



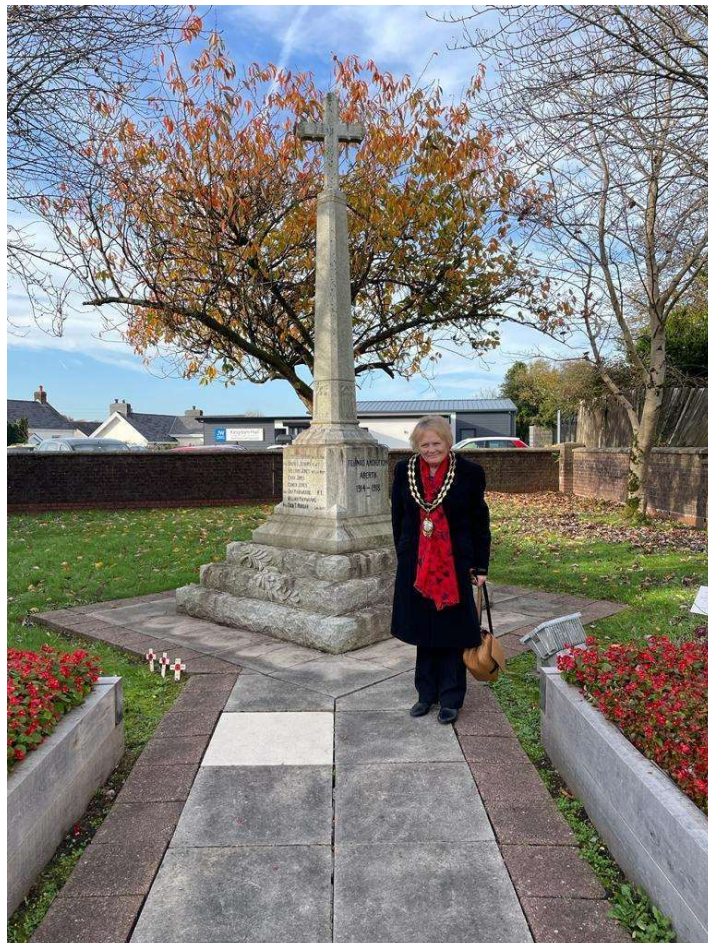
October 2023

October has been a sad month with the passing of former Councillor and Chair, Lesley Williams. Lesley was a very well-respected Councillor. and served the people of Llanon Ward for many years before retiring in 2022. Lesley was extremely passionate about the Welsh heritage and language and cared deeply about the environment.

As the Secretary of the Keep Mynydd Mawr Tidy Group, Lesley organised a regular band of volunteers to tackle the litter within the area. Lesley planted many of the trees that are within Llanon Community Council's recreational areas and was successful in a grant application to purchase more trees last year.

I was very fortunate to work closely with Lesley. A kind, intelligent, caring and knowledgeable lady that I will miss, but remember fondly.

We were very proud to hold Lesley's wake at Tumble Hall following her funeral on Wednesday, 18th October 2023.





October 2023 (continued)

The operations of the Council have continued to keep me busy as I have concentrated on priorities from the Council's Well-being Plan and Community Engagement Policy. I have written a Newsletter and Community Survey which has been reviewed by the Community Engagement, Well-being and Events Committee during a recent workshop.

The Newsletter provides an overview of the Council and "What's On" in Tumble Hall. It advises residents that our Annual Report has been published and how to obtain a copy. It also encourages residents to complete our Community Survey.

The Community Survey is a vital piece of work that will shape the Council's 3-Year Strategy. I intend to present the 3-Year Strategic Plan in November's meeting. Finding out what our residents really want, will assist the Council in calculating budgets and setting future precepts.

Both documents have kindly been translated by the Chair, Cllr. Julie Owen. From recent discussions with residents, we know that they would like information to be delivered to their homes, so a Royal Mail campaign has been booked for the week commencing 30th October 2023. Every household will receive one copy of each document. The Newsletter and Survey will also be published on the Council's website and social media.

To cover the cost of both campaigns, the Finance Committee has recommended creating an additional budget line for "Community Engagement" with £2500 being moved from the Maintenance Budget. Due to the printing and posting deadlines, the spend has been authorised by the Chair and Vice-Chair and delegated to myself to action.

