

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF TALGARTH TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 7 PM, HELD REMOTELY**

**MEMBERS PRESENT BY VIDEO LINK:** Cllr W Powell (Town & Powys County Councillor), Mayor (In the Chair), Cllr P Lewis (Deputy Mayor), Cllr A Bufton, Cllr M Dodds, Cllr L Elston-Reeves, Cllr G Jones, Cllr A Lord, Cllr T McClatchey, Cllr R Parry, Cllr R Reid, Cllr S Thomas, Cllr C Voyle

**APOLOGIES:** No apologies

**IN ATTENDANCE BY VIDEO LINK:** Josephine Rumsey (Town Clerk)

**WELCOME:** Cllr W Powell, Mayor, welcomed Town Councillor Rachel Parry to her first meeting of the Town Council and other members to the fifth virtual meeting of the Town Council by Skype.

**20/115 TO DECLARE MATTERS OF INTEREST** - There were no declarations of interest.

**20/116 MINUTES:** The Minutes of the previous AGM held on 15 May 2019, previously confirmed at the Town Council meeting held on 13 June 2019, were circulated for ease of reference.

**20/117 REPORT BY OUT-GOING MAYOR YEAR 2019/2020** – Cllr W Powell, out-going Mayor, read out his annual report as follows:

**REPORT BY OUT-GOING MAYOR YEAR 2019/2020**

“Having been elected as Chair of Talgarth Town Council in May 2018 and then re-elected in May 2019, it has been an immense privilege to work alongside Town Councillors, past and present, as well as people of good will from across our community, to develop, promote and sustain this my home town, as well as our neighbouring communities, be they village, hamlet or rural hinterland.

I would like to restate my gratitude to everyone for their commitment and hard work throughout the past year and a half, since our last AGM. The reason for this extended term is well understood – and, despite the ravages and privations we have experienced at the hands of Covid-19 - including my own hospitalisation from 26th March until 7th May - in many ways it has served to remind us of the very essence of community.

Within Talgarth Town Council, over the past two and a half years, I have done my best to promote team spirit and joint working, where everyone has a voice and partisanship has no place. All members contribute according to their experience, knowledge and skills, towards the betterment of Talgarth and our adjacent communities. Despite the challenges thrown up, and the turbulence that has been our lot, not least in these past six months of ‘lockdown’ and shielding, we have worked together effectively towards our shared goals.

The past 18 months have been a fascinating mix, of activities, events and engagements. In June 2019, I was delighted to meet and greet participants in the 2019 Black Mountains Classic Tour and to distribute medals to those successfully completing the rally. In November of last year, I was proud to lay the wreath on behalf of Talgarth Town Council as part of the local service of Remembrance, to mark the 101st Anniversary of the Armistice. Congratulations to everyone who helped to make a success of that solemn occasion, by refreshing our programme of commemoration, in concert with Royal British Legion and other partners – special thanks to Cllr Louise Elston-Reeves for promoting this. Thanks also to all councillors and volunteers, who helped to host the Town Hall reception afterwards, in the days pre-dating ‘social distancing.’ Despite the constraints placed upon us by Covid-19, I am proud that we held commemorative events to mark the 75th Anniversaries of both VE Day and VJ Day during recent months, in the latter case also dedicating the 1939-45 commemorative bench that the Council has presented to the community of Talgarth, as a legacy of these events.

We have also continued as a council to deepen our engagement with One Voice Wales (OVW) during the past 18 months. Having hosted several events in the previous year here in Talgarth, including a special session focussed on Road Safety and Speed Enforcement issues, with Dyfed-

Powys Police and Crime Commissioner, Dafydd Llywelyn, we have been represented at both Brecon and Radnorshire meetings, as well as the AGM at Pontrhydfendigaid last Autumn. We are also hugely indebted to the team at OVW, notably Paul Egan, Shan Bowden and Mel ab Owain for their good counsel and procedural advice throughout the year, not least through the demands of Covid-19 and the necessary adaptations to our working practices.

