

LLANPUMSAINT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

We are pleased to present the Annual Report of Llanpumsaint Community Council ('LLCC') for the year 2023/24 (the period running from 1 April 2023 and ending 31 March 2024).

1. Composition of LLCC

LLCC is essentially a non-political Community Council. All members of the outgoing Council stood down and no-one stood for election. In June 2023 a re-election was held: three former Councillors and three new people offered to stand and all were elected unopposed. An eighth person was co-opted during the year.

New Council from June 2022

- Cllr Arwel Nicholas (Chair)
- Cllr Kumi Ariyadasa (Vice Chair)
- Cllr Clare Bishop
- Cllr Dylan Jones
- Cllr Derick Lock
- Cllr Ann Pettitt
- Cllr Felix Merry (co-opted January 2023)
- Cllr Lyn Thomas (co-opted July 2023)

Cllr Kumi Ariyadasa agreed to continue in the role of Acting Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer on a voluntary (unpaid) basis pending the recruitment and appointment of a new Clerk.

A new Clerk was appointed in February 2024, and the council welcomed Mrs Angela Bearman at the 12th March 2024 meeting.

The sub-committees created the previous year remain unchanged and all members agreed to continue in their roles at the AGM. A planning working group is convened as and when required to 'review planning applications and any planning issues relating to the community of Llanpumsaint, make site visits where this is considered appropriate, and prepare any representations to be submitted in response, for approval by the Council.'

Councillor Bishop and Cllr Pettitt continue as the Council's representatives for the One Voice Wales Carmarthen Area Meeting which acts as a forum for exchanging ideas and experiences between Community and Town Councils in the County.

2. Meetings

LLCC holds regular bi-monthly Council meetings on the second Tuesday of every other month. During 2023/24, LLCC met on the following six occasions:

Ordinary meeting	9th May 2023
Annual meeting & Ordinary meeting	11th July 2023
Ordinary meeting	12th September 2023
Ordinary meeting	14th November 2023
Ordinary meeting	9th January 2024
Ordinary meeting	12th March 2024

3. Relationship with Carmarthenshire County Council

LLCC's main communication with the County Council is through County Councillor Bryan Davies. However, due to illness, he was unable to attend the Community Council meetings as regularly as he would have liked. Whilst he is recuperating, LLCC will contact the relevant departments at the County Council directly, keeping Cllr Davies apprised.

Recruitment of a Clerk

A new clerk was appointed in February 2024 and the handover was made at the March meeting. In the interim, the Vice-Chair took on the role of Acting Clerk in a voluntary (unpaid) capacity, and other Councillors had also voluntarily assisted with specific tasks when possible, for all of which the Council is extremely grateful.

Budget

LLCC's main source of income is the Precept. This is the amount that Carmarthenshire County Council collects from Llanpumsaint residents through the Council Tax. The Precept in 2023/24 was £10,106 For the typical household (Band D) in Llanpumsaint this amounts to around £30 per year.

LLCC's main items of expenditure during 2023/24 were:

Translation	715.20
Fees to Wales Audit Office (this included fees for previous years)	1448.00
Street lighting	1792.10
Llanpumsaint Heritage Walk website	60.00
Llanpumsaint Memorial Hall donation	500.00
Llanpumsaint and Nebo Bowling Club donation	500.00
Carmarthen YFC donation	200.00
Welfare and Recreation Committee donation	500.00
Community Events (Coronation and Christmas Tree Event)	462.06

Full details are available in the Annual Return for 2023/24, which is published on the Council's website.

All Councillors waived the annual allowance of £156 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 2023/24 was nil.

4. Assets

The Council's assets were reviewed and valued during 2022 and the Asset Register was updated. The Council's assets include the following:

- Ty Hers, Gwili Terrace
- 4 bus stops
- 6 benches
- 2 telephone boxes
- 30 Street lights (the final upgrading was completed during 2022).
- 2 Noticeboards
- Historical Information Board (outside the hall)

A repairs and maintenance programme is being developed.

5. Standards Committee

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

6. Training Plan

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

The new training plan was reviewed in January 2024. It is published on the Council's website. Councillors have taken up limited opportunities for free training provided by One Voice Wales and attended training courses on the Members' Code of Conduct, employment, planning, community engagement, local government finance and biodiversity duties. A bursary was received from One Voice Wales to contribute towards the training fees.

7. Language policy

Historically, the Council has conducted its business in Welsh and engaged a simultaneous translator for Council meetings. This practice continues with a simultaneous translation

service. However, the Council has agreed that its administrative documents will routinely be produced and published only in English until a bilingual Clerk is appointed.

8. Audit

The Annual Return for 2023/24 has been published on the Council's website, it has been internally audited by Ashmole & Co and submitted to Audit Wales.

9. Biodiversity

The Council's ongoing Biodiversity Plan fulfils its statutory duty to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity, and Cllr Bishop continues to be the Biodiversity Champion. The baseline studies undertaken in 2022 were repeated and expanded in 2023. Seventeen households participated in the RSPB's Garden Bird Watch and their results were aggregated to form a picture of the winter bird population at village level. In the summer of 2023, the survey of meadow flowers covered six locations and the results were uploaded to the Big Meadow Search (a UK, Ireland and Channel Island project developed by Carmarthenshire Meadows Group). The results of both surveys were reported in the village magazine ('Village Voice'). The village participated in a pilot project testing phosphate levels in the Afon Gwili as part of a larger project testing the water quality of the Afon Twyi. The Council-initiated Llanpumsaint Biodiversity Facebook page is proving to be a popular vehicle for over 70 members sharing information about wildlife in the area.

10. Key Activities Undertaken in 2023/24

This has been another busy year for the Council seeking to take the Council forward. All issues regarding Audit Wales mentioned in our 2023 Annual Report have been resolved. However, we are waiting on Audit Wales for the 22/23 Audit Completion.

Graig Junction was the main issue the Council were concerned with over the year. Further information regarding this issue, including the letter received from Bronwydd Council, which concluded the matter, can be found on the Council's website.

A new clerk was appointed in February 2024.

A number of requests for financial assistance were considered and the Council was pleased to approve grants for the Village Hall, Welfare and Recreation, Llanpumsaint and Nebo Bowling Club, and Carmarthenshire Young Farmers Club.

The Council has 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. It has also received reports to keep up to date with relevant policy and practice and put forward views on behalf of the local community, for example, on the new 20mph speed limits introduced by the Welsh Government.

The Council put up a Christmas tree outside the Village Hall again and organised a well-attended lights switch-on and carols event in December 2023. This popular event will be repeated in 2024.

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.

11. Priorities for 2024/25

- Consider any identified needs within the community and ways for the Council to address these within the available resources.
- Continue to develop the biodiversity plan and whether there are any opportunities for the Council to maintain and enhance biodiversity within the community.
- Prepare a repairs and maintenance programme for Council assets to ensure they remain safe and fit for purpose.
- Secure relevant training for all Councillors and the Clerk, in line with the Council's Training Plan.
- Continue to build on improvements to the Council's governance arrangements.