



# **ANNUAL REPORT**



**MAY 2019 - NOVEMBER 2020**

## Welcome to this Annual Report.



Serving as the Town Mayor has once again been a great privilege and honour. This year has been a difficult one with the very real challenges of the Covid-19 Pandemic and the Town Council's thoughts are with the people of the town and especially with those who are particularly vulnerable to this dreadful disease.

All Councillors have been aware of the support groups being set up to aid those in need and indeed many have been active within them. The Council has been doing its best to help and support them in whatever way we can. Through our Town Clerk the Town Council have actively signpost groups and individuals to the appropriate departments at Denbighshire County Council and to our Third Sector Partners and secured external funding to offer direct financial support to local initiatives.

During the enforced shutdown of our Town Hall, the Town Council has taken the opportunity to renew the heating system, brighten up the foyer and generally improve our major asset so that when we are once again able to open, you will notice a distinct improvement in our facilities.

The Town Council has been prevented from meeting in person since April but has had been able to continue in a "virtual way" since May. Despite initial teething problems with the connections and software, we seem to have settled into a working relationship with Technology. We have been unable to hold our Annual Meeting until now but as my time as Town Mayor comes to an end I would like to thank all the Councillors for their dedication to the people of Llangollen during my Chairmanship and despite the current pandemic, I look forward to a bright future for the Town.

Cllr Jon Haddy  
Town Mayor.

### **Town Clerk's Statement.**

I am writing this year's report in the midst of the COVID -19 global pandemic, something I had not envisaged every having to do. Obviously, this unforeseen global catastrophe will have had a significant impact on many of our lives and this has certainly been the case for all of us here at the Town Council, staff and elected members alike.

Social distancing requirements have had a huge impact on the way we have operated the services we provide since March and unfortunately, we have had to close the Town Hall to visitors and cancel a number of events.

I have been particularly proud of the response the Town Council have shown in the face of adversity and the COVID -19 threat. The Town Council have proactively supported local help groups set up to practicably aid those in need.

Individual Councillors have and continue to volunteer with the Llangollen Coronavirus Help Group and the level of support offered from our residents has also reassured my belief that Llangollen is truly an amazing community with people who will go out of their way to help somebody else whom they have never even met.

It is this sense of community that provides me the confidence that Llangollen will bounce back as the town moves towards a new model of normality.

Gareth Thomas  
Town Clerk  
November 2020

## Conwy and Denbighshire Public Services Board.



Wales faces a number of new challenges now and in the future, economic and social recovery post Covid-19, climate change, poverty, health inequalities and the need for jobs and growth. To tackle these, we need to work together. To give current and future generations a good quality of life we need to think about the long-term impact of the decisions we make.

In April 2016, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 established a statutory board, known as a Public Services Board (PSB), in each local authority area in Wales.

Conwy and Denbighshire have used the power within the Act to merge both of their separate PSBs into a single board for the Conwy and Denbighshire region.



The PSB is a collection of public bodies working together to improve the well-being of their county. This means that as a board the Conwy and Denbighshire PSB must improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of the Conwy and Denbighshire area by working to achieve the national seven Well-being goals.

Membership consists of senior representatives from: -

- Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
- North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- Wales Community Rehabilitation Company
- National Probation Service
- Conwy County Borough Council
- Community & Voluntary Support Conwy
- Denbighshire County Council
- Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council
- Natural Resources Wales
- North Wales Fire and Rescue Service
- North Wales Police
- Public Health Wales
- The Welsh Government

Sustainable development is the overriding principle of Conwy and Denbighshire PSB's activities. This means acting in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The Public Service Board priorities continue to be focused on areas where collaboratively, they can make a difference and have a long-term impact.

Their priorities are based on analysis of other partnership boards who are already working to improve the North Wales region. These partnership boards include a focus on education, community safety, economic growth and well-being.

The PSB's Well-being Plan – sets out the challenges communities face which they feel they can really improve by working together. The plan focuses on 3 priority areas:

**People – Supporting Good Mental Well-being for all ages.**

This priority will focus on ways of working together to ensure people of all ages enjoy good mental well-being.

**Community – Supporting Community Empowerment.**

This priority will look at ways of working collectively to empower communities. This is particularly important in a climate of declining funding, where the resilience of communities will play a more important role. The PSB will support communities by working with them to develop the skills, structures and knowledge needed to develop their community to meet their local needs.

