

Wednesday, 24th October, 2024

**Minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee of Llandybie Community Council held at the Council offices, High Street, Llandybie and on Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 24th October, 2024 at 6.30 p.m.**

**Present**

**Councillors** ; R. A. Davies, J.W. Tandy, D. Hopkins, , N. C. Davies, A. Evans, L. Wilkins

**Online** ; Mrs K.D.L Davies, D. Thomas, E. J. Davies

**Apologies** ; P.H. Roberts, C. R. Thomas

**527.**

**Declarations of Interest.**

Cllrs R. A. Davies declared that he was a member of Llandybie Tennis Club regarding Item 1 on the agenda referring to budget expenditure on Llandybie Tennis Court.

**To receive apologies for absence**

Apologies received from Cllr P.H. Roberts and Cllr C. R. Thomas

**528.**

**5 Year Asset Management Plan.**

The Clerk opened the discussion by going through the 5 Year Asset Plan he had developed and explained that whilst year one and two were detailed the following years were an aspiration on what he felt were the priorities given the current asset list and the expenditure needed to maintain the assets owned by the council.

He also explained that ‘New Projects’ were there from year three to set in place a forward planning agenda for the Council and he encouraged Councillors to look at their own wards and start to engage on future community projects and spend that they had within their vision for their ward.

(cont)

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5 Year Asset Plan Projections											
Projects	2025 - 26			2026 - 27		2027-28		2028-29		2028 - 29	
	Cost	Grants to be applied for	VAT Claims	Projects	Cost	Projects	Cost	Projects	Cost	Projects	Cost
<b>Community Project from Budget</b>											
Saron Park	15000	5000	3000	Blaenau Park	15000	Derwydd Park	10000	Llandybie Park	10000	Bonilwyn Park	10000
Llandybie Tennis Courts (total project £61,000 inc vat) £51,000 net	32500	18,500	10500	Cwmgwili Park Upgrade	15000	Penybanc	10000	Penygroes	10000	Derwydd Park	10000
CCTV at Saron Park	5000	0	1000			Capel Hendre Park	10000	Gors Ddu	5000		
	<b>48500</b>				<b>30000</b>		<b>30000</b>		<b>25000</b>		
<b>Maintenance of Assets Budget</b>											
Heating System at Llandybie Pavilion	11000	3500	1850	Solar Panels Llandybie Pavilion	5000	Llandybie Pavilion Upgrade of 16 notice boards	5000	To be decided		To be decided	
Shed Roof at Llandybie Pavilion	2000	0	0	Upgrade Offices	3000		10000	To be decided		To be decided	
General	3000	3000	300	Llandybie Toilets	4000						
				Penygroes Toilets	4000						
	<b>16000</b>				<b>16000</b>		<b>15000</b>		<b>16000</b>		<b>16000</b>
<b>Parks and Repairs Budget</b>											
Rubber Overlay at Heol Ddu Park	£2,920.00	0	0	General park maintenance	10000	General park maintenance	10000				
Penygroes											
Gate at Children's Play Area Penygroes Park	£1,425.00	0	0								
Removal of Fence at Capel Hendre Park	£950.00	0	0								
Contribution to Riverway Park Bonilwyn	£5,000.00	0	0								
	<b>£10,295.00</b>		16650		<b>10000</b>		<b>10000</b>		<b>10000</b>		<b>10000</b>
				<b>New projects</b>	<b>15000</b>	<b>New Projects</b>	<b>20000</b>	<b>New Projects</b>	<b>20000</b>	<b>New Projects</b>	<b>25000</b>

The Clerk referred in detail to the 5 Year Asset Management Plan line by line as an explanation of the spend he had included that would impact the next item, the Draft Budget for 2025/26.

Discussion of Budget and Spend on asset projects;

- Saron Park;** The Clerk explained that he had met councillors from each ward at parks and it was clear to him given the spend in recent years on Llandybie and Penygroes Parks that Saron be given priority and recommended £15,000 be budgeted and further explained that it had been confirmed that it was eligible for the Betws Wind Farm Fund and that he would be applying speculatively for £5,000. He further explained he had not included 'to be applied for' grants in the budget as they were not a confirmed income.
- Llandybie Tennis Courts;** The Clerk explained that he had had three quotations and a visit from a contractor in January 2024 to ascertain the cost and a cost of £51,000 plus Vat had been quoted. He also explained that he was getting updated quotes regarding this figure due the length of time since the project was quoted. The Vat implication would be a claim of circa £10,000. He also confirmed he had already secured £18,500 grant funding towards the project.

