

CTC 15

Ymgynghoriad ar rôl, llywodraethiant ac atebolrwydd y sector cynghorau tref a chymuned

Consultation on the role, governance and accountability of the community and town council sector

Ymateb gan: Cyngor Tref Llandrindod

Response from: Llandrindod Town Council

Below is the consultation response from Llandrindod Wells Town Council:

The role and value of community and town councils in Wales;

The role of Town & Community Councils in Wales is many fold. T&CC's are the closest link to the general public and the sector which residents tend to approach before contacting a unitary authority. T&CC's are often made up of local residents who are well known and respected within the community and often are connected with other community and third party sector organisations.

Residents tend to be happier to discuss issues important to them with someone they know and trust in the community. T & CC's regularly introduce residents to the unitary authority members and provide crucial links to relevant officers within the unitary authority. They also signpost residents to other support services for a diverse number of reasons.

T&CC's campaign for their communities and often for Wales as a whole. They issue surveys and consultations to establish what the community wants and identifies what issues are concerning them.

T&CC's are the closest level of elected or co-opted members serving the community and working for the direct benefit of their community and residents.

Whether the sector is fit for purpose in an evolving local government landscape;

In this ever changing financially pressured climate, T&CC's are better placed to take on services which the public are demanding from unitary authorities often on a more cost effective basis and delivering far more relevant standards required.

T&CC's often struggle to set sufficient budgets to meet the requirements as unitary authorities continue to cut and lessen the services residents feel are most important. Libraries, public toilets, grass cutting, town maintenance and so many others.

T&CC's are best placed to communicate and deliver services to the residents and need sufficient funds to provide these. The profile of T&CC's needs to be lifted and promoted more greatly by Welsh Government and award adequate funding and more grant opportunities for this sector.

T&CC's often work with the third sector and achieve wonderful meaningful projects of great importance and a far more community led way.

There is huge scope within the T&CC's sector, provided we are given the tools to enable development.

Over the last 10 years our sector has evolved greatly, with more legislation and statutory duties being placed on us, many of these lead to even more community engagement at the grass roots. Funding for community engagement would greatly assist with raising the profile of our sector.

Governance and scrutiny arrangements and its impact on accountability and transparency; T&CC's are heavily scrutinised by Wales Audit and are supported by One Voice Wales and SLCC. These organisations ensure that Governance and Accountability, Openness and Transparency are at the forefront within our sector. We may be small, but we are effective.

Scope of digital and new technology to improve decision-making, service provision and participation in local democratic processes;

One Voice Wales is actively supporting digital work and has specific officers in place to work with council's on projects and initiatives to promote our work and bring new innovations to councils. This is an excellent initiative, and one which many councils are using to develop our digital services and inclusivity.

Our sector will benefit greatly from adopting new technology to improve our work, and the recent legislation to give Welsh councils the power to hold remote/hybrid meetings has assisted our council greatly due to the rurality of our area and has also encouraged a more diverse membership. No longer is the typical membership consisting of male, over 60's.

How new powers and responsibilities for this tier of government are utilised to support communities.

Previously I have referred to new legislation and the introduction of GPOC in Wales have given far more scope to Council's with more diverse projects. This raises the bar for our sector and has made things we only dreamed of, be possible. This has enabled us to widen the scope for ideas which seem to be really important to our residents and communities.

This Council fully supports the submission of the response from One Voice Wales and echoes its well-researched comments. As Town Clerk I participated in remote meetings discussion this consultation, this proved to be an important and lively discussion with the general consensus that our sector is the life-blood of the community, a sector most likely to engage with the

residents and be contacted by the community. T&CC's are the face of communities and represent the communities voice.

This Council is willing to provide further information or assistance should it be required by myself and Town Clerk and RFO – with nearly 30 years service within this sector.

Kind Regards

Jane Johnston PSLCC, CiLCA (Wales)

Town Clerk

Llandrindod Wells Town Council

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Please note our new email address: clerk@llandrindodtowncouncil.co.uk