**Place – Supporting Environmental Resilience.**

This priority will look at way's partners can work together to develop environmental resilience in our communities. This priority considers several aspects of environmental resilience, including the need to better prepare and adapt, at a local level, to the impacts of climate change i.e. flooding, and how the PSB's can work together to address other priority matters of environmental concern such as reducing our carbon and ecological footprints.

The PSB's also has four principles that support these priorities:

- 1) To tackle inequalities and treat everyone equally
- 2) To support and promote the Welsh Language
- 3) To support people so they can access healthy, safe appropriate accommodation
- 4) To avoid duplicating work.

## About Llangollen Town Council.



Llangollen Town Council was created in 1974 following local government re-organisation and the disbanding of Llangollen Urban District Council. It is one of 37 city, town and community councils in Denbighshire.

Llangollen Town Council serves a community of approximately 3,900 residents (3,362 electorate). It consists of eleven Councillors elected for a term of 5 years. The Councillors elected in 2017 will hold office until May 2022.

Meetings of the Town Council are held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall on the third Tuesday of every month at 6.00 pm and the public are welcome to attend. Meetings of the Asset Management, Cittaslow Committee and Human Resources Committee are held quarterly.

The Town Council has a legal identity as corporate bodies and are separate and distinct from the persons who, comprise an authority for the time being. As such, they can hold property, employ staff and sue or be sued in their own name.

This means that individual councillors are not personally liable for acts done in good faith by the Council. However, Local Authorities derive their powers from statute and do not exist independently of it. This means that, although they may properly lobby for changes in the law, in their day-to-day conduct of affairs they must act within the law as it stands. It also means that councils are subject to the ultra vires doctrine and cannot act beyond the powers bestowed upon them by statute.

### Councillors

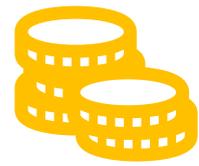
It is the role of Councillors as individuals to represent their communities and bring their views into the Council's decision-making process. individuals have a duty to act properly as a councillor.

Additionally, Members actively support other local and national groups and there are Member representatives on the following outside bodies: -

- Friends of Pengwern.
- Friends of the Town Hall Group.
- John Mathews Trust.
- Llangollen Christmas Festival.
- Llangollen Silver Band.
- Llangollen Youth Trust.
- Llangollen and Glyn Traian Welfare Charities.
- One Voice Wales.
- Plastic Free Llangollen.
- Ysgol y Gwernant.

**Finance and administration.**

The Council derives almost all of its funds from its precept. This is an additional amount which is added to Denbighshire County Council Tax bills based upon Llangollen Town Council's estimated expenditure.



The closure of the Town Hall under Section 52 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 has resulted in a loss of income through room hire. In addition, the Town Hall tenants have had to close their shops and offices.

Fortunately, the Council has relatively healthy financial reserves and balances and can be assured of the continued payment of the precept which is a statutory requirement placed on the County Council. However, the Town Council have acted prudently during the second financial year covered by this report by minimising expenditure whilst maintain adequate levels of reserves.

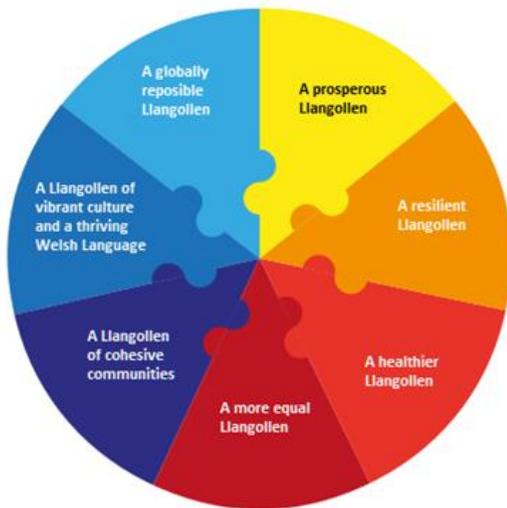
**Staffing.**

The statutory basis for employing a Clerk is Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Clerk to the Council as defined in the act is 'The Proper Officer' of the Council i.e. the person responsible for formal acts and to whom all correspondence is addressed in the normal course of events. A council must also appoint a Responsible Financial Officer to manage its finances. The Town Clerk fulfils both these functions.

