

# Carmarthen Town Council Annual Report

## Civic Year 2019-20

### Introduction

<b>Outline of Council</b>	<p><b>Carmarthen Town Council</b> serves the area of Carmarthen and its population of around 14,600 residents. It has 18 councillors, covering the North, South and West Wards of Carmarthen.</p> <p>The Town Councillors during the 2019/20 period were:</p> <table><tbody><tr><td>Jeff Thomas (Mayor)</td><td>Angharad Jones-Leefe</td></tr><tr><td>Gareth John (Deputy Mayor)</td><td>Alun Lenny</td></tr><tr><td>Miriam Moules (Sheriff)</td><td>Arwel Lloyd</td></tr><tr><td>Julia Ault</td><td>Ken Lloyd</td></tr><tr><td>Danny Bartley</td><td>Dr Ioan Matthews</td></tr><tr><td>Rev Tom Defis</td><td>Emlyn Schiavone</td></tr><tr><td>Dr Baba Gana</td><td>Dr Matthew Thomas</td></tr><tr><td>Phil Grice</td><td>Wyn Thomas</td></tr><tr><td>Peter Hughes Griffiths</td><td>Barry Williams</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>The Town Council employs 18 full or part time members of staff, and the Clerk of the Town Council is Alun Harries.</p> <p><b>Carmarthen Town Council</b> is responsible for many services in the town, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Carmarthen Park, incorporating the tea shop, velodrome and rugby ground;</li><li>• Other public parks in Carmarthen including Johnstown Park, Penllwyn Park, Parc Hinds and the play areas at Russell Terrace, Maes y Wennol and Allt Ioan;</li><li>• Most of the town's public footpaths;</li><li>• St Peter's Civic Hall;</li></ul>	Jeff Thomas (Mayor)	Angharad Jones-Leefe	Gareth John (Deputy Mayor)	Alun Lenny	Miriam Moules (Sheriff)	Arwel Lloyd	Julia Ault	Ken Lloyd	Danny Bartley	Dr Ioan Matthews	Rev Tom Defis	Emlyn Schiavone	Dr Baba Gana	Dr Matthew Thomas	Phil Grice	Wyn Thomas	Peter Hughes Griffiths	Barry Williams
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carmarthen Cemetery;</li> <li>• Footway lighting across the town;</li> <li>• Events and activities including the annual Christmas lights ‘switch on’ and reindeer parade, the Carmarthen Town Sports Awards, the Mayor’s Races on May bank holiday, and the St David’s Day celebrations in the town centre;</li> <li>• Activities and events held at Carmarthen Park throughout the year, including the extensive summer programme of entertainment and facilitating the Winter Wonderland;</li> <li>• The town’s hanging basket scheme and other floral displays;</li> <li>• Providing financial grants and other support for local organisations and good causes.</li> </ul> <p>Since 2018 Carmarthen Town Council has been recognised by One Voice Wales for its high level of service and performance in a number of areas, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best Heritage Project (Carmarthen Velodrome Redevelopment) - <b>Winner</b></li> <li>• Best Sustainability Initiative (Red Court Solar Farm Grants Scheme) - <b>Winner</b></li> <li>• Best Environmental Project (Red Court Solar Farm Grants Scheme) – <b>Winner</b></li> <li>• Best Tourism Initiative (Tour of Britain activities) - <b>Winner</b></li> <li>• Best Community Engagement Initiative (use of social media) – <b>Highly Commended</b></li> <li>• Best Local Council Service (Carmarthen Tea Room &amp; Summer Events Programme) - <b>Commended</b></li> <li>• Best Annual Report – <b>Highly Commended</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>What is the Council’s Vision/Objectives?</b></p>	<p>Carmarthen Town Council adopted the following five-year strategy and plan in 2017:</p> <p><b><u>Strategy</u></b>  ‘To enhance the Well-being of the people of Carmarthen and to be ambitious in providing excellent service and value for money’.</p> <p><b><u>Plan</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To develop a strategy and plan for the period 2017-2022;</li> <li>2. To engage widely with the diverse communities of Carmarthen and identify priorities from that engagement and public consultation;</li> <li>3. To create an engagement and consultation strategy in support of 2 above;</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. To identify effective ways of engaging with younger generations and create opportunities for the voice of young people to be heard and enable them to influence Council decision making;</li> <li>5. To promote and enhance the well-being of Carmarthen and its people and to respond as necessary to the requirements of the Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan;</li> <li>6. To consider the relevance of a 'Community Plan' and a 'Place Plan' for Carmarthen town;</li> <li>7. To be as efficient as possible in the delivery of the best possible service to the people of Carmarthen town and those who visit the area;</li> <li>8. To work closely with neighbouring and other town and community councils;</li> <li>9. To continue to work with neighbouring and other town and community councils.</li> </ol>
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## FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2019/20