Cllr N. C. Davies enquired why no grants had been sourced from Tennis Wales and the Clerk confirmed he had looked at this and at a further 7 grants in all and that these grant organisations had confirmed that the project was not eligible for grant support. Tennis Wales was in particular due in part to the fact that our policy was not to charge the precept paying public for use of the courts and as lease holder the 'Sport Live' fund was not for Community Councils who are funded through precept and as Sports Club although Llandybie Tennis Club would be eligible it was not the lease holder of the courts as an asset and a further request for a Joint Bid had been refused. A Sport Live and Carmarthenshire Tennis for All Fund was looked at but

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Llandybie Community Council had not taken part some years earlier as they could not agree to terms to charge for court usage and repayment terms of £1,500 per annum, this fund however, was closed in 2023.

The Clerk confirmed that the need for a new Tennis Surface had now become critical as the damaged surface was retaining water and susceptible to further and ongoing frost damage and had become a breeding space for a chronic moss problem. The courts he noted may need to be closed next season as it would compromise our indemnity if a member of the public slipped on the surface and was injured. He had also been informed by the Tennis Club that they may need to have club nights and matches on neighbouring facilities in Ammanford.

Cllr D. Thomas expressed his view that this was a very expensive use of the precept, Cllr N. C. Davies asked what were the guarantees for the work in terms of the need to re-surface the courts in future years. The Clerk explained that it was not within the guarantee of contractors as they would not be responsible for the level of usage of the courts in the coming years, they had however offered the advice that it was typical to have to recoat the surface after 5 years and they are rarely called out before 10 years to re-lay the surface quoted for.

Cllr R. A. Davies was questioning the cost and shortfall of spend but the Clerk explained there was no shortfall and that the Community would need to outlay the Vat of circa £10,000 but he could as Clerk get that back with a quarterly Vat claim at the end of June to inject into the Income in the 2025/26 budget year.

Cllr R. A. Davies further offered the opinion that the moss problem may not be able to be overcome with the new surface and that the council may be back in the same position sooner than expected. The Clerk replied to this by saying he was not an expert on Tennis Courts and moss prevention but had taken advice from the contractor in terms of prevention on the new surface. He was advised that to clear the site from overhanging trees that limit light on the courts and cause leaves would be a prudent move and regular moss prevention treatment from day one to stop the moss taking hold. He also explained that power washing in the past had damaged the surface and that from now on would be avoided. Cllr R. A. Davies stated that he had been involved with the club as a committee member until last year and no such power washing had taken place, the Clerk offered to note this in the minutes.

Cllr R. A. Davies enquired on how much the Tennis Club were contributing towards the cost of the new courts. The Clerk said that he felt as owners and in effect landlords it was for the Community Council to bare the cost of maintaining the asset. Cllr R. A. Davies explained that in the past the Tennis Club had offered a contribution, Cllr N. C. Davies agreed that they should be at least asked.

Cllr A. J. Evans offered the opinion that the cost was a good investment after learning that the courts were last re-laid over 20 years ago, although the Clerk explained that the courts had been re coated around 5 years ago.

It was **proposed** by Cllr N. C. Davies and **Seconded** by Cllr R. A. Davies that the Clerk write asking the Tennis Club for a contribution.

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The Chair asked for a decision on whether the spend on the Tennis Courts could be included in the budget for 2025/26, this was proposed by Cllr E. J. Davies and Seconded by Cllr N. C. Davies. The Clerk asked for a vote to confirm this and a vote of 8 to 1 in favour was recorded. The budget spend was passed.

- **CCTV Saron Park;** The Clerk explained this spend of £5000 had already been agreed from reserves in 2024/25 but asked that it be agreed in the budget for 2025/26. This was proposed by Cllr N. C. Davies and Seconded by Cllr L Wilkins.
- **Shed Roof at Bowling Green, Llandybie;** The Clerk explained that there had been delay in getting this roof repaired as there was a suspicion of Asbestos and he had asked the County Council to investigate but that a spend of £2000 be budgeted subject to the outcome of the Asbestos investigation.
- **Heating System at Llandybie Pavilion;** The Clerk explained that the cost of the 30 years plus system had meant energy bills were getting very high and asked that £10,000 be budgeted to put in place new electric heaters and the following year 2026/27 Solar Panels be added.

Cllr N. C. Davies felt that this didn't go far enough after the Clerk had explained that an Air Source Heat Pump could be looked at in year 3, Cllr A. J. Evans agreed and this was supported by Cllr D. Thomas and Cllr L. Wilkins.

It was proposed by Cllr N. C. Davies that £20,000 be budgeted subject to the Clerk costing up the system for the 2025/26 budget and investigating grants, this was Seconded by Cllr D. Thomas.

