**Items 4 to 16**

**Reports of the Clerk to**

**Llanllawddog Community Council of 6 January 2025**

**4. Report of the County Councillor**

To receive a verbal update from Abergwili Ward Councillor, Councillor Neil Lewis in relation to his Ward work.

**5. Budget monitoring relative to the period ending 31 December 2024**

The Council holds a balance of £7,392.89 in its current account, and a balance of

£40,239.27 in its savings account. The Council’s resources total £47,632.16. The Council’s resources have increased due to successful funding applications made to support the play area and the final instalment of the Council’s precept in the sum of £2,715.67 received from the County Council on 20 December 2024. On 5 December 2024 following consultation with the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, the sum of £25,000 was transferred from the Current Account to the Savings Account to gain interest. The reason for doing so is that further costs on the play area do not become due until installation has taken place.

The Council’s bankers have informed that they will be reducing the interest rate on the savings account from 2.62% to 2.52% with effect from 18 February 2025, in line with the downward trend for interest rates.

Attached is the spend profile for the financial year to date.

**Recommended:** That the Council note the Budget Monitoring for the period ending 31 December 2024.

**6. To agree on a budget for the next financial year, review reserves and to decide on the Council’s precept for 2025/2026 – see separate report.**

**7. Bills for Payment**

The Council has the following liabilities for which approval is requested to make payments:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reference** | **Payee** | **Description** | **Amount £** |
| 300068 | Andrew Rees | Administrative Expenses for November and December 2024 | 84.75 |
| 300069 | Andrew Rees | Salary of Clerk for November and December 2024 | £700.96 |
| 300070 | HMRC | Payment of Income Tax for November and December 2024 | £175.20 |
| 300071 | Vision ICT | Website Hosting and Support for February 2025 to January 2026 | 150.00 |
| 300072 | Society of Local Council Clerks | Subscription for 2025-26 | 110.00 |
| **Total Payments** |  |  | 1,220.91 |

Further to minute no. 260 of the meeting of 11 November 2024, wherein it was resolved that Christmas signage be purchased, signage in the sum of £508.00 was purchased from Just Print Digital Limited (cheque no. 300067 refers).

**Recommended:** That the Council approve the above payments.

**8. Cefn Farm Play Area**

Further to minute no. 260 of the meeting of 11 November 2024, wherein formal approval of the final specification and cost of the play equipment and surfacing were approved, an order was placed with Sovereign Design Play Systems. In accordance with their terms of business, payment of 25% in the sum of £11,310.42 was made on 26 November 2024 (cheque no. 300066 refers). Sovereign have informed the Council of the following milestones:

* 24 January 2025 – Pre-Installation Survey
* 10 March 2025 – Installation of play equipment over 5 days
* 17 March 2025 – Installation of surfacing over 2 days.

The above dates have formed an Installation Agreement to enable the dates to be confirmed. Prior to the installation works commencing, the Council will remove the artificial turf from the play area and erect Heras fencing around the play area and a temporary sign will be placed to inform the area cannot be accessed during the construction period.

Sovereign Play have provided their Operations and Maintenance Manual which has a checklist of routine inspections which the Council is recommended to undertake over and above that included within Sovereign’s compliance package which is included in the cost of the play area. The copy of the checklist is provided for Members’ attention.

The Council will need to consider appropriate bilingual signage at the play area which will also need to have the branding of the National Lottery and Brechfa Wind Farm as per the requirements of the grant funding. The Council has recently purchased Christmas signage from Just Print Digital which is of a very high quality. The company is also based in Carmarthenshire, and it is recommended that Just Print Digital be engaged to produce signage for the play area.

As the Council has greater certainty on the installation of the play equipment and the area’s surfacing, with completion envisaged towards the latter part of March 2025, consideration be given to holding a formal opening of the play area. The Fund Manager of the Wind Farm has indicated that it could be supportive of an application to the Grant Bach Fund for a pizza van to be located outside the play area. There could also be potential to have an art project by engaging a local artist. Given the closeness of the completion of the play area to Easter (weekend of 18 April), the Council may consider holding an opening event at Easter by holding an Easter Egg Hunt.

Following the last meeting of the Council, the Clerk has spoken to the Fund Manager whether the Brechfa Wind Farm would consider funding the legal costs in full, but it would not do so. The reason for an application being made to the Grant Bach fund which has a ceiling of £750 was on the basis that the Wind Farm fund did not have sufficient funding to meet the applications received. The Grant Bach Fund is one where officers have delegated authority to make awards.

The Fund Manager of Brechfa has offered to attend a future meeting of the Council which would be opportune for the Council to question the availability of future grant funding allocation. However, the Fund Manager has recently been taken ill. It is advised that the Council wait for the Fund Manager’s recovery and return to work.