The **Council Precept** is the main source of Council income and represents the amount of council tax paid by households in Carmarthen that is allocated to the Town Council. The annual precept (£133.10 per Band D household) raised a total of £727,617.75 for the Town Council during 2019/20 (the Town Council does not receive anything from business rates). It also received other income of £185,435 mainly from the provision of its services (e.g. Carmarthen Cemetery, purchases from Carmarthen Park Tea Shop, hire of the velodrome and rugby pitch) and external grants.

During 2019/20 **Council expenditure** was:

Capital Projects (see below)	-	189,500	Cemetery and Depot	-	159,783
Town Centre Events	-	33,900	Parks & Play Areas	-	152,496
Grants	-	10,500	St Peter's Civic Hall	-	61,868
Civic Expenditure	-	24,150	Hanging Baskets	-	10,290
Street (footway) Lighting	-	30,000	General Administration	-	277,175
Transport	-	22,498	Other expenditure	-	9,260

The Council retains **reserves** of £100,000 to deal with unforeseen contingencies and emergencies.

Expenditure on **capital projects** during 2019/20 was significantly above the average, with several planned capital projects being completed during the year. These included:

- Development of play area and equipment in Carmarthen Park - £100,000
- Enhancement of the electricity supply capacity at Carmarthen Park - £38,000
- Purchase of new tractor for the Grounds Maintenance Team - £32,000
- Procurement of chairlift for St Peter's Civic Hall - £16,000

## Progress against the Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan Objectives

Carmarthenshire PSB Well-being Objective	Steps taken by the Town/Community Council that contribute to the Well-being Objective	How have the 5 Ways of Working been used to shape your activity? (Summary in Appendix A)	Which national Well-being Goals does this work support? (Summary in Appendix B)
<b>Healthy Habits:</b> People have a good quality of life, and make healthy choices about their lives and environment	1 Public Parks & Play Areas	<p>The Council manages several public parks, and these are important community facilities that the Council uses to promote health and fitness and improve people’s physical and emotional sense of well-being.</p> <p>Each of the Council’s public parks has play and other equipment, and the main park in Morfa Lane provides space and equipment for all generations. In 2019 the council implemented a programme of improvement at each of these parks and play areas, and during March 2020 a £100,000 investment in new and inclusive play equipment was completed at Carmarthen Park.</p> <p>Inclusive play equipment has also been introduced at Johnstown Park.</p>	Prosperous Wales Healthier Wales Cohesive Communities More Equal Wales
	2 Carmarthen Velodrome	<p>Carmarthen Velodrome is managed by the Town Council and has a strategy to engage locally with cyclists and clubs, and work across Wales for improved health, well-being and creating more outdoor opportunities for elite and novice cyclists. Encouraging competitions at our Velodrome from local and national levels, we will continue to provide this platform to all groups.</p> <p>During 2019 the first stage of the Women’s Tour (of Great Britain) took place at Carmarthen Velodrome and this international event attracted competitors and media interest from all over the world.</p>	Healthier Wales Cohesive Communities