- **Rubber Overlay at Gors Ddu Park;** The Clerk explained that this had been highlighted on a Park Inspection and work needed to be undertaken in the coming year, it was agreed that £2,920 be included in the budget to ensure compliance in the park.
- **Gate at Children's Play Area, Penygroes Park;** The Clerk explained that this would become a compliance issue and it was agreed to include £1,425 in the budget.
- **Removal of Fence at Capel Hendre Park;** The Clerk explained that was needed to offer the opportunity to open out the park for planting and that the chain mail fence was now getting rusty and could start to be a hazard, it was agreed include £950 in the budget for removal of the fence.
- **Contribution to Riverway Park Nr Ddol Y Dderwen;** The Clerk recommended a contribution of £5,000 towards the cost of upgrading the Park that was in fact in Ammanford Town Council's care as an asset, the request at a previous meeting by Cllr A. W. Jones was made as there were approximately 120 properties on the estate which fell, by a quirk of the boundary commission ruling, within Heol Ddu Ward.

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Cllr E. J. Davies and the sitting Chair Cllr J Tandy objected on the grounds that the same could be said for our park in Bonllwyn being close to the boundary with Ammanford and Penybanc Park having the same proximity to Tycroes and it was just a fact that we were awarded precept based on boundaries.

Cllr R. A. Davies wanted it noted that whilst this was the case there was a point in the fact that Ddol Y Derwen residents were using the park, Cllr E. J. Davies, Cllr N. C Davies and sitting Chair Cllr J. Tandy said that the same reasoning could be applied to Bonllwyn residents using Bonllwyn Park or Llandybie residents using Ammanford Park.

It was **proposed** by Cllr N. C. Davies that it not be included in the budget and this was **Seconded** by Cllr E. J. Davies with Cllr E. J. Davies asking the Clerk to explore if it was even acceptable to fund another Community Precept under our Standing Orders or indeed Statutory Powers of a Community Council.

The Clerk concluded the discussion by going through each heading on the 5-year Asset Plan and asked for comments, Cllr D. Thomas said that in the light of a 'New Project' column asking for future ideas, that the Clerk explore the installation of a Zip Wire at Penygroes Park. The Clerk agreed to do this within the coming year and to note it as a request as a project in budget year 2026/27 with an ear mark of £12,000 as indicated by Cllr D. Thomas from initial investigations he had made.

It was **recommendations** that the Clerk update the draft 5 Year Asset Plan to reflect the discussion and add where applicable to the 2025/26 Draft Budget to include the agreed changes and defer to the next Finance Committee in November and then to be offered for **ratification** by full council in the November Ordinary Meeting.

**529.**

**Discussion on Draft Budget for 2025/26.**

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**Cyngor Cymuned Llandybie - Cynnig y gyllideb 2025-26  
Llandybie Community Council - Budget Proposal 2025-26  
DRAFT PROPOSAL  
EXPENDITURE & INCOME**

	Proposal		
	2024-25	2025-26	
	£	£	
Presept	180,000	180,000	Precept
Llog : Lloyds	800	800	Interest: Lloyds
Llog : cyfrifon buddsoddi	250	3,500	Interest: investment accounts
VAT	12,000	24,000	VAT
Section 106	21,750	0	Saron TBD
Grants (Betws Wind Farm Fund)	0	15,000	
Hawliau tramwy	3,000	3,000	Rights of way
Cytundebau llogi	4,700	5,000	Hire Agreements
	<u>222,500</u>	<u>231,300</u>	
Staff	61,864	57,252	Staffing
Adeiladau	22,000	22,000	Premises
Insurance	2,500	3,600	Insurance
Gwasanaethau swyddfa	6,000	7,500	Office Services
Costau Aelodau	15,875	15,000	Member costs
Gwasanaethau a Tanysgrifiadau	6,050	6,050	Services and Subscriptions
Adran 137		0	Section 137
Taliadau dan bwerau eraill		0	Payments under other powers
Mannau agored cyhoeddus		0	Public open spaces
Neuaddau pentref		0	Village halls
Mynwentydd	20,000	20,000	Burial grounds
Hawliau tramwy - cynnal		0	Rights of way - maintenance
Hawliau tramwy - gwella	10,000	5,000	Rights of way - improvement
Toori gwair/sbwriel / cylfcustarau	30,000	31,500	Grass cutting/ litter/ facilities
Agyweirio a ailosod parciau	20,000	11,000	Park repairs and replacement
Goleuadau cyhoeddus - ynni		0	Public lighting - energy
Goleuadau cyhoeddus - gwella	6,000	4,000	Public lighting - improvement
Datblygiad cymunedol	42,000	48,500	Community development
Costau Etholiadau	0	8,000	Election
Toiledau cyhoeddus	14,000	11,200	Public conveniences
Vat	12,000	24,000	VAT
	<u>268,289</u>	<u>274,602</u>	