**Recommended:** (1)That the Council consider bilingual signage for the play area and engage Just Print Digital to produce the signage.

(2) That consideration be given to the format of a formal opening of the play area;

(3) That the Council note the decision of the Brechfa Wind Farm in relation to the legal costs.

**9. Road Safety on the A485**

Subsequent to the meeting of 11 November 2024, County Councillor Lewis contacted the Traffic Management Team to progress the road safety concerns which the Council has of speeding traffic and overtaking on the A485. Councillor Lewis has received a reply from Traffic Management who will arrange for the placement of speed monitoring equipment to be in place in December. The gathered speeds will aid GoSafe which has enforcement powers who as to what course they deem necessary. It is estimated the data from the monitoring equipment will be analysed by mid-January, following which the Traffic Management Team will arrange to provide the Council and County Councillor Lewis with an update. The Traffic Management Team recommends that contact is made with GoSafe regarding speeding concerns as the County Council has no enforcement powers on speeding traffic.

**Recommended:** That the outcome of the data analysis from the monitoring equipment be awaited and that contact is made with GoSafe.

**10. Noticeboard**

On 20 November 2024 during adverse driving conditions due to snowfall, the driver of a Windy Corner coach attempted a three point turn on the A485 reversing into the Council’s Noticeboard in Rhydargaeau. The accident was witnessed by Mr Daniel Newman of Clos y Fedw who supplied a photograph of the damage and forwarded CCTV footage of the incident supplied by a neighbour to the Council. This enabled the Council to seek full recompense from Windy Corner Coaches. Accordingly, Windy Corner Coaches has settled the Council’s claim against them in full for the cost of a replacement Noticeboard including labour in the sum of £1,178. A new replacement Noticeboard has been ordered from the Parish Noticeboard Company on a like for like basis. Mr Huw Evans who installed the Council’s Noticeboards in 2023 will be instructed to install the Noticeboard following its delivery.

**Recommended:** That the report be noted.

**11. Application for Financial Assistance**

The Council has received an application for funding from the following organisation:

**Urdd Gobaith Cymru Fund for All Appeal** – The Council’s support has been requested towards supporting the Urdd movement’s Fund for All Appeal. The aim of the appeal is to offer 1000 places to give disadvantaged children and young people in Wales a summer holiday in 2025 at one its summer camps.

The Council has a budget of £1,000 in 2024-25 to support charitable organisations, with £730 yet to be committed.

**Recommended:** That the Council consider the request for funding.

**12. Community Defibrillator Project**

Further to the meeting of 11 November 2024, the Clerk was instructed to ascertain from the consultant who monitors the defibrillators whether the Council could apply to the Brechfa Wind Farm for paediatric pads (minute no. 265 refers). The consultant has informed that the Wind Farm will not fund paediatric pads due to the unlikely event in the pads being used. However, the consultant has suggested switching the defibrillator located at the Gwalia filling station as it has a paediatric switch with the defibrillator located at Clos y Fedw.

Following a question at the previous meeting on the various apps for registering the defibrillators, the consultant has advised that whilst there are many apps in being, The Circuit where all the Council’s defibrillators are registered is the only portal used by the Welsh Ambulance Service.

**Recommended:** That the Council considers switching the defibrillator located at the Gwalia filling station as it has a paediatric switch with the defibrillator located at Clos y Fedw.

**13. Digital Health Check Report**

One Voice Wales requested all Town and Community Councils in Wales undertake a digital maturity self-assessment. In return, One Voice Wales will produce a Digital Health Check. One Voice Wales will use the assessments to collect a set of baseline data on councils digital working to support the development of the Community and Town Council sector. Each council’s answers to the assessment will contribute to the data collection.

The Council has received its Digital Health Check from One Voice Wales and a series of recommendations have been made for the Council’s consideration as follows:

* **Website –** That the Councilutilises a .gov.wales domain to promote better credibility as a website and create stronger trust with website users.
* **Multi-location Meetings –** No recommendations were made
* **Other Digital Engagement –** Whist the Council is active on Facebook that it considers expanding social media engagement to reach different demographic groups who are more likely to use different platforms as follows:
* Instagram: Favoured by younger adults and teenagers, particularly those aged 18-29, for sharing visual content and engaging with influencers.
* Twitter (X): Used by a diverse demographic, but most popular among users aged 18-49, for real-time updates and interactions.
* LinkedIn: Primarily used by professionals, aged 25-49, for networking and career-related content.
* TikTok: Highly popular with teenagers and young adults, aged 13-24, for short-form video content.
* **Digital Communication and Collaboration –** ThatCouncillors should not forward emails to private accounts and ensure all staff and Councillors are provided with and encouraged to use email addresses associated with the Council's domain name.
* **Digital Services and Operations –** That the Council invest in an online accounting package tailored for local councils for better financial management. A policy of data back-up, retention and disposal is needed. One Voice Wales plans to issue updated guidance to help with this as part of the Digital Health Project.
* **Technology –** That the Council considers leasing options for equipment to ensure regular upgrades and cost-effectiveness as it does not provide equipment for the Clerk. Refurbished devices can also be a suitable, budget-friendly option.
* **People-Centric Digitalisation –** That the Council offer digital training for Councillors to enhance their confidence and competency in using digital tools. Digital training is available via One Voice Wales.