	3 Carmarthen Rugby	The main rugby field at Carmarthen Park is the home of Carmarthen Quins RFC, one of the leading teams in the Wales Premiership. The pitch is also regularly used by other teams including Carmarthenshire District Schoolboys.	Healthier Wales Cohesive Communities
	4 Carmarthen Football	In 2019 the Council accepted the transfer of Parc Myrddin football pitch from the County Council and the facility is now shared by two local football clubs who were in danger of folding due to them not being able to play elsewhere.	Healthier Wales Cohesive Communities
	5 St Peter's Civic Hall	St Peter's Civic Hall is one of the key community venues in Carmarthen and is able to accommodate over 300 people and also provide meeting room facilities. It is used for a wider range of community events including eisteddfodau, concerts, beer festivals, private parties and sports events. During 2019 competitive boxing returned to the Hall, and the annual Carmarthen Open Darts Tournament remains one of the key social events on the annual local social calendar.	Cohesive Communities Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language
	6 Sian Johnston Environmental Sub-Group and Town Council Biodiversity and Environmental Development Strategy	The Town Council adopted a Biodiversity and Environmental Development Strategy in 2018 that aims to promote and enhance the natural environment and promote long term sustainability across the Council's estate in Carmarthen. The Sian Johnson Environmental Sub-Group manages the operational response to the strategy on behalf of the Council.	Prosperous Wales Resilient Wales Cohesive Communities Globally Responsible Wales
	7 Red Court Solar Farm Grants	The Red Court Solar Park Farm Grant Scheme provides grants of up to £500.00 for local projects that promote sustainability and encourages people to think about ideas which have long term benefits for Carmarthen and beyond. Very many local organisations and schools have benefited from these grants over the years, thereby making a significant contribution towards improving the local environment.	Prosperous Wales Resilient Wales Healthier Wales Globally Responsible Wales
	8 Keep Wales Tidy	During 2019 the Council's offices became a designated litter pick hub for Keep Wales Tidy. This enables individuals and groups to loan litter picking equipment for litter projects. Grants are provided to support litter picking groups. The Council is also a member of Carmarthenshire 'Pride In Your Patch'.	Cohesive Communities Globally Responsible Wales Resilient Wales

Carmarthenshire PSB Well-being Objective	Steps taken by the Town/Community Council that contribute to the Well-being Objective	How have the 5 Ways of Working been used to shape your activity? (Summary in Appendix A)	Which national Well-being Goals does this work support? (Summary in Appendix B)
<b>Early Intervention:</b> To make sure that people have the right help at the right time; as and when they need it	1 Grants Scheme	The Council's Grants Scheme enables local organisations and associations to apply for and benefit from funding towards different projects and initiatives.	Prosperous Wales More Equal Wales Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language
	2 Role of the Community Well-being and Events Officer	The Council's Community Well-being and Events Officer acts as a key link between local communities across the town. In addition to providing support and guidance the Officer act as a facilitator and gateway between organisations that are able to benefit from and help each other.	Healthier Wales Cohesive Communities Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language
	3. Town Councillors	Councillors are in regular contact with their local communities and are representatives of the Town Council on many local organisations. They are able to obtain community information and intelligence in a timely way that allows emerging problems and potential issues to be identified and addressed quickly.	Cohesive Communities
	4. Coronavirus	In March 2020 the Covid 19 pandemic started to have a major impact upon the local (and national) community, and the Town Council immediately set up a structure to ensure that local people were able to access as much information and assistance as possible. The Town Council's website was restructured and a dedicated social media platform – Carmarthen Community Care - was created on Facebook to facilitate the flow of information. Links were created between very many local and national organisations, and essential information was communicated to everyone. A volunteering network was created, and very many local people enrolled to look after vulnerable people within the local community and beyond.	Cohesive Communities Healthier Wales

<b>Carmarthenshire PSB Well-being Objective</b>	<b>Steps taken by the Town/Community Council that contribute to the Well-being Objective</b>	<b>How have the 5 Ways of Working been used to shape your activity? (Summary in Appendix A)</b>	<b>Which national Well-being Goals does this work support? (Summary in Appendix B)</b>
<b>Strong Connections:</b> Strongly connected people, places and organisations that are able to adapt to change	1 Information Sharing	<p>The Town Council acts as a critical source and communicator of information across the town, and its various social media platforms have been developed into a virtual community hub in this regard. These are used to convey key messages to the community to promote health and well-being and also to highlight the numerous events and activities that take place within the local community, thereby creating opportunities for people to come together.</p> <p>Alongside the six other local councils within the county, the Town Council is a member of the Carmarthenshire Public Services Board and contributes to the work of the Board via the operational group and the Board itself.</p>	More Equal Wales Cohesive Communities Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language
	2 Schools, Colleges and other Community Groups and Organisations	<p>Carmarthen Town Council has strong links with local schools and colleges, and during March 2020 a first ever Carmarthen Town Children’s Climate Conference was due to be held at St Peter’s Civic Hall. Over a dozen schools and other organisations were due to participate. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic the conference had to be postponed, but it will take place during early 2021.</p> <p>Excellent links have been developed with Trinity Saint David University, which provides higher education for over a thousand young people and adults in Carmarthen. During 2019/20 two students from the University worked alongside the Town Council on secondment, helping to formulate plans for the Council’s Carmarthen Children’s Climate Conference. Officers were requested to address Business School students about the</p>	Cohesive Communities More Equal Wales Prosperous Wales Resilient Wales Healthier Wales Globally Responsible Wales