The Town Clerk is a professional officer employed by the Town Council to manage its activities to provide administrative assistance and professional advice. The post holder supports the Town Council before, during and after meetings, preparing Councillors for their decision-making role and putting their decisions into practice. As its chief officer, the Town Clerk protects the Town Council as a corporate body.

In addition, the Town Council employs a part time Facilities Officer whose role is to assist in the maintenance of all Council premises, property, open spaces recreation areas, street furniture, bus shelters and any other item controlled by the Council and for the supervision, security and safety of the of the Town Hall.

## Llangollen Town Council's contribution to Well-being.



The Sustainable Development Principle described in the Act is the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales.

Town Council is keen to ensure that its policies and operational aspects meet the needs of the local community.

This section of the report describes how the Town Council has contributed to improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Llangollen.

### A prosperous Llangollen.

Llangollen Town Council continues to encourage and promote the economic and commercial vitality of the town and support existing major employers and more generally help to nurture new and innovative businesses.



COVID-19 has and will continue to have a profound effect on consumer behaviour and the look and feel of the future economy and every sector of the economy will need to look at how it conducts its business going forward.

Clearly Llangollen is dependent on the tourism and hospitality sectors which have, and will continue for some time, to suffer from the effects of the pandemic.

In addition, one of the town's major employers, Mail Solutions UK Ltd, has closed, as print volumes were down by 35 per cent a situation further exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. This decision has brought about the loss of the printing trade in the town after 100 years with a loss of 35 jobs.

The Town Council strives to represent the interests of its residents and businesses and will press to make sure that measures put in place will shape the longer term implications of the crisis, to build a stronger, more sustainable and resilient business offer.

## A resilient Llangollen.

The Town Council actively supports initiatives that enhances biodiversity in order to ensure natural environments with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and have the capacity to adapt to change.

In the spring of 2020, the County Council led a partnership involving the council, Natural Resources Wales and Llangollen Town Council have purchased 36 acres of land on the western approaches to the castle, locally known as 'the 'Pancake'.

the Town Council believed that bringing it into public ownership would be the best way to safeguard, not only the land, but also the castle against any future use of the land which might adversely affect this valuable natural asset. And contributed £5,000 towards the purchase costs



In December 2019 the Town Council published a Biodiversity Action Plan stimulated by the requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 which makes biodiversity an important consideration for all local authorities.

Section 40 of this act sets out the duty to conserve biodiversity: "Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity".

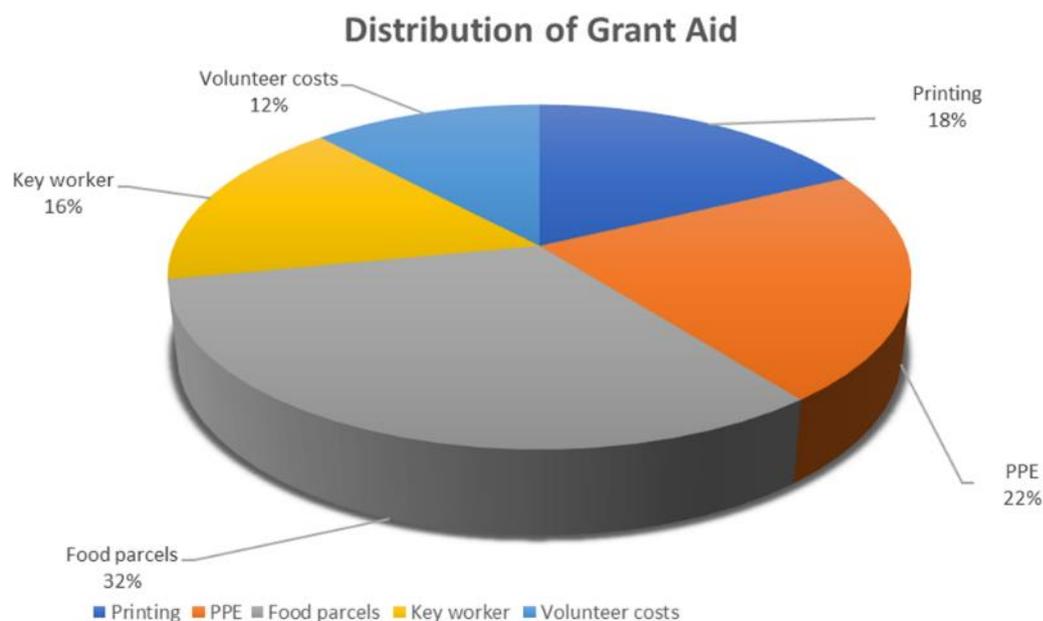
The Town Council, by adopting the action plan, is showing its commitment not only to this new duty but also to the promotion of resilient of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of the Town Council's functions.