Talgarth Town Council has continued, in as far as circumstances have allowed, to support local events, helping to embed Talgarth's growing reputation as a warm and welcoming destination, which is appreciated by locals and tourists alike. It was my privilege as Mayor to open Talgarth Festival of the Black Mountains in August 2019, alongside Lady Lily the Pink of the Official Monster Raving Loony Party and to attend the hugely popular Talgarth Lights Group Christmas Switch on in late November. It is a matter of regret that the Talgarth Walking Festival, the Black Mountains Classic Tour and Talgarth Festival of the Black Mountains all had to be cancelled this year, in common with almost all public events, due to the Corona Virus pandemic.

All Town Councillors are elected to represent the interests of our whole community, and both as Powys County Councillor, but also as Town Council Chair during the past 30 months, I am grateful for that collective service. During the past 18 months, Talgarth Town Council has continued to be proactive in strategic planning issues, including expressing community centric views on the future of PCC owned sites in our town. Particular thanks go to my Deputy Chair, Cllr Philip Lewis, for attending meetings with me to engage with BBNPA and PCC officials, especially regarding the former school site. Whilst embracing the Local Authority's plans to build vital council housing on the brown field site, we have emphasised the importance to our community of both the school field open space and the precious built heritage of the former Victorian school. On this issue – and in terms of the defunct Highways Yard, on its split site - there will be a need for continued vigilance and proactive engagement with the wider community for the future of these sites, all still in PCC ownership. A significant part of this will fall to Talgarth Town Council and other relevant groups, including the Talgarth and District Regeneration Group.

Some of the most important tasks are done away from the public eye and I think it only right that I should shine a light on some of these. Firstly, a big thank you to Cllr Andrew Bufton, who puts so much dedication into all aspects of his role as custodian of the churchyard. In this area, Andrew's encyclopaedic knowledge is invaluable to us. His role in liaising with funeral professionals and families, often at a difficult time in their lives, is not to be underestimated. On another front, Cllr Andy Lord undertakes valuable work on our behalf, keeping an eye on council finances, and ensuring that our portfolio of policies and our website, so critical in the context of Covid-19 remote working, are kept up to date. Finally, Cllr Glyn Jones has taken a special interest recently in accessibility and public transport, of which he is a regular user. It is useful to have his insight, often laced with humour, about the experience of pedestrians and bus users in our area.

This summer has seen a very serious pollution incident on the Llynfi, just beyond the boundaries of our community, the causes of which are under investigation. Our engagement with Dwr Cymru, together with the community liaison mechanisms with GP Biotec, have continued to assist the Town Council in acting on behalf of the wider community in monitoring the environmental situation together with NRW. It would be appropriate once again to thank those colleagues, past and present, for their tireless efforts in this regard, engaging with the operators, the wider community and other interested parties to ensure that processes are safe, appropriate regulation respected and further pollution events avoided.

Together with Hay on Wye, Bronllys and other adjacent Town/Community Councils Talgarth Town Council continues to be represented, by our senior member, Cllr Malcolm Dodds, on the Bronllys Wellbeing Park CLT Ltd. The instigators are to be congratulated for their perseverance, in building upon the Memorandum of Understanding with Powys teaching Health Board secured in 2018/19, which is vital to unlocking the potential of the site.

Talgarth Town Council has continued to engage with PCC in the ongoing journey of asset transfer from the local authority. Having taken over the Town Hall toilets, Sports Pavilion and playing fields and Talgarth Bowls Club, it has proved a time consuming and protracted process, especially when ensuring compliance and legality in discharging our landlord obligations, in the context of Welsh Government Covid-19 legislation. I would like to restate my sincere thanks to our Town Clerk, Mrs Josephine Rumsey, for her diligence in these matters, as well as fellow

Town Councillors Andrew Bufton, Andy Lord, and Richard Reid, who have given selflessly of their time. Heartfelt thanks also go to all who work to facilitate relations between Talgarth Town Council, Talgarth Town FC and Gwernyfed RFC, the constituent members of TaDSCA, chaired by Cllr Chris Voyle.

The departure of three experienced, long-serving members, in Zoe Argent, John Lilly and Pip Stockhaus-Turner means that Talgarth Town Council misses their individual contributions but their legacy to our community, is considerable. We are also grateful to Amy Argent for her valuable input into our deliberations as Youth Councillor into 2019/2020. We are delighted to have attracted to our ranks Cllrs Terry McClatchey, Steve Thomas and Rachel Parry, who are already making their presence felt in a positive and constructive way.

