

Statement by Ammanford Town Council on the future of the Town Hall.

Carmarthenshire County Council have released a statement regarding the future of Ammanford Town Hall. Ammanford Town Council was informed of the proposed development of the Town Hall into social housing in a meeting on the 11th of December and discussed our options in our Extraordinary meeting on the 16th of December. The proposal by the County Council is that the town council will be moved to the Aman Centre, which needs significant repair.

Our position

Following a discussion between members this week, the Town Council opposes this proposal and a move to the Aman Centre. We have been informed of the County Council's proposal very recently, and we have not agreed to any move or given our approval for any changes to the Town Hall.

The County Council inherited the Town Hall from Dinefwr Borough and Dyfed, and in our view, it belongs to the people of Ammanford. A move to the Aman Centre would also involve significant costs and disruption to our work, just as we have turned a corner on our financial and governance issues. We want to be concentrating on improving parks and the general feel of Ammanford, not moving to a building that is not currently fit for any business activity.

At no point have we been offered the lease or opportunity to take charge of the Town Hall, which has been slowly vacated by the County Council over the last few years.

Social Housing

We support more social housing in Ammanford, and believe there are several sites that could be used for this purpose. There are empty buildings around Ammanford including the Aman centre, Barclays, and Lloyds bank and an empty vestry with a large plot of land surrounding it behind Shoppers World Baptist lane. The County should buy back former social housing or similar properties that are on the market.

Consultation

Due to the lack of dialogue until recently, we would welcome a full public consultation, led by the County Council, to hear the views of the public in Ammanford.

We are concerned that once again Ammanford is being treated differently to the other towns in Carmarthenshire. As the third largest town in Carmarthenshire we should have a Town Hall that is fit for purpose and that people can take pride in. We urge Carmarthenshire County Council to consult and look at options of investing in the Town Hall as the civic centre, making it a community and business hub with Ammanford Town Council as the lead tenant.

Diolch,

Mayor Heulwen Howells and Deputy Mayor Calum Higgins, on behalf of Ammanford Town Council Members.