annual investment strategy – The strategy was discussed under policies in the Community Council meeting on 09/11/2022 minute **151/2022-2023**.

i) Insurance Policy – This matter was discussed in the May meeting on 11/05/2022 minute **37/2022-2023**. It was proposed by Cllr M Rees and seconded by Cllr R Jones to renew the policy.

The budget and precept report recommendations were proposed by Cllr J Williams O.B.E. and seconded by Cllr M Rees with no objections from any Community Council members. **Resolved** for the Clerk to request a precept of £19,363.89.

195/2022-2023 Forum in order for Members to raise reports / questions through the Chairman.

Cllr R Jones stated in the December meeting that he had reported 2 x faulty lights in Pontfaen and that only one had been repaired due to an overgrown private hedge. **Resolved** for County Cllr A Davies to report to Carmarthenshire County Council.

Cllr M Rees reported that the Llanddarog Community Council website was stating a “Not Secure” site on the search engine and that the council needed a SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) certificate. **Resolved** for the Clerk to obtain a SSL certificate.

196/2022-2023 In camera 20.29

Those who were not Community Council members, or the Clerk departed the meeting – not to return. The exclusion is due to personnel / staffing matters being discussed.

197/2022-2023 Staff pay run January 2023.

The Clerk reported the payroll amounts verbally to all council members. It was **resolved** to accept the report and ratify the payment of the sums as presented. Proposed by Cllr R Jones and seconded by Cllr M Rees.

198/2022-2023 Date of next meeting.

08/02/2023 at Porthyrhyd Village Hall.

199/2022-2023 The meeting finished at 20.00.

Chairman

Date

LLANDDAROG BUDGET & PRECEPT 2023-2024

Please find below a report on the 2022-2023 budget, the actual expenditure to 31/12/2022 and the estimated expenditure to 31/03/2023. Reasons are given on sum difference and will be discussed in the January meeting on 11/01/2023.

HEADING	PREVIOUS BUDGET	ACTUAL SPEND TO 31/12/2022	ESTIMATED SPEND ON 31/03/2023	DIFF	REASON
Ground Maintenance	1800.00	1750.00	1750.00	-50.00	-
Staff Salary & PAYE	6400.00	4414.68	5866.56	-533.44	-
Admin, Inc Audit Fees	2300.00	1594.54	2479.94	179.94	Translator Audit Charges
Insurance	930.00	966.13	966.13	36.13	Inflation
Financial Assistance – Inc Standing Revenue Grants	2000.00	1840.00	1840.00	-160.00	-
Seating & Asset Maintenance	2000.00	903.68	1620.68	-379.32	-
Street Lighting Estimate	2900.00	0.00	2900.00	0.00	-
Misc – Inc Subscriptions	450.00	0.00	225.00	-225.00	-
Members Allowance	360.00	390.00	390.00	30.00	HMRC Refund
Members Allowance PAYE	90.00	90.00	90.00	0.00	-
Election Cost	250.00	0.00	0.00	-250.00	-
Section 137	900.00	860.00	1400.00	500.00	Urdd Eisteddfod
Allocation to Special Projects & Reserve from Precept	4000.00	462.24	462.24	-3537.76	Jubilee Mugs
TOTAL	24,380.00	13,271.27	19,990.55	-4,389.45	-

There was a projected VAT refund in the 2022-2023 precept of £1140.00. This reduced the precept demand from £24,380.00 to £23,240.00. It was resolved to demand a precept income of £21,255.78 in 2022-2023 and for general funds to replenish the £1984.22 shortfall.

Please find below a proposed budget for 2023-2024 in comparison to 2022-2023. Reasons are given on sum difference and will be discussed in the January meeting on 11/01/2023.

HEADING	PREVIOUS BUDGET	PROPOSED BUDGET	REASON
Ground Maintenance	1800.00	1800.00	-
Staff Salary & PAYE	6400.00	6400.00	-
Admin, Inc Audit Fees	2300.00	2500.00	-
Insurance	930.00	1020.00	Inflation
Financial Assistance – Inc Standing Revenue Grants	2000.00	2000.00	-
Seating & Asset Maintenance	2000.00	1500.00	-
Street Lighting Estimate	2900.00	6700.00	Expected increase in utility charges 2022 x 2.6
Misc – Inc Subscriptions	450.00	450.00	-
Members Allowance	360.00	374.40	-
Members Allowance PAYE	90.00	93.60	-
Election Cost	250.00	0.00	-
Section 137	900.00	900.00	-
Allocation to Special Projects & Reserve from Precept	4000.00	2000.00	-
TOTAL	24,380.00	25,738.00	

At the time of preparation, the only projected income for 2023-2024 is a VAT refund of £775.00. This will reduce the amount of the precept demand from £25,738.00 to £24,963.00. Also reducing the overall demand will be the projected bank balance remaining in the account. Full details below.

Bank balance as at 31/12/2022	£27,173.21
Less projected expenditure 01/01/2023 – 31/03/2023	£6,719.28
Projected bank balance as at 31/03/2023	£20,453.93
Expenditure proposal for 2023-2024	£25,738.00
Less Estimated income for 2023-2024 (VAT Refund)	£775.00
Less projected bank balance as at 31/3/23 (based on projected expenditure)	£20,453.93
Amount required to make up the difference	£4509.07
Add 50% of projected expenditure to create a reserve of 50% of revenue	£12,869.00
Amount required as total precept for 2023-2024	£17,378.07
By using tax base 559.65	
Amount raised by keeping the Band D rate the same as last year @ £38.44	£21,512.95
Amount raised by reducing the Band D rate to £34.60 (-10.00% on last year)	£19,363.89
Amount raised by reducing the Band D rate to £32.67 (-15.00% on last year)	£18,283.77
<p>1 - If we keep the Band D rate the same as 2022-2023, we will end up with a budget surplus of £4134.88 which will be added to the reserve. The reserve will then be equal to 66% of annual expenditure (8 months). This is not acceptable for a council of our size unless unforeseen circumstances (Utility Charges, Inflation) are considered.</p> <p>2 - If we reduce the Band D rate to £34.60, we will end up with a budget surplus of £1985.82 which will be added to the reserve. The reserve will then be equal to 58% of annual expenditure (7 months). This is acceptable for a council of our size.</p> <p>3 - If we reduce the Band D rate to £32.67, we will end up with a budget surplus of £905.70 which will be added to the reserve. The reserve will then be equal to 54% of annual expenditure (between 6-7 months). This is acceptable for a council of our size.</p>	