

Cyngor Tref Amlwch Town Council **Annual Report 2023-24**

Introduction

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 introduced a requirement that, as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year, a town/community council must prepare and publish a report (an 'annual report') about the council's priorities, activities and achievements during that year.

This report is split in two sections –

- 1 – information about the Town Council and its responsibilities
- 2 – information and more detail about the activities undertaken by the Town Council over the year.

Section 1 – About the Town Council

Members

There are 15 seats on Amlwch Town Council (5 Seats Rural Ward, 5 Town Ward and 5 Port Ward). Councillors (elected and co-opted) are office holders who sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office upon their election or appointment – they are therefore part of the local government structure of Wales. Although they carry out many community activities on a voluntary basis, they are not volunteers.

The following were Town Councillors for the year 2023-24:

Rural Ward – Gareth Winston Roberts OBE, Myrddin Owens, Gordon Warren, Julie Edwards, Geraint Thomas

Town Ward – Meg Roberts, Gareth Thomas, Veronica Holdsworth, Llinos Knowles Williams, Nina Bulkeley

Port Ward – Gerry Belanger, Liz Wood, Alan Wood, John Gill, Noel Kerr

At the head of the Council is the Chair, who is elected for a two-year term from amongst its serving Councillors. The Chairman for 2023-24 was Councillor Gareth Winston Roberts OBE and the Vice Chair was Councillor Gerry Belanger. The Council is supported by the Clerk, Carli Evans Thau. The Town Council also work with the three County Council members elected to represent the Twrcelyn Ward: Derek Owen, Liz Wood, Aled Morris Jones.

The Corporate Body

The Town Council Office on Lon Goch is owned by the Town Council and is also home to the Police Station, Food Bank and Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB), the Council Chamber is also utilised for community consultations and other meetings and events.

The Town Council owns a number of properties that are leased to community groups and/or businesses. The Town Council is responsible for the maintenance and improvements of the play areas, parks and open spaces (Lon Goch, Lon Wen, Craig y Don, Maes Mona, Maes Llwyn, Bro Trehinion), as well as various street furniture namely benches and planters throughout the town and port and the public toilets at Amlwch Port.

As a Burial Authority, the Town Council is responsible for setting the fee structure, selling plots and the maintenance of Amlwch Community Cemetery and its burial records.

The Town Council is statutory consultee and invited to respond to local planning applications by the Local Planning Authority (Anglesey County Council Planning Department) and will receive information about Local Authority and Welsh Government consultations and respond when appropriate. The Town Council also administer the Bull Bay Slipway Scheme in partnership with Anglesey County Council.

The Town Council will arrange Christmas Trees and Lights for the town centre, and work in partnership with the Community Festival Group to arrange the switching on of the lights and supporting activities.

Meetings

During 2023-24, the Council met formally via remote, hybrid and face to face meetings at the Town Council Chamber on the fourth Tuesday of the Month at 7pm.

The meetings are structured with full agendas. Although a working meeting rather than a public presentation, members of the public are welcome to attend virtually or in person. Meeting agendas are published in advance on

the notice board outside the Council Office and on the website. Minutes, once ratified, are available on the website cyngortrefamlwch.co.uk

The Town Council has adopted a Welsh Language Policy as endorsed by the Welsh Language Commissioner. As such, meeting papers are bilingual and a simultaneous translation service provided at meetings.

The Council has several committees to deal with specific areas. These are:

- Finance and Personnel
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Cemetery
- Welcome, Twinning and Christmas Lights
- Planning (although most planning matters are dealt with in full council)

The Town Council is represented on a number of external committees and organisations relevant to the work of the Town Council and the community of Amlwch.

- Wylfa Site Stakeholder Group
- Porthwen Solar Farm Liaison Group
- One Voice Wales
- Anglesey Town and Community Councils Liaison Forum
- Amlwch War Memorial Institute
- Clwb y Gorlan
- Amlwch Scouts Hall Committee
- Bull Bay Boat House
- Amlwch Community (Christmas) Festival
- North Anglesey Councils' Partnership
- Trefi Mon (Five Towns) Partnership
- Amlwch Port Users Group

Budget

The Town Council are required to approve and monitor a budget for each financial year. For the financial year 2023-24, the Town Council's income from council tax (precept) was £109,816 this equates to £70.35 per Band D household. The Town Council's income was supplemented by other funding including slipway and cemetery receipts, rent payments and grants. The Town Council's expenditure for 2023-24 was £151,236

In line with the budget approved by the Council, expenditure included administrative costs, maintenance and development of parks and open spaces, cemetery maintenance, provision of public toilets, maintenance of the town CCTV system, Christmas lights.

Members of the Town Council are able to claim an annual allowance to support their role. This payment was not claimed by any members during 2023-24.

Council accounts, along with supporting documentation and governance documents undergo an independent internal (local) audit before being presented to Audit Wales for external audit. The audit documents for 2023-24 were presented to Audit Wales in August 2024.