## A healthier Llangollen.

The current pandemic is the most serious risk to the health of residents and the Town Council acted early to support local voluntary organisation during this crisis including The Llangollen Coronavirus Help Group, Llangollen Foodshare, and the Friends of Pengwern.

As well as providing the facilities of the Town Council offices to help coordinated efforts to support the community during the coronavirus pandemic funds were applied for by the Town Council on behalf of these groups and were held in the Town Mayors Charity account for dispersal to the partners.

These funds have now been spent and the areas supported by the grant assistance are detailed in the graph illustrated below



The Town Council will continue to be vigilant both in the delivery of its own services in a Covid secure manner but also, by responding to any significant demands from the local community.

More generally the Town Council actively supports local support groups such as Llangollen CAB, Dementia Friendly Llangollen and will work in collaboration with local providers and the third sector to improve access to activities and opportunities for older people; improving access to activities for young people; supporting and enabling better sports provision and researching local healthcare needs.

## A more equal Llangollen.



The Town Council has actively promoted the views and interests of Llangollen at the national and county level on a host of consultative matters.

The Town Council's Planning Committee has continued to be vigilant in scrutinising planning proposals and has made careful and considered recommendations to 46 planning applications received.

Even though the Town Council has limited powers in respect of planning, on the whole recommendations have been noted by the County Council's Planning Committee.

Since May 2019, the Town Council also responded to consultations on the Future Audit Arrangements for Community Councils in Wales and the Local Development Plan 2018 – 2033 Draft Preferred Strategy.



The Town Council continues to make public information accessible through a variety of formats utilising newsletters, social media, and the Town Council's own website [www.llangollewntowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.llangollewntowncouncil.gov.uk)

The Town Council have embraced the World Cafe concept a simple, effective, and flexible format for hosting large group discussions.

The methodology has been modified to meet local needs and the Community Cafe concept has been adopted by the Town Council as a means of gauging community views through interactive events.

The outcome of these events are analysed and are used to inform future Town council policies and programmes.



## A Llangollen of cohesive communities.

The Town Council has embarked on the production of a Place Plan for Llangollen based on the Shape my Town model of community engagement and Shape My Llangollen is the result.



An initial vision document was prepared and the Town Team, working on behalf of the Town Council, were in the process of moving to the publication of an action plan just prior to the restrictions put in place during the Covid-19 pandemic. This has not only hindered progress on the plan, in terms of public consultation, but has also brought a raft of other issues to the fore that will now influence and guide the plans for the town.

The Town Team therefore now progressing the work done to date based on a considerable amount of consultation and research and are also looking at aspects relating to the effects of the pandemic with a view to production of an action in early 2021



Since May 2019 Members of the Town Council support a range of Community groups which include: -

- Llangollen Dementia Friendly Community.
- Friends of Pengwern.
- Llangollen Food Bank.
- Llangollen Coronavirus Help Group.
- Llangollen Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Llangollen 2020.

In addition, financial support was provided to the following groups under the Town Council's Community Support Grant:

- Friends of Pengwern, Zero Waste and Foodshare Llangollen.
- Llangollen Football Club.
- Llangollen Museum.
- New Dot Cinema.
- Vale of Clwyd Mind.
- Ysgol Bryn Collen and Ysgol and y Gwernant PTFA's.
- Ysgol and y Gwernant.

## A Llangollen of vibrant culture and a thriving Welsh Language.

The Town Council continued to acknowledge the importance of a number of community events, run solely by volunteers, which greatly benefit the town. Llangollen Hamper Food Festival, the Christmas Festival, the Llangollen International Music Eisteddfod and the Llangollen Fringe and the Women's Festival all add to the vibrancy and cultural of our town.