		<p>work of the Town Council to raise the awareness of the Council's work and the local democratic process.</p> <p>The Council continues to interact with an ever-growing number of community groups to facilitate community benefits and to share information that will help to provide direction to the Council's work.</p> <p>During the year Council worked in Partnership with Dr M'z (young people's organisation) and the Carmarthen over 50+ Partnership on the 'Bites and Bytes Project' saw young people and older generations get together in a mutually beneficial way.</p>	
	3 Free Town Wi-Fi	The Town Council (in collaboration with its partners from the County Council) has invested in the provision of free public Wi-Fi in the town. As the project progresses, it is intended that this will provide information that will inform and influence immediate and longer term commercial and other strategic decisions.	<p>Prosperous Wales</p> <p>Cohesive Communities</p> <p>Vibrant Culture &amp; Thriving Welsh language</p>
	4 Civic Role	During the course of the year the Mayor and other civic role holders undertook very many community engagements and visits, and these often generated an exchange of information that promote the Town Council's work and also allows the Mayor to feed information back to the Council for it to consider as part of its future work programme. The Mayor contributed over £4,000 to various charitable and other good causes during the year.	<p>Cohesive Communities</p> <p>Vibrant Culture &amp; Thriving Welsh Language</p>
	5 Annual Sports Awards	The Town Council held its annual Sporting Awards Celebration in January 2020. This recognises the sporting achievements of individuals, teams, clubs and associations across the town.	<p>Cohesive Communities</p> <p>Healthier Wales</p>
	6 Annual Pride of Place Awards	In October 2019 the Town Council's annual awards and presentation evening took place. This recognised the work of local people in contributing towards the physical and aesthetic appearance of the town and is also an opportunity for the Council to formally acknowledge and reward the work of different individuals and charitable, voluntary and other organisations. Together, everybody works for the benefit of the local community - and makes Carmarthen a better place for everyone.	<p>Cohesive Communities</p> <p>Resilient Wales</p>

Carmarthenshire PSB Well-being Objective	Steps taken by the Town/Community Council that contribute to the Well-being Objective	How have the 5 Ways of Working been used to shape your activity? (Summary in Appendix A)	Which national Well-being Goals does this work support? (Summary in Appendix B)
<b>Prosperous People and Places:</b> To maximise opportunities for people and places in both urban and rural parts of our county	1 Annual Events	<p>Carmarthen Town Council has an annual programme of key events that help it to promote the well-being of local people and communities. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carmarthen Town Council Sports Awards</li> <li>• St David’s’ Week Activities and Events, including the March 1<sup>st</sup> Parade</li> <li>• Fairtrade Fortnight</li> <li>• Mayor’s Races</li> <li>• Mayor making Ceremony &amp; Civic Service</li> <li>• Carmarthen Park Summer Events Programme</li> <li>• River Festival</li> <li>• Gwyl Canol Tref</li> <li>• World Peace Day</li> <li>• Annual Pride of Place and Awards presentation evening</li> <li>• Fireworks Display</li> <li>• Annual Remembrance Day Activities</li> <li>• Christmas Lights ‘Switch on’ &amp; Reindeer Parade</li> <li>• Winter Wonderland</li> </ul>	Prosperous Wales Resilient Wales Healthier Wales More Equal Wales Cohesive Communities Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language
	2 Carmarthen Regeneration Forum	<p>The Carmarthen Regeneration Forum is a County Council managed group of very many stakeholders responsible for the economic development of the town. During the year it was chaired by the Mayor of Carmarthen. Several other councillors and officers are members of the Forum and its various sub-groups, all of whom work together to improve the future prosperity of Carmarthen.</p>	Prosperous Wales

