

Ammanford Town Council
Cyngor Tref Rhydaman



**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of Ammanford Town Council
held on 24th February 2025 via MS Teams**

Meeting commenced at 18:00

The Mayor, Cllr. Heulwen Howells presided over the meeting.

Minute no.138 - Members Present:

Cllr. Heulwen Howells (Mayor)
Cllr. Calum Higgins (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr. Anthony Jones
Cllr. Johnny Owen
Cllr. Deian Harries
Cllr. Emyr John
Cllr. Nigel Morgan
Cllr. Colin Evans
Cllr. Wayne Erasmus
Cllr. Clare Hope

Also Present:

Mrs Sara Murray (Interim Clerk)
Ms Jayne Grazette (RFO)
Geena Ware – Connecting Carmarthenshire

Minute no.139 - Apologies for absence

Cllr. Ll. Davies – Bereavement

Minute no.140 - Declarations of Interest

No new declarations

Minute no.141 - Matters arising from the Public

Geena Ware from Connecting Carmarthenshire spoke briefly about the work that her organisation undertakes in the community. The interim Clerk advised that she would contact her to arrange for Geena to speak to the Council in more detail at a future meeting.

The Mayor then spoke to move straight to agenda point 8 in order that the business of the budget & precept could be dealt with. The Mayor also reminded the Councillors of the Standing Orders and the rules to be followed when partaking in meetings.

Minute no.142 – To discuss the recommended budget for the 2025-26 Financial Year

The interim Clerk confirmed that all documentation had been circulated to members via email prior to the meeting. The RFO presented the 2025-26 Budget, Reserves and Precept levels to the full council for consideration.

The Chair of the Finance Committee explained that the Council are still playing catch-up due to there being a minimal or no precept increase historically.

Cllr. Higgins also identified that the budget does not take into account any provision for legal or storage costs should they be required due to the relocation of the Town Council from the Town Hall.

Cllr. Higgins proposed that the draft budget be accepted as proposed. He asked Councillors to provide recommendations of where adjustments could be made if they wanted an increase or decrease.

The draft budget was discussed in detail by Council along with the precept to be charged.

The RFO clarified for Council that the recommended levels of general reserves held should be a third of its precept.

Cllr. Erasmus addressed the Mayor and requested that his following statement be minuted: "According to the Wales Precept Act 1995, the Council's budget cannot be bigger than its precept."

Cllr. Hope also requested to have it minuted that: "Cllr. Erasmus' above statement is incorrect."

Resolved that the budget for the 2025-26 Financial Year is accepted as £520,451.25.

Minute no.143 – To discuss the recommended precept required for the 2025-26 Financial Year

Resolved that the precept for the 2025-26 financial year should be a sum of £471,064.27

This represents a 18.46% increase in the precept.

Cllr Hope suffered with IT issues and did not partake in the above voting of Minute no.142 - budget setting or Minute no.143 – agreeing the precept.

Cllr Hope was not part of the meeting between 18:51 and 18:52. She lost signal again at 18:53 and re-joined the meeting at 18:57.

Minute no.144 – To discuss the recommended reserves required for the 2025-26 Financial Year

Reserves were discussed by Council and the RFO confirmed that the amount as of 31st January 2025 is at a healthy level of £194,199.63. The RFO explained that in April the Council will need to consider earmarking some of this money.

Resolved that the Council accepts the level of Reserves as at 31st January 2025 as £194,199.63.

Minute no.145 – To receive & approve the Cashbooks for January 2025

The interim Clerk confirmed that all documentation had been circulated to members via email prior to the meeting. The account balances as at 31st January 2025 are:

Reserve account ending 8573 - £1407.02

Reserve account ending 9522 - £192,672.19

Reserve account ending 4785 - £127.24

Current account ending 9514 - £192,713.51

Current account ending 1307 - £211.87

Resolved that the cashbooks for January 2025 are received and approved by Council.

Minute no.146 – To agree to the re-instatement of an Asset Management, Planning & Environmental Committee

The interim Clerk advised Council that there is a considerable amount of work needed in relation to its assets which includes refurbishment of playgrounds, general maintenance and future projects. The Council's statutory obligations such as producing a Section 6 Biodiversity Report are still required. Terms of Reference will need to be agreed.

Resolved that an Asset Management, Planning & Environmental Committee be re-instated.

Resolved that the members of the Committee will be: Cllr. Heulwen Howells, Cllr. Calum Higgins, Cllr. Emyr John, Cllr. Colin Evans, Cllr. Johnny Owen, Cllr. Deian Harries and Cllr. Anthony Jones.

Resolved that the Terms of Reference for the committee be deferred.

Minute no.147 – To consider the request for a financial contribution towards a St. David's Day Event organised by Menter Dinefwr

The interim Clerk informed Council that Menter Dinefwr were requesting the amount of £575.00 for the event. £550 is for the event's entertainment and £25 is for the purchase of a trophy as they have organised a competition amongst local business' to decorate their windows.

The interim Clerk advised Council that Menter Dinefwr were including the Town Council's logo on their advertising of the event.

Resolved that the council agree to the request and approve a donation of £575.00 to Menter Dinefwr.

Minute no.148 – To discuss and consider a Civic Service of Celebration for the 80th anniversary of VE Day

The interim Clerk informed Council that she had been contacted by Major Kenneth Burton of the Royal British Legion to discuss plans for an event to celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day. Major Burton had already been in contact with Rev. Ali Reeves of All Saints Church who is happy to be involved. Their suggestion is to hold a civic service of celebration on Sunday 4th May which would involve a service at All Saints Church followed by a picnic in the park.

Councillors discussed the suggestion and were wholly in agreement that the Town needed to celebrate this event. A suggestion was made including the possibility of holding the event on Monday 5th May as this is a bank holiday and having a family fun day in the park. The RFO confirmed that there were funds available subject to the costs involved.

Resolved that the Council are happy to support this event and that the interim Clerk will liaise with Major Burton & Rev. Ali to finalise plans, she will also obtain costs in relation to a funday and report back to Council.

Minute no.146 – Planning Applications

PL/08809 – Full planning permission: Former English Congregational Church, Iscennen Road, Ammanford, SA18 3BG Change of use from a former church to a dwelling with family annexe from D1 to C3

PL/08801 - Householder planning permission: 2 Wern Ddu Road, Ammanford, SA18 2NE Outbuilding

Both applications were noted by Council. No comments made.

Minute no.147 – Mayor's Report

Minutes of the meeting with CCC officers circulated to councillors.

Minute no.148 – County Councillor's Report

Cllr. Harries provided a verbal update which included a meeting with the police regarding recent car thefts/break-ins in the area.

A written update was provided to the Clerk which included the police also reported that older children are using the playground late at night and have become abusive towards the police when being asked to move on.

There has been an enquiry from a member of the public regarding the replacement of benches around the park – this has been raised with the Clerk.

The funeral of local war veteran Neville Bowen took place last week, he passed away at the age of 102. Neville was highly decorated during his service with the Navy and went on to live a full life to the very end – he recently opened the new Hazbeans in Ammanford Town Centre. He will be greatly missed by all.

Minute no.149 – Clerk’s Report

Clerk to circulate to Councillors.

Minute no.150 – Confirmation of the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 27th January 2025

Cllr. John requested that any required amendments to previous minutes be recorded for reference.

Resolved that the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 27th January 2025 are a true record.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 19:46

Signed (Chair)

Date