Again, I offer my genuine gratitude to all our community organisations, charities and the many individual volunteers for their commitment and tireless efforts to improve our community. From the TiRC and the Talgarth Luncheon Club, which is currently unable to operate, with their decades of service through to Grow for Talgarth, On the Verge and the Talgarth Woodland Group and many more, they deserve our recognition and our thanks.

Although it has been a challenge at times, it has also been an immense privilege to serve Talgarth Town Council as Chair these past 18 months -and indeed for the entire 30 months that I have held the office. While there are many areas that require fresh impetus and new direction, I have done my best to serve the greater good of our town during this period. My wife Ria has given me immense support throughout the year, for which I am very grateful. I thank especially my Deputy Chair, Phil Lewis for his loyalty, steadfast support and wise counsel. The determination and input of the whole Town Council, together with the dedication and sheer hard work of our Town Clerk, Josephine Rumsey, has allowed us to achieve a great deal. I offer my sincere thanks and appreciation to everyone who has played their part. Diolch o galon.”

**RESOLVED** unanimously to thank Cllr William Powell for all his leadership and dedicated work as Mayor, since May 2018.

**20/118 MAYOR FOR YEAR 2020/2021 & DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE -**

Nominations were invited for the position of Mayor for the year 2020-2021.

Proposed by Cllr W Powell and seconded by Cllr G Jones, all in favour, that Cllr P Lewis be nominated Mayor for the year 2020/2021.

Noted there were no other nominations.

Cllr P Lewis accepted the position of Mayor for year 2020/2021 and noted for the Town Clerk to arrange for Cllr P Lewis to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office – Section 83, Local Government Act 1972 of Mayor, in her presence.

**RESOLVED** unanimously that Cllr Philip Lewis be elected Mayor for the year 2020/2021.

Members of the Council congratulated the newly elected Mayor and wished him well during his year of office.

**Cllr P Lewis, Mayor, took over as Chair for the remainder of the meeting.**

**20/119 DEPUTY MAYOR FOR YEAR 2020/2021**

Nominations were invited for the position of Deputy Mayor for the year 2020-2021.

Proposed by Cllr G Jones and seconded by Cllr S Thomas, all in favour, that Cllr L Elston-Reeves be nominated as Deputy Mayor, for the year 2020/2021.

Noted there were no other nominations.

Cllr L Elston-Reeves accepted the position of Deputy Mayor for the year 2020/2021.

**RESOLVED** unanimously that Cllr Louise Elston-Reeves be elected Deputy Mayor for the year 2020/2021.

Members of the Council congratulated the newly elected Deputy Mayor and wished her well during her year of office.

**20/120 MATTERS ARISING -** There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the previous AGM 15 May 2019, which are not on the Agenda.

**20/121 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR** - Clerk reported that Sharn Drury had been appointed as Internal Auditor for the year 2020/2021, at our 17 June 2020 remote meeting .

**20/122 ANNUAL REVIEW/ADOPTION OF TALGARTH TOWN COUNCIL DOCUMENTS –**  
Draft documents circulated in advance of meeting:

**Standing Orders** - Noted the Standing Orders remain unchanged since last AGM.

**Financial Regulations** – Noted the Financial Regulations remain unchanged since last AGM.

**Assets Register as at 31 March 2020** – Noted the Assets Register figures, were included in the Audit Annual Return 2019/2020, previously agreed at the 17 June 2020 remote meeting and that there was one additional item in 2019/2020 - the Bowling Club House/Bowling Green.

**Fire Risk Assessment (Town Hall)** – Noted document had been updated since last AGM.

**Town Hall Risk Assessment** – Noted document had been updated since last AGM.

**Public Conveniences Risk Assessment** – Noted document had been updated in June 2020 due to COVID regulations.

**RESOLVED:** Unanimously agreed to adopt the above documents.

**Town Council Risk Assessment** – Draft document received and discussed.

**RESOLVED:** To update with the inclusion of an item on ‘Infectious Disease Pandemic’, for adoption at the 14 Oct meeting.

**20/123 TOWN COUNCIL POLICIES & ST GWENDOLINE’S CHURCHYARD RISK ASSESSMENT -**

**Talgarth Town Council Policies –**

**RESOLVED:** To update the current documents, for adoption at an early future meeting of the Town Council and to review at future AGMs.