	<p>3 The Role of Councillors</p>	<p>Elected members represent the Council on very many bodies including school governing bodies, the Chamber of Trade, the Community Health Council, Menter Gorllewin Myrddin and Oriol Myrddin. They report back regularly to the Council on their work with those organisations.</p> <p>There is a good balance of town councillors who also represent the County Council, thereby facilitating the flow of information between the two authorities and helping to create effective working relationships.</p>	<p>Cohesive Communities More Equal Wales Resilient Wales</p>
	<p>4 Community Well-being and Events Officer</p>	<p>Carmarthen Town Council has appointed a full time Community Well-being and Events officer. One of their key objectives is to act as a key point of contact and communication between the Town Council and the hundreds of different organisations that contribute towards the well-being of local people.</p>	<p>Cohesive Communities</p>
	<p>5 Supporting the Local Economy</p>	<p>Carmarthen Town Council has a policy of using local businesses and contractors wherever possible. This means that work opportunities and purchases are localised, with the financial and social benefits remaining within the local economy and benefitting the communities of Carmarthen.</p> <p>The large number of events referred to above are designed to help bring people to the town and thereby support the local shops and businesses. During December 2019 the Winter Wonderland made its second visit to Carmarthen Park and this has quickly established itself as an iconic annual event in west Wales, and provides a massive economic boost to the local economy.</p>	<p>Prosperous Wales Cohesive Communities</p>
	<p>6 Hanging Baskets</p>	<p>The Town Council provides the hanging basket scheme that brightens up the aesthetic appearance of the town and helps to attract visitors and shoppers to the town from south west Wales and beyond. The number of shops and businesses engaging with the scheme grew again in 2019.</p>	<p>Prosperous Wales Cohesive Communities</p>

## Reflection and Looking Forward

An opportunity to reflect on how things are going and outline future priorities.

What has worked well for the Council?	Several long-standing capital projects have been completed during the year, including a substantial investment in play equipment for children and young people at Carmarthen Park.
What have been the barriers for the Council?	In March 2020 the focus of the Town Council's work shifted dramatically towards supporting vulnerable people during the coronavirus pandemic. A range of initiatives and projects were very quickly initiated, including an initial focus on supporting local vulnerable people directly by the creation of a volunteer support scheme - 'Carmarthen Community Care'. This work is continuing and has been followed more recently by phase 2, where the Town Council has been leading work with stakeholders on the Carmarthen Town Recovery Plan in an effort to restore economic normality as soon as possible. This work will be reported upon in more detail in 2021.
Are there any matters the PSB could support delivery/progress on?	To continue to facilitate joint working and the sharing of good practice between members.
What are the Council's main priorities looking forward to 2020-21?	The Council will seek to increase its level of engagement with the local community and focus on its use of digital technology to achieve key objectives. It will also seek to progress the transfer of certain maintenance responsibilities within the town centre from the County Council.

## Biodiversity Duty Report to Welsh Government

### *Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 - Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Report*

- The Council provides a range of local services, and manages a number of green spaces. These include several public parks, play areas and Carmarthen Cemetery.
- The Council published a 'Biodiversity and Environment Development Action Plan' in September 2018 and it also has a Council Sub-Committee - the Sian Johnston Committee - which deals specifically with matters relating to the environment and sustainability. This makes recommendations to the Town Council on these matters.

## Appendix A: 5 Ways of Working

<b>Long Term</b> The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.
<b>Prevention</b> How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.
<b>Integration</b> Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
<b>Collaboration</b> Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.
<b>Involvement</b> The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

## Appendix B: National Well-being Goals

<b>National Goal</b>
<b>A Prosperous Wales:</b> An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the Global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately, and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.
<b>A Resilient Wales:</b> A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change.
<b>A Healthier Wales:</b> A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood
<b>A More Equal Wales:</b> A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances
<b>A Wales of Cohesive Communities:</b> Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities
<b>A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language:</b> where we have lots of opportunities to do different things and where lots of people can speak Welsh
<b>A Globally Responsible Wales:</b> where we look after the Environment and think about other people around the World