During the second week of October, I attended the SLCC National Conference in Leicestershire with the Deputy-Clerk and Burial Clerk. There were many suppliers at the event who provided some interesting ideas that we may look to incorporate in the future. We attended several workshops, including an interesting session for Welsh Clerks. Once again, there was a focus on bullying and harassment that many Clerks endure and there were some quite harrowing stories shared.

I am the Secretary of the West Wales Branch of the SLCC and Ffion is the Treasurer and I'm delighted to report that we won an award for the largest increase in membership. This certainly put Llannor Community Council on the map in this national event.

I also won a free subscription to Council Hive Hub. This is a new platform developed by Breakthrough Communications which offers support and training in Council communications and compliance. I have e-mailed an introduction into data protection course to all Councillors that might be useful.



Governance and Administration

In addition to October's Full Council meeting, I have also prepared the agendas and relevant paperwork for three Committee meetings and one workshop. The Deputy-Clerk continues to write the minutes of the meetings.

A complaint has been received from a resident of Clos Y Glowyr regarding the security alarm being activated regularly during the night since November 2021. I have checked the stats and the alarm has been activated five times during this period. I have spoken to the resident regarding this and we will monitor the situation.

A complaint has been received from a member of the public who is receiving calls meant for Tumble Hall. All members have been copied into the e-mail trail.

Strategic Development

Tumble Hall is becoming very busy with community groups and classes using the hall every day. Tumble Surgery have recently vaccinated over a thousand people during their flu and covid clinics held at the Hall.

There is an issue with the boiler which required urgent attention (within my delegated authority). New parts have cost £3200, which we hope will be delivered this week.

Y Cwtsh has re-opened, three days a week. Members can use the Community Supermarket once a week and are encouraged to visit on other days to have a cuppa and a chat; enjoy a free bowl of soup and collect "Slow Cooker Packs" (a weekly pack made up with healthy ingredients for a meal that can be cooked in a slow cooker).

The shelter in Parc Y Mynydd Mawr has been removed and the shelter in Tyisha has been repaired. Trees at the rear of Tumble Memorial require urgent attention and that work will be carried out before Remembrance Day.

Through SPF funding, Tumble RFC have secured the services of a consultant to assist with their changing room development. I have attended two initial meetings regarding this and will be meeting with representatives from the Welsh Rugby Union and Football Association of Wales next week. Once they have formulated a plan, I will provide a full update to the Council and members will be invited to attend focus group sessions.



Financial Governance and Accountability

Following the completion of the Internal Audits for 2021-22 and 2022-23, all relevant paperwork was submitted by myself to Audit Wales before the deadline of 30th September 2023. The Annual Returns have been published on the Council's website.

Ffion and I are currently preparing a draft budget for 2023-24 which will be finalised following the results of the Community Survey.

VAT re-claim for 2021-22 and 2022-23 has been submitted and should be refunded shortly. This money will be allocated to the Council's reserves.

Ffion will shortly be submitting the VAT re-claim for 2023-24 to the end of September.

Ffion has ensured that all cashbooks and reconciliations are up to date and have been presented to the Council with a Quarter 2 Finance Report.

We are also investigating bank accounts offering a higher interest rate and will report back with our findings.

During November's meeting the Council will need to discuss the appointment of an Internal Auditor for 2023-24. As Mr Morris of M.I.Morris & Co Ltd has worked so closely with us and diligently reported on 2021-22 and 2022-23, I would recommend that the Council re-appoints Mr Morris for 2023-24. He will then assist with the preparation of financial risk assessments and will meet with the Finance Committee.

Information Management and Information Technology

The Council's phone line and broadband costs have increased and the service provided has been poor. I am currently looking at other suppliers and will report back my findings.

I am also currently obtaining quotations for the development of a new website for the Council which will be presented in November's meeting.

During the SLCC conference we discovered a company offering a software package that would combine all the Council's assets, including the burial records. I have a demonstration planned for this next week.



Estates and Facilities Management

We have received a grant from Andrew Scott Ltd to provide an extra bench in Cross Hands Park. This has been delivered and will be installed next week.

Dog poo bag dispensers have been purchased for Cross Hands Park and Parc Y Mynydd Mawr and will also be installed next week.

