Public Participation – Ammanford Town Council – 24 October 2022

Looking at tonight's Agenda it seems quite fitting that Wicksteed Leisure are presenting.

In 2017 I wanted to know that my child was safe playing in Ammanford Park. A tip-off from Ammanford Police led me to discover that the £17,000 ATC had spent on CCTV (but VAT not recovered) didn't work when needed - due to leaves on the trees.

A secondary question I had was if my livelihood was going to be nuked by Carmarthenshire County Council spending £130,000 of our money to move the newly installed fibre cabinet 4 metres along Margaret Street - dreaming up the idea at the very end of a very public nine-month build and commissioning process.

I was stonewalled by ATC. The lady at One Voice Wales literally laughed in my face on the doorstep in College Street. And down the rabbit-hole I went.

It was easier for me to find out how the Town's forefathers had dealt with cholera in Iscennen Road a hundred years earlier than it was to find current, statutory, information about the Council. Both Welsh Government and Public Services Ombudsman for Wales staff suggested I tip-off the local press rather than spin my wheels.

At the last Council Meeting I was alarmed when the Chairman/Mayor (Town Councillor Stephen 'Dougie' Davies) suggested bringing back the mysterious black book for declarations of interests. More alluring than the middle aisle in Lidl. Less accessible than the Sultan of Brunei.

In welcoming back Town Councillor Llio Davies tonight I am reminded of her lobbying for Menter to undertake paid work for the Council at previous Meetings. A declaration of interest that might be written in the black book, but wasn't made apparent, even when her Director's registration details from Companies House (05709847) were cut and pasted into the Meeting chat.

To continue with the theme of being taken for a ride on the swings and ending up back where we started going around on the roundabout, let me introduce my question by reading from pg 30 of the Full Council's Minutes of 09 Dec 2019 [available off-and-on ATC's website for two and a half years].

For context: this is the Welsh Government's statutory guidance to the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, Minuted just after the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales's anonymised report of the investigation and declaration of serious maladministration at ATC.

> 25. Finally, the Act contains new requirements relating to the registration of members' interests. Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000 requires a Community Council (as well as other authorities) to maintain and publish a register of members' financial and other interests as are specified in the model code of conduct (prescribed by Order under section 50 of the 2000 Act[1]). Prior to commencement of section 58 of the Act, the register needed to be available for inspection at Council offices at all reasonable hours. Section 58 of the Act requires that the register is also published electronically. In addition, the Act transfers responsibility for establishing and maintaining the register of interests from the principal authority's monitoring officer to the 'proper officer' of each Community Council. The 'proper officer' is the member of the Council's staff designated by the Council for this purpose.
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> [1] Currently the 'Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) Order 2008'

When does Ammanford Town Council intend to comply with this part of this nine year old law?