Llofnodwyd / Signed	Cadeirydd / Chair	Clerc / Clerk
<b>Predicted Budget at March 31st 2025 THIS FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	<b>Actual Budget</b>	<b>Predicted at 31st March 2025</b>
Expenditure	268,289	254,816
Income	222,500	252,160
<b>Budget 2025 - 26</b>	<b>274,602</b>	
Expenditure		
Income	231,300	
<b>Deficit for 2025/26; funding from reserves</b>	<b>2025 - 26</b>	<b>Note</b>
Money to be allocated from reserves	43,302	(30789 Allocated 2024-25)
<b>Additional Budget 2025/26 explanation notes</b>		<b>Notes</b>
<b>Staffing:</b>		
Clerk going from point 30 to point 33 in April 2024 plus	3,275	As per Job Evaluation
Admin Assitant going from point 5 national pay award to point 13 (Allowance for expected 2.5% national pay award included)	1496	As per Job Evaluation
Pension	2,185	NEST Pension 4% Contribution (less than budgetted of 8%)
<b>Grass cutting:</b>		
5% Annual increase in Council Services	1,500	
<b>Parks and Repairs increase of 5%</b>	<b>1,500</b>	
<b>Community Budget</b>		
Increase on last year £6500 due to extra cost of Tennis Courts	6500	
<b>1. Reserves 2025/26 Earmarked</b>		<b>Notes</b>
Parks and Play Areas x 11 parks	150,000	(£150,000 2024-25)
<b>2. Reserve funding of deficit on budget to keep precept at 180k</b>	<b>43,302</b>	(£30,7890 2024-25)
<b>3. General Reserves</b>	<b>63,711</b>	(£70,211 2024-25)

This equates to 4.4 months of precept or 2.8 months of gross budgeted of gross expenditure.

#### 4. Growth in Electorate and Households.

As at Oct 21st 2024 there were 9,403 Electors (9238 as of March 2023)

As at Oct 21st 2024 there were 5,380 Households

#### 5. Predictive balance in the bank at 31st March 2025 **257,013**

NB £277,013 Less £20,000 agreed from Reserves for Caerbyrn Community in January 2025

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The Clerk went through each heading on both income and expenditure explaining the reasoning of why he had set the figures, the discussion points that led to amendments apart from the agreed changes on asset spend from the previous item on the 5 Year Asset Plan were as follows;

- **Precept;** Cllr R. A. Davies felt that after 10 years of not raising the precept that it was now the time to do so, this was agreed by Cllr D. Thomas and sitting Chair Cllr J. Tandy and again via debate concurred with by Cllr E. J. Davies.

Cllr A. J. Evans felt that we should raise the precept by small amounts each year instead of leaving it so long with big hikes in the amount that has already eaten into our reserves that have been propping up the budget, sitting Chair Cllr J. Tandy agreed as did the Chair Cllr D. Hopkins. Sitting Chair Cllr J. Tandy added that these reserves should be used for community benefit projects and asset maintenance.

Cllr R. A. Davies proposed a raise of £10 per household, but Cllr D. Thomas argued that a percentage figure needed to be reached, sitting Chair Cllr J. Tandy felt that this needed further investigation as each household would be different in terms of which council tax band they fell into.

The Clerk requested that he be directed to investigate actual figure for the next Finance Committee, Cllr J. Tandy proposed 7.7% this was seconded by Cllr L. Wilkins.

It was **recommended** that 7.7% increase be accepted and added to the Draft Budget and report back to the next Finance Committee in November 2024.

- **Members costs;** Sitting Chair Cllr J Tandy suggested that the budget be increased to allow an increase in members meeting expenses. He felt that £15.00 per meeting should remain for those attending online, but a higher amount be paid for those attending in person to cover travel costs.

Cllr D. Thomas disagreed as did Cllr K. D. L Davies who felt that the online input given was valid when a busy schedule was being met by those attending online and perhaps travelling expenses could be looked at to recompense the cost of travelling to and from meetings.

Cllr A. J. Evans agreed that by councillors attending online were valuable and travel costs could be looked at.

It was **agreed** that the Clerk look at the impact on the budget of paying travelling expenses to councillors in attendance at meetings and report to the next Finance Committee in November.

**530.**

As there was no further business to discuss, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.47 p.m.

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\_\_\_\_\_ Chair