

Cyngor Cymuned Llannon Community Council



**Minutes of the Finance Committee of
Llannon Community Council
Monday 12th February at 13:30
Held remotely via Zoom.**

Meeting commenced at 13:30

The Chair of the Committee, Cllr. Sarah Stewart presided over the meeting.

Minute No. 17 – Members Present.

Cllr. S. Stewart (SS)
Cllr. L Davies (LD)
Cllr. J. Owen (JO)
Cllr. R. Lloyd Davies (RLD)

Also Present:

Mrs. C. V. Hope – Clerk (CH)

Minute No. 18 – Apologies and reasons for absence.

Cllr. Nigel Thomas - Holiday

Minute No. 19 – Declarations of Interests.

There were no new declarations of interests.

Minute No. 20 – To consider a draft budget for 2024-25.

It was noted that the Clerk had previously circulated the prospective budget document to all Members.

The Clerk explained that she had written the document to provide Members and residents with a detailed understanding of the recommended budget, and it contains a full breakdown of expected income and expenditure.

The Clerk explained the expected income to the Committee in detail as follows.

Income Expected

LINE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT £	REASON
1	BANK INTEREST	500.00	We have received more interest than originally anticipated in 2023-24 so have increased this budget for 2024-25.
2	CEMETERY FEES	15,000.00	Cemetery fees income is much higher than anticipated for 2023-24 due to the car accident that required substantial works. The insurance company paid the claim directly to LICC and we had to pay the contractors. This is reflected in the additional expenditure Line 27.
3	OTHER GRANT INCOME	10,000.00	The budget set for 2023-24 was higher as we were expecting to manage funds ourselves from the Household Food Poverty Fund. CCC altered the scheme so food could be ordered directly from Castell Howell. We expect to source a minimum of £10,000.00 in grant funding during 2024-25 to support our community engagement projects.
4	SECTION 106	-	Due to the successful application for £45,000 Section 106 monies in 2023-24 this line was added to account for the money once received. There are currently no active S106 pots within the Llannon Ward so we cannot budget for this going forward.
5	VAT REFUND	10,000.00	We are currently still awaiting a substantial VAT refund of approximately £90,000. A large portion of this was the VAT we had to pay for Cross Hands Playground. We have faced huge difficulties in accessing the Council's HMRC account as it was registered to the wrong address by the previous administration and markers had been placed on the account. HMRC have now carried out all their security checks and we have started to upload the outstanding claims. We anticipate this money will be received by the end of the 2023-24 financial year, which will replenish the reserves.

6	ROOM HIRE	15,000.00	Room hire at Tumble Hall has been busier than originally anticipated due to Lloyds Bank booking the library weekly and Hwb Bach Y Wlad booking the library every two weeks. We therefore anticipate a higher level of income for 2024-25 as reflected in the budget.
7	BAR SALES	15,000.00	This budget remains the same based on the number of bookings we have for 2024-25.
8	THEATRE INCOME/EVENTS	3,500.00	This budget remains the same based on the number of bookings we have for 2024-25.
9	FOOTPATHS	1,151.70	This budget remains the same as this is an annual SLA with figures already agreed.
10	TUMBLE UNITED AFC FEES	2,200.00	This figure has increased slightly as last year's invoice was pro-rata due to the date the lease was completed. This year's invoice will be for a full year.
11	Y CWTSH ROOM HIRE	2,000.00	Tumble Family Centre will continue to source grant funding to pay a contribution towards Y Cwtsh room hire. At this time it is more difficult for them to source funding as they do not have their own dedicated space.
12	Y CWTSH FINANCIAL DONATIONS	5,000.00	This budget heading remains the same. We have been fortunate to receive donations from the chapel and Dunbia that we were not anticipating. The remaining income is the donations members make towards their food.
13	Y CWTSH GRANTS	5,000.00	We intend to apply for at least £5000 of additional funding for Y Cwtsh during 2024-25 and these funding pots may require match funding.
14	PLAYGROUND INSPECTIONS	5,000.00	We currently employ two fully trained playground inspectors and have explored the opportunity of carrying out playground inspections for other local councils. An agreement has now been reached for 2024-25 with Llandybie Community Council so we are pleased that this will be an additional source of income.
15	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & WELLBEING	7,500.00	We anticipate that Cinio a Chlonc will generate a small income which will assist in subsidising the project. We also intend to apply for grant funding which may require match funding.
16	SSE REFUND	-	SSE refund is for the solar panels on the roof of Tumble Hall. The refund is received every three years so will not reflect in the 2024-25 budget.