Direct financial support was given to the Llangollen International Music Eisteddfod in 2019 and indirect support was given to the Llangollen Fringe and other community events using the Town Hall through subsidies hire fees costing the Town Council £8,950.



Since March 2020, the Town Hall had to be closed under Section 52 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and therefore It is clear that the income from room hire will not be achieved as it is unlikely that full use of the Town Hall will become a reality during this financial year and therefore there will be an anticipated shortfall in income of .

As a Cittaslow Town, Llangollen is keen to encourage and celebrate diversity rather than standardisation. In this context events help to raise awareness of Cittaslow and the goals and principles that each Cittaslow town commits to work to achieve.

One such goals is promoting and increasing the value of local cultural events and as the variety of events staged throughout the year attract large audiences and day visitors to the Town and greater focus will have to be directed to these activity in the future.

## A globally responsible Llangollen.



In October 2020 Llangollen Town Council declared a climate and ecological emergency pledging to work towards making Llangollen carbon neutral by 2030. To help achieve this as well as committing to making the authority net carbon zero by 2030, at the latest, the Town Council will establish a Community Climate Change Committee to develop an action plan based on an ongoing climate and ecological risk assessment which would regularly report back to Full Council who will deliver the climate and emergency action plan.

The Town Council continues to support Llangollen's status as a Cittaslow towns aim to be places where people enjoy living, working, and visiting. Cittaslow principles encourage towns to adopt good environmental practices and encourages and supports practical projects that help local people, and local businesses, by maintaining and promoting the unique traditions, strengths, and character of their town.

In the spring of 2019 the Town Council secured 120 beech saplings from the Woodland Trust and with the assistance of the AONB Countryside Officers these were planted on the around the West and North sides of the Recreation Field adjacent to the sports centre



Each Cittaslow town agrees to adopt the following principles fostering economic, social and environmental sustainability:

- Encourage and celebrate diversity rather than standardisation.
- Support and promote local culture and local traditions.
- Work for a more sustainable environment.
- Raise awareness and appreciation of local produce and local businesses.
- Promote healthy eating and healthy living.
- Work with the local community to build on these principles.



During the year, the Councils Cittaslow Committee have launched a new website and convened several consultations and community engagement events

## Councillors attendance.



### Town Council meetings.

Councillor.	Meetings attended	Attendance %
Cllr Baker.	14	72%
Cllr Beech (Resigned 03/20)	9	60%
Cllr Carole (Co-opted 10/20)	1	100%
Cllr Cheminai.	17	94%
Cllr Edwards (Resigned 09/19)	8	94%
Cllr Grindley.	18	100%
Cllr Haddy.	18	100%
Cllr Hughes. (Resigned 03/20)	15	84%
Cllr Keddie. (Elected 10/19)	12	100%
Cllr Lovelock.	16	88%
Cllr Lube.	16	88%
Cllr Mile.	18	100%
Cllr Richards (Resigned 07/20)	14	100%
Cllr Palmer (Co-opted 09/20)	2	100%

**Total 18**

### Asset Management

**Total 6**

#### Committee meetings.

Councillor.	Meetings attended	Attendance %
Cllr Baker.	5	84%
Cllr Beech (Resigned 03/20)	5	84%
Cllr Edwards (Resigned 09/19)	5	84%
Cllr Haddy.	6	100%
Cllr Keddie. (Elected 10/19)	2	100%
Cllr Richards (Resigned 07/20)	5	84%

### Cittaslow Committee meetings.

**Total 7**

Councillor.	Meetings attended	Attendance %
Cllr Baker.	5	71%
Cllr Cheminai.	6	86%
Cllr Grindley.	6	86%
Cllr Lovelock.	6	86%
Cllr Mile.	6	86%

### Human Resources

**Total 3**

#### Committee meetings.

Councillor.	Meetings attended	Attendance %
Cllr Beech (Resigned 03/20)	3	100%
Cllr Cheminai.	3	100%
Cllr Haddy.	3	100%
Cllr Lovelock.	2	66%
Cllr Richards (Resigned 07/20)	3	100%

## Contacts.



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