Land to the rear of Llanon School - I am still awaiting an outline plan and lease from Carmarthenshire County Council.

Cross Hands Bowls Club – Wish to licence the pavilion. I will be working on this over the next few weeks and will bring this to Council in November.

Upper Tumble Public Cemetery – Wendi will be sending out the new rules to all grave owners. Following this, notices will be put up in the cemetery advising we will be removing any items such as vases positioned in areas outside of the rules. Roger continues to inspect the headstones.

Paul is continuing to work on an outline plan for sport to return to Cross Hands Park.

De-fibrillators – Mrs Mills of Llwynteg has collected £550 from local residents to purchase a cabinet to hold a de-fibrillator in the village. She is requesting the Council purchase the de-fibrillator at a cost of £999. I have also secured a grant for a de-fibrillator for Y Cwtsh, the Council just needs to purchase a cabinet.

The Finance Committee has recommended an additional budget line is created “DeFibrillators” and £1549.00 is transferred from the Oil budget to cover this purchase.

AGENDA ITEM 16 – It is for the Council to decide whether they are in agreement to the purchase of a de-fibrillator for Llwynteg at a cost of £999 and a cabinet for Y Cwtsh at a cost of £550.

Repairs required to Tumble playground:

- Cut back of carpet surfaces to expose ground plates on posts.
- Excavate loose Tarmac and install concrete pad underground plates.
- Re-bolt ground plates with new bolts
- Repair carpet around posts



We have contacted several companies to quote for repair work and have only received a quotation from Dragon Play which is for £2800.00 plus VAT. The costs would come out of the Council's maintenance and repair budget.

AGENDA ITEM 20 – It is for the Council to decide whether these repairs are authorised at a cost of £2800.00 plus VAT.

Communication

I have published the Council's Annual Report 2022-23 on the website and have advertised this on social media. As previously mentioned, residents will also be notified of this through the Council's Newsletter.

I have met with a resident of Park Place regarding issues surrounding parking and congestion.

The Chair, Vice-Chair and I met with two residents of Penparc to discuss some issues raised during the public meeting held to discuss the Safer Routes in Communities Scheme.

I continue to update the Council website and social media platforms.

I have communicated the Tumble Active Travel meeting to be held at Tumble Hall from 6-8pm on Thursday, 26th October 2023 to over fifty stakeholders.

I am currently making the final plans for the Remembrance Day services to be held at Tumble Memorial Garden and Cross Hands Memorial Garden.

I will also be arranging and attending the "Meet Your Local Councillor" Session on 4th November 2023 at Tumble Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 18 - Chris Bowkett has been disqualified as a Councillor due to nonattendance for six months. The Notice of Vacancy has been displayed in the Council noticeboards and I have published it on the Council website and social media. The Newsletter also informs residents of the vacancy. This is for information only during the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 17 – An e-mail has been circulated to all Councillors with One Voice Wales Training Dates for October, November and December. This is for information only during the meeting.



Health and Safety

The staff are currently updating all Health and Safety policies and procedures.

Project Management

During November I will be completing the Landfill Disposal Tax Communities Scheme Grant Application for Y Graig.

Training has been arranged on 9th November 2023 with Dolen Teifi in preparation of the new mini-bus for those who expressed an interest.

Equality and Diversity

The Council is now an accredited Living Wage Employer and I will be using marketing materials to advertise this.

A new interpreter, Lynwen Davies, has been employed to translate from Welsh to English for all future Full Council Meetings.

People Management

I have reviewed the staffing structure, in line with the current needs of the Council, which will be discussed by the Personnel Committee this week.

I have carried out three appraisals and the rest will take place during the first two weeks of November.

Personal Development

Due to the workload over the past two years, I have been unable to submit my CiLCA portfolio. I have re-registered to submit my work which is marked on a module-by-module basis, with each marking process taking around three weeks.

There are five modules which are made up of thirty learning outcomes so I hope to submit all my work by the end of this Council year.

I have arranged and will be attending the next SLCC West Wales Branch Meeting on 7th November 2023. I have invited the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, Michelle Morris to attend so it should be an insightful meeting.

I will also be attending the One Voice Wales/SLCC Virtual conference on Wednesday, November 8th 2023.

Mrs Clare Hope (Clerk to the Council)
25th October 2023