The Clerk explained the expected expenditure in detail to the Committee.

Expenditure Expected

LINE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT £	REASON
1	SALARIES	294,000.00	5% increase to account for National Pay Award increase from 1 st April 2024. Salary payments are £222,000 for the ten permanent staff employed plus a budget to allow for casual staff. The rest of the budget is for pensions and NI contributions.
2	STAFF EXPENSES	1,000.00	Small budget to cover any additional expenses,
3	POSTAGE	25.00	Token amount as we still have many stamps.
4	WFH COUNCILLORS ALLOWANCE	1,398.48	This is a mandatory allowance that must be budgeted for.
5	COUNCILLORS REIMBURSEMENT OF CONSUMABLES	780.00	This is a mandatory allowance that must be budgeted for.
6	CHAIR'S CIVIC ALLOWANCE	1,500.00	The role of Chair may require attendance at Civic Ceremonies. The Chair may also choose to support good causes of their choice.
7	CHAIR'S PAYMENT	1,500.00	Members resolved to accept this allowance in accordance with IRPW recommendations.
8	VICE CHAIR'S PAYMENT	500.00	Members resolved to accept this allowance in accordance with IRPW recommendations.
9	COUNCILLORS FINANCIAL LOSS PAYMENT	1,000.00	Members resolved to accept this allowance in accordance with IRPW recommendations.
10	COUNCILLORS CARE/PA ALLOWANCE	1,000.00	This is a mandatory allowance that must be budgeted for.
11	COUNCILLORS SENIOR ROLE ALLOWANCE	1,500.00	Members resolved to accept this allowance in accordance with IRPW recommendations.
12	AUDIT FEES	3,000.00	Audit Fees must be paid to the Internal Auditor and the External Auditor (Audit Wales). We are yet to receive an invoice from Audit Wales for 2021-22 and 2022-23.
13	PROFESSIONAL FEES	10,000.00	In 2020, the Council resolved to employ the services of an external HR company for a five-year period. This costs just under £5,000 per year. The remainder of the fees have been budgeted for tree surveys and

			the instruction of a solicitor to complete the asset transfer of Cross Hands Park and the land to the rear of Llannon School.
14	BANK CHARGES	350.00	The Council pay small amounts of bank charges on our four bank accounts each year.
15	IT EQUIPMENT	1,000.00	We do not anticipate any further purchases of IT equipment; however, a small budget allocated if any replacements are required as three laptops are now out of warranty.
16	CARD MACHINE CHARGES	1,000.00	Card machine charges are a necessity and we are currently fixed in a three-year contract with Lloyds.
17	EPOS NOW	840.00	The rental for the tills was agreed during 2022-23 and continues as this is also part of a three-year contract.
18	STATIONERY	500.00	Small budget for stationery costs that might be required throughout the year.
19	SUBSCRIPTIONS	9,000.00	This budget includes membership of One Voice Wales and the SLCC. Monthly Zoom Membership; Mailchimp; Canva Account; 1&1 internet for e-mail and security; Microsoft licenses for laptops; Edge IT Cemetery Software.
20	PAYROLL FEES	1,200.00	Carmarthenshire County Council administer payroll on our behalf. They pay all staff members, HMRC and the Dyfed Pension Fund then invoice the Council for payment.
21	COPIER EXPENSES	-	This is included in the stationery budget going forward.
22	WELSH LANGUAGE TRANSLATION	1,000.00	Welsh translation at meetings in accordance with the Council's Welsh Language Scheme. There have been significant savings in document translation as the Chair and Vice-Chair now do this.
23	WEBSITE	1,000.00	The Council is aware that the website requires a complete transformation but it must still comply with its main function which is to publish statutory information. The Clerk has obtained quotations to develop a new website and this will be brought to Council at the end of February and has been accounted for in 2023-24 finances. The requirement for a budget in 2024-25 will be for ongoing support.
24	Y CWTSH	1,000.00	Tumble United AFC and Tumble Family Centre's fees cover the utility costs of the building. The Clerk pays for the broadband herself as an ongoing donation. Due to the funding, we have secured through the

