

LLANPUMSAINT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

We are pleased to present the Annual Report of Llanpumsaint Community Council ('LLCC') for the year ending 31st March 2022.

LLCC is essentially a non-political Council and during the year 2021/22 was comprised of the following 7 Community Councillors, all Llanpumsaint residents:

- Cllr Arwel Nicholas (Chair)
- Cllr Danny Davies (Vice Chair)
- Cllr Elfed Davies
- Cllr Gethin Edwards (resigned 15.09.21)
- Cllr Dylan Jones
- Cllr Pamela Jones
- Cllr Derick Lock

The Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer for the relevant period was Mr Philip Jones.

MEETINGS

LLCC usually holds bi-monthly Council meetings. However, no meetings were held at the start of the year, during the period from 1st April 2021 and 14th September 2021, due to ongoing Covid restrictions. During 2021/22, LLCC met on the following 5 occasions:

Ordinary meeting	15.09.21
Ordinary meeting	10.11.21
Public meeting	30.11.21
Ordinary meeting	05.01.22
Ordinary meeting	09.03.22

BUDGET

LLCC's main source of income is its Precept. The Precept is the amount that Carmarthenshire County Council collects from Llanpumsaint residents as part of its Council Tax arrangements. The Precept in 2021/22 was £8,243.75. For the typical household in Llanpumsaint this amounts to less than £25 per year.

LLCC's main expenditure during 2021/22 was in respect of:

(i)	Clerk's salary	£ 848.20
(ii)	Translation	£ 420.00
(iii)	Street lighting upgrade	£2, 079.00
(iv)	Insurance	£ 311.89
(v)	Llanpumsaint Heritage Walk website	£ 60.00
(vi)	Grant to Wales Air Ambulance charity	£ 100.00

A full breakdown is available in the Annual Accounts for 2021/22.

All councillors waived the annual allowance of £150 each, set by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, as well as any additional entitlements for the Chair. The total remuneration paid to Councillors during 2021/22 was nil.

AUDIT

A dispute between the Clerk and Audit Wales resulted in the issue of a public interest report in October 2021 in relation to a failure to submit annual accounts for audit and certain other governance failings, although the report was clear that there was no evidence of any misappropriation of the Council's finances. The Council held a public meeting in November 2021 to discuss the report and agreed that in order to draw a line under matters and move forwards, the recommendations of the report would be accepted. Since then, the former Clerk has resigned and the Council has appointed a new Acting Clerk and agreed an action plan to address the Audit Wales recommendations.

The Council's accounts for the financial year ending 31st March 2022 (as well as the two previous years) have now been subject to Internal Audit by chartered certified accounts and registered auditors, Ashmole and Co; and have been submitted for external audit by the Auditor General for Wales. Following the conclusion of the external audit, the audited accounts will be published on the Council's website.

KEY OBJECTIVES FOR 2021/22

The year 2021/22 was affected by ongoing Covid restrictions, which meant that the Council's activities and the activities of the organisations it would normally support, were limited.

The main priority for 2021/22 was to successfully resolve the issues raised during the external audit of the Council's accounts by Audit Wales. Although it was unfortunately not possible to resolve matters during 2021/22, significant progress in this regard has been made following the election of the new Council in June 2022.

The Council has continued to fund the upgrade of street lighting in the village, the costs of which represent a significant proportion of the Council's budget.

The Llanpumsaint Heritage Walk website has also been maintained, to attract visitors to the area and give them a flavour of the history of the village.

The Council continues to support organisations and charities benefitting the local community, and this year made a donation towards the essential services provided by Wales Air Ambulance, a charity regularly supported by the Council.

We have also continued to consider various highways concerns and planning applications affecting the village and submitted representations to the Highways Department and the Head of Planning respectively, where appropriate.

BIODIVERSITY

During 2021/22, the Council did not identify any opportunities to maintain and enhance biodiversity within the community, but further consideration is to be given to this in the year ahead.

RELATIONSHIP WITH CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

LLCC's main communication with the County Council was through the (former) County Councillor, Irfon Jones, who attended most of our Community Council meetings.

ASSETS

The Council's assets include the following:

- a) Ty Hers, Gwili Terrace
- b) 4 bus stops
- c) 6 benches
- d) 2 telephone boxes

An updated Asset Register is being compiled.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Council has been notified of no complaints about its councillors conduct, nor any references to the Standards Committee in relation to the conduct of any of its councillors.

TRAINING PLAN

No training was attended in 2021/22, as councillors were approaching the end of their term of office and their focus was on resolving the dispute with Audit Wales and reserving sufficient funds to cover the audit bill. However, since the election of the new Council in June 2022, a new training plan is being developed.

LLCC has resumed its membership of One Voice Wales, which enables its councillors to access a range of training courses to support the effective discharge of the work of the Council.

PRIORITIES

For the forthcoming year, 2022/23, the Council's key priorities will be to:

- Ensure all necessary action has been taken to address the recommendations made by Audit Wales in relation to the Council's governance arrangements.
- Secure induction and other relevant training for all its Councillors.
- Recruit a new Clerk.
- Consider any identified needs within the community and ways for the Council to address these.
- Consider whether there are any opportunities for the Council to maintain and enhance biodiversity within the community.
