



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **MAYOR RE-ELECTED FOR A SECOND SUCCESSIVE YEAR**

#### **MAYOR MAKING CEREMONY CONDUCTED VIA 'ZOOM' AGAIN THIS YEAR**

The Annual Meeting of Carmarthen Town Council took place on Wednesday 28th May 2020. Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the annual meeting took place for a second successive year via video link.

The meeting commenced with a prayer from the Rev Beti Wyn James and this was followed by the election of the town's civic leaders.

Councillor Gareth John was elected to continue as Mayor for a second year in succession.

Cllr John reflected on a difficult year for the community due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Carmarthen Town Council was the first council in Wales to hold a virtual Mayor Making amidst the pandemic. The year had posed very many social, economic, and cultural challenges for Carmarthen Town Council and the town as a whole, with local businesses in particular having suffered from the challenges of long periods of lockdown and the lack of visitors and shoppers to the town.

'My thoughts are with all of those who have been ill with the virus and I wish to express my sincere condolences to all those who have lost family members or friends to this dreadful illness'.

Cllr John who instigated the 'Town Centre Recovery' group that continues to meet every Monday morning, added: 'We have worked hard with many partners as a Town Council to co-ordinate the economic recovery of the town and this has been very challenging - and will continue to be the case for some time to come. People have lost their jobs, and many business are still really struggling'.

'As we open up our town during the summer hopefully there will be opportunities for the local economy to recover as quickly as possible'.

The Mayor paid tribute to all the groups and volunteers offering assistance in response to the pandemic, especially Carmarthen Foodbank, Carmarthen Round Table, the Salvation Army, chapels and churches and the Community Care Group consisting of over 50 volunteers who put themselves forward to help provide support to local vulnerable people.

He also referred to the long list of 'firsts' during the year due to the changing circumstances and continued positive developments in the town such as provision of benches and parasols at the park and castle forecourt and free hanging baskets for businesses previously part of the scheme.

The Mayor recognised the hard work of Council staff during the last year to respond to the situation and fill the roles that needed to be filled whilst bringing people together. Thanks were given to Council for the opportunity to serve the community during a challenging year.

Councillor Miriam Moules was re-elected for a second successive year as the Deputy Mayor and Councillor Wyn Thomas again appointed as Sheriff of Carmarthen.

The new Mayor declared his wife Claire as his Mayoress, and the Rev Beti Wyn James as the Mayor's Chaplain for the year.