			Household Food Poverty Fund and donations, Y Cwtsh is self-sufficient, however, a small budget has been allocated for any minor repair work that might be needed throughout the year.
25	PLAYGROUND	7,500.00	Tumble Playground requires repairs that the Council have agreed to carry out and this will need to come out of the 2024-25 budget.
26	INSURANCE	8,000.00	The Council must have public liability insurance, indemnity insurance for Staff and Councillors and insurance to cover buildings, contents and vehicles. We anticipate a combined figure of around £8000 will be required for 2024-25.
27	CEMETERY	1,000.00	This budget is to cover new signage required at the cemetery.
28	EQUIPMENT	2,500.00	The Maintenance Team now have all of the equipment they need to carry out the tasks required of them. A small budget has been allocated in the event repairs/replacement of hand-held equipment e.g. brushcutters (£850 each) are required.
29	ELECTRICITY	10,000.00	This budget is to cover electricity usage at Tumble Hall; Tumble Cemetery; Parc Y Mynydd Mawr and Cross Hands Park. Due to the fluctuating costs of utilities, this budget for 2024-25 is reasonable but will have to be monitored closely.
30	COUNCIL TAX/BUSINESS RATES	4,000.00	Must be paid for Tumble Hall and the Cemetery so must be included in the 2024-25 budget.
31	WASTE COLLECTION	8,000.00	This budget has been based on the current year to date spend.
32	FUEL	5,000.00	This budget covers fuel for both Council vans and all the maintenance equipment including: three John Deere ride-on mowers; push mowers; brushcutters; strimmers; leaf blowers; power washers. This is a reasonable budget considering the vast open spaces the Maintenance Team look after.
33	ADVERTISING	1,000.00	A small budget for advertising has been allocated.
34	FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE DONATIONS	4,000.00	The Council has a Financial Assistance policy in place allowing local groups and organisations to request monetary assistance. This figure is based on the requests we expect to receive during 2024-25.

35	FOOTWAY LIGHTING	3,000.00	The Council is responsible for over one hundred streetlights across the ward and these are the annual charges paid to CCC.
36	TRACKER	175.00	This is for the tracker on the Council owned van.
37	TAX – VEHICLE	400.00	Annual tax for the Council owned van.
38	VAN	7,500.00	This budget includes the lease of the second van and any servicing/repairs/tyres etc required to both vehicles.
39	HIRE OF EQUIPMENT	14,000.00	This budget includes monthly charges for the Hire Purchase of two John Deere Ride-On Mowers.
40	TRAINING & CONFERENCES	7,500.00	The Council resolved to adopt this budget for 2024-25 as part of our statutory requirement to produce a Training & Development Plan.
41	HALL ACTIVITIES & SUPPLIES	-	This will be considered by the Hall Committee for 2024-25.
42	THEATRE EXPENDITURE/EVENTS	1,000.00	Events that are arranged at the Hall may require an initial outlay so this budget is to cover these items but this should balance within the income section.
43	CHRISTMAS	1,000.00	A small budget to cover the purchase of four Christmas trees and any replacement lighting that might be required.
44	CHRISTMAS FOOD HAMPERS	1,278.39	This money is carried over from a grant secured during the Covid-19 pandemic. Items will be purchased and distributed through Y Cwtsh.
45	TELEPHONES & BROADBAND	2,000.00	This budget is based on savings that can be made by changing supplier for the phone line. We are tied in to a five-year contract for the broadband so are unable to make any savings there.
46	CLEANING MATERIALS	1,500.00	Cleaning materials are required for Tumble Hall and the toilets at Tumble Cemetery.
47	HYGIENE SERVICES	1,000.00	Sanitary bins must be emptied professionally and pest control must be carried out professionally so this budget covers these items.
48	PORTALOO HIRE	6,000.00	This budget is to cover the Portaloo hire at Cross Hands Park and Parc Y Mynydd Mawr in response to requests from residents.
49	MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS	28,000.00	This budget covers ALL materials, repairs and outside contract works that might be required throughout the year to any of the Council's considerable outside areas and buildings.