One Voice Wales considers the Council to have a moderate standard of digital maturity, and it ensures compliance with expectations as set out by legislation. A copy of the Digital Health Check is attached.



**Recommended:** That the Council consider the recommendations contained in the Digital Health Check Report provided by One Voice Wales and take any actions that it thinks appropriate.

**14. Correspondence**

To receive correspondence from the following:

**Public Sector Network**

* November and December Newsletters

**One Voice Wales**

* Training Dates November to December 2024 to March 2025
* Local Places for Nature – Exhibition
* National Conference Report
* Guidelines about Naming Domains and Websites
* News Update
* Cost of Living Project – Meals That Matter Webinar
* Training for Councillors
* Guidelines about Email and Procurement
* Top 10 Things to do for Councils
* Digital Guidance on Cloud Storage
* Pethau Bychain Nature Network
* Community Survey
* Cost of Living Crisis Project – Keeping Communities Warm Webinar
* Cost of Living Crisis Project – December Newsletter
* One Voice Wales National Awards 2025

**Carmarthenshire County Council**

* Temporary road closure: C2049 Peniel SA32 7AL
* Application for Road Closure - C2049 Peniel
* Temporary Road Closure: Brynbedw Road, Rhydargaeau
* Consultation of Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance
* Tenancy Engagement Officer
* Town and Community Councils Updates
* Anti-Litter Message

**Welsh Government**

* Section 137 - Discretionary Expenditure Limit for 2025-2026
* New consultation: Legislation (Procedure, Publication and Repeals) (Wales) Bill
* Public Engagement on Climate Change in Wales
* Free Pension Credit Webinars
* Wales COVID-19 Inquiry Special Purpose Committee - UK-Covid Inquiry Module 1 Report
* Ystadau Cymru Conference
* Publication of Consultation Papers - Planning Resilience and Preserving Trees
* Dementia Action Plan Survey
* Older People’s Commissioner
* Day and Respite Opportunities Questionnaire
* Review of Deliberative Engagement in Wales
* Pension Credit Subgroup (Income Maximisation in Wales)
* Consultation on Reforms to the Compulsory Purchase Process and Compensation Rules
* Age Without Limits Day: Micro-grants for Age-friendly Communities

**UK Parliament**

* House of Commons’ Women and Equalities Committee Inquiry on Community Cohesion
* COVID-19 Day of Reflection - 9 March 2025

**Valuation Tribunal**

* Membership Recruitment

**Dyfed Powys Police**

* Police and Crime Commissioner’s E-Bulletins
* Launch of Budget Consultation

**Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service**

* Charity Carol Service
* Firefighter Experience Days
* Calon Tân in Brief: November 2024
* Community Ambassador Role
* Burn to Protect Launch
* Calon Tân - Yearly Roundup Highlights 2024

**Planning Aid Wales**

* The Value of Place Plans Event 28 November 2024
* An Introduction to Heritage Issues and the Planning System
* Latest News

**Llais Cymru Health and Social Care**

* Monthly Newsletters
* Update on the Silly Rules Campaign

**Planed**

* Carmarthenshire Living Well Centre

**Peace Ambassador Project**

* Update

**Boundary Commission for Wales**

* Review of Senedd Boundaries

**Mumbles Community Council**

* Invitation to Green Heroes December Event

**Gallagher Insurance**

* Community Matters Winter 2024 News

**Carmarthenshire Local Places for Nature**

* News

**Recommended:** (1)That the correspondence received be noted;

(2) That Members indicate any One Voice Wales training modules they wish to attend for approval by Council;

**15. Planning Applications**

The Council has been consulted on the following planning application as a statutory consultee since the last meeting of the Community Council:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Application No.** | **Proposal** | **Site Address** | **Application Type** |
| PL/08600 | Discharge of Condition 3 on W/39159 (WSI) | Land adjacent to Danfforddgar Bungalow, Alltwalis Road, Pontarsais SA32 7DU | Approval of details reserved by a condition |

There have been no planning applications determined by Carmarthenshire County Council within the Council’s area since the last meeting of the Community Council.

**16. Reports of meetings**

The Council has been represented at the following event since its last meeting:

* 18 November 2024 – Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales - Consultation event on the Draft Annual Report – Attended by Andrew Rees.

**Andrew Rees, Clerk to Llanllawddog Community Council**