

Aberaeron Town Council Annual Report May 2021-April 22

Town Mayor's Report to the 2022 Annual Meeting

It's been an honour and pleasure to represent both the Town Council and the residents of Aberaeron over the last year. Unfortunately, once again most of the year was spent under some form of Covid restrictions but despite this some events did actually go ahead.

On 15th of May I was pleased to be invited to mark the centenary of the Royal British Legion which has done so much for ex-servicemen and women. I was also interviewed by "Straeon Aberaeron", a Facebook page setup to promote the Welsh Language in Aberaeron.

In June I attended the presentation ceremony at the Fire Station when Marc Davies received his 20 year service medal as a Retained Firefighter.

In July I helped launch the "Love Life Projects Garden Angels Project" and attended the opening of the art exhibition, "Art at the Feathers" featuring the works of Wynne Melville Jones (creator of Mr Urdd), Phil Huckin and Charlotte Baxter

In August I was invited to the annual six a side cricket competition where the Deputy Mayor was also part of a team.

In September the Tour of Britain came to town. The night before, I made a brief appearance on S4C's "Heno" programme promoting Aberaeron before joining the residents of the town watch the riders start on their long journey north to Llandudno. I must say that there was some spectacular TV footage of Aberaeron and the route North.

In November along with our (newly re-elected) County Councillor Elizabeth Evans, I unveiled a plaque on the Square Field Gate to mark 100 years of the Royal British Legion which was followed by the annual Remembrance Service at the Memorial Hall where the Town Council wreath was laid. I also supported the Aberaeron & New Quay Scouts with their Bonfire evening. This month also saw the switching on of the Christmas Lights with a select audience on what must have been the worst night of the winter! In December the RABI Illuminated Tractor Run came to town, which was a wonderful idea and with some tweaks would become a great event. The traditional Christmas presents were also delivered to the Min y Môr residents on behalf of this Council.

In January I joined the Dyfed Powys Police Neighbourhood Policing Team out on patrol on what was probably the nicest day in January. It was great to meet residents and talk about their policing concerns.

The annual Ysgol Gynradd Aberaeron St David's Day parade was amazing! The weather was perfect and well supported by the town's residents. I must also pay tribute to the schools Siarter Iaith group who made artificial daffodils so that town's

businesses could use to decorate their windows. I was also interviewed that month by both Blwyddyn 1 and Blwyddyn 2 classes who interrogated me in my role as Mayor, they made Lord Sugar look like a pussy cat! Towards the end of March, I was disappointed not to have been able to attend the Ukraine Fundraiser evening after contracting Covid, especially after working so hard to organise it in such a short period of time. However, with the help of the Committee of the Memorial Hall, the event was a huge success and raised over £4,200 for the Disasters Emergency Committee Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal.

My final official engagements happened at the end of April where I was delighted to present medals at the Junior Football Festival followed by a visit to the Rugby Club to watch the home side secure a comfortable win over Llanybydder.

From the Council's perspective we have continued with the work of the Business Plan and corresponding Action Plan, but the Covid situation has meant that things have taken much longer than they should. We have progressed the registration of Town Council land holdings, and another new sign at the eastern entrance to Allt-y-Graig.

Darryl and I became Registered Operational Playground Inspectors (we've got badges to prove it!) and have continued with our monthly playground inspections.

The volunteer group have done amazing work in Allt-y-Graig and several litter picks have taken place throughout the year. Our flowerbeds also look amazing thanks to Diana and her volunteers.

It's not all a bed of roses though (see what I did there!) I continue to get complaints regarding the revised town centre layout daily and I'm hoping that common sense will prevail and that the town centre can reclaim its title as the jewel in the crown of Ceredigion as opposed to a nasty thorn that it has been for many for the last two years. Although rubbish does not fall within the remit of the Town Council, complaints frequently arise about the state of our town with the weekly bin collections a bit like Russian roulette, and we've all witnessed increases in fly tipping across town.

My first job as Chairman back in last May was to report the resignation of Mair Harrison as Councillor and now this is the first meeting without the old guard of Owenna James and Neris Lloyd, along with Katrina James and Roger March who have all served the Council well over their time as Councillors. We thank them all for their time and commitment to this Council. I was however disappointed that we didn't get more nominations this time round but sadly I think people are more careful with their time these days.

Finally, I thank you all but particularly Darryl my Deputy, my family and friends for the support that everyone has given me during my time as Town Mayor. It would be amiss of me not to forget to thank the Clerk ensuring I stick to procedure and protocol!

Councillor Rhodri Jones
Town Mayor 2021-22

Organisation of the Council

Aberaeron Town Council is the most local tier of local government for the community of Aberaeron and is a local authority established by way of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Council comprises twelve elected Members.