50	OIL	5,000.00	This budget is to cover oil usage at Tumble Hall. Due to the fluctuating costs of utilities, this budget for 2024-25 is reasonable but will have to be monitored closely.
51	WATER	3,000.00	This budget is to cover water usage at Tumble Hall; Tumble Cemetery; Parc Y Mynydd Mawr and Cross Hands Park.
52	SECURITY/CCTV	1,500.00	This budget is to cover the annual service charges of the six CCTV systems operated by the Council.
53	BAR BEVERAGES	6,000.00	This budget is to cover the purchase of bar beverages. Since draft products are no longer used, wastage due to line cleaning and kegs going out of date has been eliminated.
54	STOCKTAKER	200.00	The stock take will take place at the end of March and must be budgeted for.
55	BAR OTHER SUPPLIES	-	This will be considered under the Hall Committee Budget going forward.
56	BAR LICENSING	200.00	Must be paid annually.
57	GAS	2,000.00	This budget is to cover gas usage at Tumble Hall and Parc Y Mynydd Mawr. Due to the fluctuating costs of utilities, this budget for 2024-25 is reasonable but will have to be monitored closely.
58	LAUNDRY	1,200.00	Events held at the Hall often require the use of tablecloths requiring laundering and ironing so we must have a budget to show the expenditure. The expenses are reflected in Hall hire charges.
59	ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE BUDGET	5,000.00	To fulfil Section 6 Duties a budget is required.
60	HALL COMMITTEE BUDGET	1,000.00	A small budget to consider items required for the bar and hall.
61	CROSS HANDS PARK	-	The playground is complete so there is no requirement to set aside a budget for this in 2024-25.
62	ELECTIONS	10,000.00	There were by-elections held in Tumble and Cross Hands this year which must be paid for. We will not receive an invoice until the 2024-25 financial year and expect to have to use the elections reserve in addition to meet these invoices.
63	FUTURE PROJECT CONSIDERATION	50,000.00	A detailed explanation has been provided earlier in this document regarding future projects. A pot of money to match fund any future projects is therefore essential.

64	DE-FIBRILLATOR	-	No need to budget for 2024-25 as purchases will have been made within the 2023-24 budget.
65	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & WELL-BEING	20,000.00	An explanation has been provided earlier in this document regarding ideas for community engagement and the Council's Well-being objectives are published on our website. This budget will also include the publication of future newsletters.

The Clerk advised the Committee that earlier in the day the Personnel Committee met and discussed the staffing budget. Although there are concerns that no provision has been made for a Hall Manager, they agreed to keep the existing staffing structure for now and only allow for a 5% increase to consider the National Pay Award and rises in the National Living Wage. The Personnel Committee agreed to recommend the staffing budget of £294,000.00 for 2024-25.

The Clerk noted that the Assets Committee had also met earlier in the day and discussed in detail, the improvements required to the Council's assets. The Assets Committee agreed that in order to apply for future funding and make improvements to the recreational facilities a budget of £50,000 was required for "Future Projects."

