

CTC 26

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 Y Bontfaen (Bwrdeistref Hynafol) gyda Llanfeliddan

Response from: Cowbridge (Ancient Borough) with Llanblethian Town Council



Be kind



Byddwch yn garedig

COWBRIDGE (ANCIENT BOROUGH) with  
LLANBLETHIAN TOWN COUNCIL  
CYNGOR TREF  
Y BONTFAEN (Bwrdeistref Hynafol) gyda  
LLANFLEIDDAN

## Response to the Senedd Local Government and Housing Committee Consultation

**From:** Cowbridge (Ancient Borough) with Llanblethian Town Council

**Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024

### 1. Reason for Report

Response to the Inquiry into the Role, Governance, and Accountability of Community and Town Councils in Wales

### 2. Introduction

Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council is pleased to contribute to the consultation regarding the role, governance, and accountability of community and town councils in Wales. As a town council with a long-standing commitment to local service delivery and civic engagement, we recognise the importance of ensuring that the sector is fit for purpose and able to support our communities in an evolving local government landscape. We particularly wish to highlight the importance of placemaking in shaping our local environment and improving community well-being, which we believe should be a key priority for town councils moving forward.

### 3. The Role and Value of Community and Town Councils

Our council plays a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of life for residents by organising and facilitating a wide range of cultural, civic, and community activities throughout the year. These events are designed to foster community spirit, strengthen local identity, and ensure that residents feel a strong connection to their town.

#### ***Some key events and activities led by Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council include:***

- **Christmas Lights Display:** The council organises annual festive lights, which enhances the town's atmosphere and supports local businesses by attracting visitors to the town centre during the holiday season.
- **Summer Basket Displays:** Each summer, the council arranges for the display of hanging flower baskets throughout the town, contributing to the town's aesthetics and promoting community pride.
- **May Day Celebrations:** A traditional celebration, where the council facilitates local activities that reflect the town's heritage and provide entertainment for all ages.
- **Remembrance Sunday and Civic Sunday Events:** The council takes a leading role in organising and supporting these important civic events, ensuring the community comes together to honour those who have served and continue to serve.



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- **Christmas Parade and Fairs:** These events are a highlight for local families and provide an opportunity for the town to come together and celebrate the holiday season.
- **Coronation and Golden Jubilee Celebrations:** The council organised the recent Golden Jubilee and Coronation events, reinforcing our commitment to recognising significant events in British history.

These initiatives highlight the council's role in maintaining a vibrant community, promoting local business, and preserving the town's unique culture and heritage. The focus on placemaking is central to many of these efforts, ensuring that the town remains a thriving, attractive, and well-connected place for residents and visitors alike.

#### **4. Fitness for Purpose in an Evolving Local Government Landscape**

Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council believes that community and town councils are integral to the delivery of local services that larger governing bodies might not be able to address effectively. The sector's agility allows for quick responses to community needs and the capacity to organise local events that contribute significantly to community well-being. We also recognise the need for ongoing capacity-building within the sector to meet new challenges, particularly in governance, digital engagement, and service provision. The introduction of new responsibilities through legislation, such as the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, has highlighted the need for councils to continuously adapt and develop. We are committed to evolving with these changes to ensure we remain fit for purpose. It should also be noted that not all recommendations from the 2017 report by the Independent Review Panel into the governance of community and town councils have yet been implemented, and we urge that these are considered in the future reform process.

#### **5. Governance and Scrutiny Arrangements**

Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council maintains robust governance structures to ensure transparency and accountability in all our activities. We operate according to sound financial management principles and provide regular updates to the public through council meetings and digital platforms. The council values the importance of strong scrutiny mechanisms, both internally and through external audits, and we continuously seek to improve our processes in line with best practice guidance from One Voice Wales and Audit Wales. However, we believe that further training and resources from higher levels of government could enhance the governance capacities of smaller councils across Wales.

***Prepared by: Chief Executive Town Clerk Cathy Kennedy on behalf of Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council***