The Members during the 2021-22 municipal year were Councillors Phill Davies, Rhys Davies, Darryl Evans, Elizabeth Evans, Katrina James, Owenna James, Rhodri Jones, Neris Lloyd, Diana Mace, Roger March and Huw Thomas. There was one vacancy following the resignation of Councillor Mair Harrison in May 2021.

The Council employs a part-time Clerk, Mr Denfer Morgan, who is responsible for the administration of the Council, including its finances.

The Council meets at 7:00 pm on the second Tuesday of each month at the Committee Room, Memorial Hall Aberaeron, other than in August. During the period when the Welsh Government Covid 19 restrictions were in force, the Council met by way of remote attendance on Microsoft Teams. The meetings are held in public. In accordance with the latest Welsh Government legislation, meetings can be attended in person or by remote attendance using Teams.

The Council can be contacted by contacting the Clerk by emailing ctaberaeron@btinternet.com or telephoning 07749320915.

The Council's website is <http://www.aberaeron-tc.gov.wales/> <http://www.aberaerontowncouncil/> Information provided on the website includes:

- Contact details
- Details of Councillors
- Calendar of meetings and agendas and minutes
- Financial information
- Policies

Business Plan 2021-24

The Council produced a Business Plan for the period 2021-24 which includes an Action Plan for 2021-22 outlining its proposed work for the that year. Progress on the work was monitored at the monthly meetings.

The strategic aims for the period of this Business Plan are to:

1. Make the town an attractive place to live;
2. Promote business growth and enhanced employment opportunities;
3. Retain and improve services for the benefit of the town and the wider

community;

4. Maintain and promote its cultural heritage and the Welsh Language;
5. Continue to develop Aberaeron as a major tourism destination. The Key Objectives of Aberaeron Town Council for the period of this Business Plan

It includes eleven key objectives to help achieve these strategic aims.

The main projects undertaken during the year were as follows:

- Covid 19 Town Adaptations Grant obtained to assist local businesses during lockdown
- A new website
- Improvements at Square Field and Parc-y-fro playgrounds, including repairs to equipment, safety surfaces and fencing
- Training of playground inspectors
- Improvements at Allt-y-graig woodland, including new signs and clearance of rhodedendron
- Repairs to benches within the town
- Review of Christmas lighting
- Tree condition survey

The full Business Plan is available on the Council's website.

Recreational and Amenity Land

The Council owns three areas of land in the town which it provides for recreational and amenity purposes, namely:

- Square Field
- Parc-y-Fro
- Allt-y-graig woodland
- Banc Bach woodland.

Square Field has been designated the Ceredigion Centenary Field and is let to organisations to hold events such as the Garden Festival, Junior Football Festival, Cob and Shire Horses Festival and the Annual Carnival. The Field is also used by the Aberaeron Football Club for holding games.

Services

The Council provides the following services:

- Children's playgrounds at Square Field and Parc-y-fro
- A woodland walk at Allt-y-graig
- Floral displays in the town

- Festoon lights at the Harbour
- An amenity area at Banc Bach.

The Council contributes to the cost of providing the following services by the Ceredigion County Council:

- South Beach toilets summer opening
- Tourist Information Centre

Finance

The Council sets an Annual Budget in January which outlines its proposed expenditure for the following financial year. The expenditure reflects the proposals contained in the Business Plan and the services provided by the Council. This expenditure is funded by way of a precept which is set at the same time. The precept, in turn, is raised by way of a Council Tax payable by each dwelling within the town. Other sources of income are also used together with reserves.

The Council's budget for 2021-22, set at its Meeting held on 19th January 2021, was as follows:

Expenditure

£68,725

Income

Precept: £40,808

Other: £4,326

Reserves: £23,591

Annual Accounts

The latest Annual Accounts to have been audited by Audit Wales are those for the previous financial year, 2020-21. The Council received an 'unqualified' report, with no matters requiring attention.

Further details can be found on the Council's website.

Community Matters

Representing the Community

The Council is consulted by Ceredigion County Council on certain matters. Ceredigion County Council is the local education authority, local highways authority, local planning authority and is responsible for the provision of social services for the County.

The Town Council has made representations on the following during the year:

- Planning applications
- Safe Zones / Experimental Transport Orders
- Harbour development / coast protection scheme
- Footpath creation and diversions

Voluntary Action

The Council has established a group of volunteers to undertake various work including cutting back and clearing growth at the Allt-y-graig woodland and regular litter picking sessions.

Development Proposals

The Council is working with the County Council to develop proposals and access funding for the following:

- A Place Plan for the Town
- A regeneration scheme for businesses including proposals for town branding
- A town WiFi service

2022-23 Municipal Year

The Council set its budget for 2022-23 at its January meeting and is continuing with progressing the proposals contained in the Business Plan by way of the 2022-23 Action Plan which is reviewed and updated at every monthly meeting.

Denfer Morgan
Clerk to the Council
May 2022