The Clerk advised that the Community Engagement, Well-being and Events Committee had also met and discussed their budget in detail. The Committee agreed that helping to tackle loneliness and isolation within the Llannon Ward and supporting a community transport scheme with the addition of Dolen Teifi's new minibus was important. LICC will be establishing a Luncheon Club from April. The Committee acknowledged that many residents would like a newsletter to be delivered to their homes, so this must be considered. The Committee agreed that a budget of £20,000 was required.

The Clerk explained that despite the 5% increase for staffing costs, cuts have been made throughout the budget and the only additional expenditure requested was for Future Projects and Community Engagement, Well-being & Events. Without these two budget headings, there would actually be a small decrease in the precept requested.

The Clerk reminded the Committee that LICC has invested significantly in the community with the installation of three, new playgrounds over the past four

years. The money has not been replaced and the Section 106 funding of £50,000 that the Council paid upfront because they thought they could claim it back afterwards (as advised by previous staff) for Llannon Park, cannot be claimed as the playground has already been installed and the funding cannot be applied for retrospectively.

The Clerk explained that grant funders often look to support projects where a match fund is offered but there has been no additional funding available from LICC to match fund any additional projects in 2023-24.

The Clerk explained that the document details the potential for Parc Y Mynydd Mawr, which will require match funding.

The Clerk also reminded the Committee that she is working with Tennis Wales with the prospect of upgrading the tennis courts in Cross Hands Park. LICC are currently on the waiting list but if our application is moved up, this project will require match funding.

The Clerk stated that the changing rooms in Cross Hands Park are in a dangerous state and there is still a £35k maintenance grant waiting to be claimed from Carmarthenshire County Council who require a masterplan of the site from LICC before they will release the funds. The Clerk explained that it is essential there is money available to produce the masterplan.

The Clerk would also like to source funding opportunities for upgrades of the footpaths and playgrounds in Y Graig and Tirwaun Park and these are also likely to require a match fund.

The Clerk noted that there was a huge amount that can be achieved to make the improvements that residents want but without any additional funding this would be extremely difficult and LICC has already lost out on funding opportunities as we have been unable to offer a match fund.

The Committee discussed the recommendation. It was agreed that no further cuts could be made from any other budget headings so discussion focussed on "Future Projects" and "Community Engagement, Well-being & Events."

The Committee agreed that LICC must consider our responsibilities for the environment, green spaces and recreation while addressing the loneliness and isolation felt by residents following the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Committee also agreed that LICC must deliver services which have the greatest impact on their future health and well-being of the residents of Llannon Ward.

The Committee agreed to recommend the budget requirements as presented.

Minute No. 21 – To consider the precept request for 2024-25.

The Clerk reminded the Committee that any precept requested is held by Carmarthenshire County Council and received by Llannon Community Council over three payments during the year:

- End of April;
- End of August and
- End of December.

General reserves may be used in between these payments to assist with cash flow, especially during the first two quarters of the year where expenditure tends to be greater. These reserves are replenished from the precept payments throughout the financial year.

In order to meet the requirements of the agreed budget for 2024-25, the Finance Committee recommend a precept request of £468,386.69. This is a rise of 66p per week in the local element for residents that live in Band D properties.

Residents living in Bands A, B and C will pay less, some residents might also be eligible for a reduction in their council tax.

Minute No. 22 – To consider the reserve levels for 2024-25.

The Clerk advised the Finance Committee that General Reserves are very low and recommended reserves for a Council of this size would be at least £119,000, they are currently £75,000.

The Finance Committee agreed that the General Reserves should remain the same as they were in 2023-24 and felt that LICC cannot justify further increases in the Precept knowing the impact this would have on residents' finances.

Consideration was also made for Earmarked Reserves, which currently only cover a small election cost of £3703.64.

The Clerk reminded the Committee that Earmarked Reserves originally contained £90,000, allocated to Cross Hands Playground which has now been spent. The Committee agreed that replenishing this will be a slow process over a number of years.

The recommended reserves for 2024-25 were agreed as:

General Reserves: £75,000.00
Earmarked Reserves: £ 3,703.64

The Chair closed the meeting at 14;30

Signed Date

(Chair)

DRAFT