**20/124 TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE/S ON TOWN COUNCIL SUB-GROUPS/ OTHER ORGANISATIONS FOR YEAR 2020/2021** – Clerk had circulated to Town Councillors

the 2019/2020 list of Town Councillors on the various Sub-Groups of the Town Council /Other Organisations. It was noted that Cllr W Powell and Cllr M Dodds are Ysgol y Mynydd Governors in their own rights and the Town Council representative as the ‘Additional Community Governor’ is currently Cllr T McClatchey, who was appointed in Feb 2020, for a period of 4 years, after which we alternate with a Bronllys Community Councillor for a 4 year term.

**RESOLVED:** To agree representatives on the relevant Sub-Groups of the Town Council and other organisations, for 2020/2021, at the 14 Oct meeting.

**20/125 TOWN COUNCILLORS SIGNATORIES ON NAT WEST BANK A/C –**

**RESOLVED** to remain with 4 signatories: Cllr A Lord, Cllr A Bufton, Cllr M Dodds, Cllr R Reid and for Josephine Rumsey, Town Clerk, to remain for transferring between accounts.

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**20/126 HEADSET FOR MAYOR - Jabra Evolve 20 UC Stereo Corded PC Headset –**

**RESOLVED:** To purchase a headset from The Headset Store c/o Birmingham Telecommunications Ltd, for use of the Mayor at remote meetings - £39.99, del £6.95 + VAT.

**20/127 REQUEST FOR A BURIAL OF A 3<sup>rd</sup> PERSON TO BE BURIED INTO AN EXSITING GRAVE AT ST GWENDOLINE’S CHURCHYARD** – A request has been received from

Tovey Bros, Funeral Directors, Newport, suggesting options for a 3<sup>rd</sup> person to be buried into an existing grave at St Gwendoline’s Churchyard.

Noted that the grave, in question, is believed to be a double depth grave, in which two bodies have already been buried.

**RESOLVED:** Not to accept the options for a third burial in an existing grave, suggested by the Funeral Director, and to offer an interment of ashes into this existing grave in ‘D’ block or to a burial in a new grave space in ‘H’ block, fairly near to the existing grave.

**20/128 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2020** – A suggested plan for Remembrance Sunday, which includes the presence of a guard of honour/piper/bugler available via Kelvyn Jenkins, British Legion, Hay-on-Wye – at a cost would be £150 for the piper, had been received from Cllr L Elston-Reeves and circulated to Town Councillors for consideration.

**RESOLVED:** To agree to the presence of a guard of honour/piper/bugler a piper at a cost of £150 and for a socially distancing event, as appropriate in the circumstances, at 11am at the War Memorial on 8 Nov pending the Clerk obtaining the advice of OVW and the British Legion, on current rules and numbers allowed at gatherings etc and WG guidelines at the time.

Noted Cllr C Voyle, Chair of the TADSCA group, had volunteered members of the group, to steward the traffic whilst the event takes place.

Agreed that our usual Service leaflets will not be used, but access to the Service leaflet will be made available on the Town Council’s website.

Noted that the Clerk had been informed by Canon Rowland Edwards that he was planning that there will be the usual Remembrance service, or something similar, at St Gwendoline’s Church, but there would not be any music, and numbers would be restricted due to the WG social distancing guidelines and representation of approx. 2 from the Town Council would be invited.

**20/129 COMMUNICATIONS** – The suggestion of promoting the Town Council and other groups’ work in the Town, was raised.

**RESOLVED:** That the Communication Group, agreed at the 2019 AGM, will be used for this purpose and for this to be an Agenda item for at our 14 Oct meeting.

**20/130 PUBLIC CONVENIENCES – Hot Water availability** – It was suggested that hot water be made available in the Public Conveniences – Disabled (now unisex) and ladies toilet areas.

**RESOLVED:** That Alun Walters, Plumbing & Heating Engineer, who is currently upgrading the heating/hot water system in the Town Hall, be asked to include work for this facility at an additional cost and to inform the Clerk of the cost for this facility to be included in the Public Conveniences - Disabled (now unisex toilet) and the ladies toilet areas

**20/131 DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETING:**

7pm Wed 14 October 2020 - Remote meeting

**There was no further business and the meeting closed at 8.30pm.**

**SIGNED:** .....

**DATE:** .....