Section 2 - Activities

Finance and Personnel

The Finance and Personnel Committee is chaired by Myrddin Owens and during 2023-24, met on a monthly basis throughout the year. Committee members approved payments and acknowledged regular reporting of income and expenditure. The Finance Committee considered requests for financial support from a number of organisations, with the following, local, groups being supported – Cwmni Theatr Eleth, Yr Arwydd, Wales Air Ambulance, Amlwch Community Festival.

The Town Council Office was home to Ewyllys Da Amlwch (Food Bank) and the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) as well as the Amlwch Police Station (first floor). The Town Council Chamber was also used by Bangor University for a Welsh class as well as other organisations such as the Youth Justice Service. The Finance Committee oversee the legal

aspects of facility management i.e. lease agreements and setting the rent due. Work is ongoing for the renewal of a number of lease agreements.

The Budget and Precept for each year is carefully considered by the Finance Committee and presented to the Full Council for approval (see budget above).

During the 2023-24 financial year, the Committee, or Committee representatives met with Anglesey County Council Economic Development Officers regarding grants and schemes relevant and available to Amlwch, and also with company representatives planning on developing in the locality.

In the later part of 2023-24 it became known to the Town Council that buildings of significant historical importance were being sold. The Town Council have pledged substantial support to the Bull Bay Community Boat House, with the community group continuing their fundraising efforts to reach their target. Discussions are ongoing with Menter Mon and Anglesey County Council with regard to safeguarding the future of the Sail Loft and Copper Bins in Amlwch Port.

Grants

During 2023-24, the Town Council were successful in securing grants towards improving access to the Town Council Building, improving access to old burials in the cemetery, surveying part of the cemetery for future burials and the installation of solar lighting in Lon Goch Park. The Town Council worked with IACC Economic Development to share information to local businesses regarding available grants, and conducted a town centre improvement survey to support applications being submitted by IACC for larger grants.

Parks and Open Spaces

The Parks and Open Spaces Committee work to maintain the play areas and open spaces for which the Town Council is responsible, there are many areas however that do not come under the Town Council's remit. The committee meet on a regular basis to manage and enhance its parks and open spaces. The play areas are routinely inspected, as are community benches, and green areas including tree safety surveys by qualified arboriculturists.

A number of new benches were installed in the port area and others replaced throughout the town. The Town Council have agreed to install only benches made of recycled plastic moving forward as these have very little maintenance costs and longevity.

A new basket swing was installed at Lon Wen Park to replace the wooden frame that had come to the end of its life. The new equipment is made of recycled plastic requiring very little maintenance and a 25 year guarantee subject to proper use.

The committee have signposted the IACC Right of Way Officers to a number of footpaths needing attention and maintenance in the area and will continue to do so. The IACC Waste Management department were notified of problem areas with regard to dog fouling and litter and action taken to relocate bins to relevant hot spots. The Town Council have also provided dog poo bag dispensers for problem areas and continue to provide the bags for community use.

IACC were successful in securing funding to provide new signage and information points throughout the town.

Cemetery

The Committee continue to oversee general maintenance works in the cemetery. During 2023-24, twenty-three people were interred, with others purchasing their burial plots in advance. A survey on a new section of the cemetery required as part of the planning process was completed, funded in part by the Ysgellog Wind Farm grant. Further funding from the same source was secured to improve access to the older sections of the cemetery.

Planning

The Town Council is not a planning authority, rather it is a statutory consultee. Planning applications as noted on the IACC planning portal are distributed to members by email for observation. This allows all members, not only committee members to view and comment on each application. A meeting of the planning committee will be held should further discussion be required. During 2023-24, members of the Town Council were presented with thirty one planning applications to consider.

Community Safety

The Town Council continued to manage and maintain the CCTV system in the town. A grant was made available for the purchase of additional cameras, but having carefully considered the number of cameras already in situ, and the additional maintenance costs involved with the number of additional cameras, it was agreed not to move ahead with the scheme.

During 2023-24 the Town Council has continued to work with the Police, Fire Service and various departments within IACC to put pressure on the owners of both the Octel Site and Glanrhos Garage to improve and maintain site security following reports and concern for youths gaining access and antisocial behaviour.

Police Inspector Gareth Parry met with the Town Council to discuss policing matters and the challenges facing the police force on the island.

Improving road safety has been an ongoing theme throughout the year. Members have worked with IACC Highways Department to identify a number of accessibility improvements throughout the town. This work has been completed by means of a grant secured by IACC for Active Travel and included an upgrade to the bus shelter on Lon Goch as well as installation of dropped kerbs on main thoroughfares.

Members have also highlighted concerns to IACC regarding parking issues (both roadside and in car parks) and other safety matters such as blocked pavements, overgrown hedging, lack of signage etc. As the Highways Authority, IACC are ultimately responsible for assessing and completing such works.

The Town Council will continue to liaise with the local police officers and the highways authority with regard to all aspects of antisocial behaviour including inconsiderate and inappropriate vehicle use and obstruction of the highways.

Contact details and further information

For further information regarding the Town Council please visit the office (Llawr y Llan, Lon Goch, Amlwch, Ynys Mon LL689EN), the website: cyngortrefamlwch.co.uk or contact the clerk by email clerc@cyngortrefamlwch.co.uk or telephone 01407 832228.