

This document provides a translation of correspondence received from Crymych Community Council

# CYNGOR CYMUNED CRYMYCH

## CRYMYCH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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### **Crymych Community Council's response to the Local Government and Housing Committee's inquiry on the role, governance and accountability of the community and town council sector**

Community councils are people's main contact for local issues that affect them, and community councils can lead projects that arise from the community.

When Pembrokeshire Council started charging for using the Crymych car park, there was local opposition, so the community council pays the county council so that residents and visitors can use the car park for free. This supports the economy and businesses in the area to promote free parking for their customers.

Similarly, the County Council wanted to close the toilets in Crymych due to maintenance costs. Crymych Community Council has taken on a long-term lease on the toilets in order to keep them open, and partially funds this through rent money for storage that's part of the toilet building. Again, keeping the toilets was an important issue for the community.

The community council has also facilitated and supported small local organisations to receive grants: one scheme was piloted to give carers respite with the support of the community council, and that scheme now runs independently. The opportunity to pilot new schemes and projects is important.

It has also been a driving force in bringing Crymych businesses together to form the Preseli Business Club, which now organises an annual calendar that includes social and commercial events so that there are no clash in terms of days; creates a flyer for local events to attract tourists and visitors to spend money in the ward; and supports each other independently of the community council.

Our community council has evolved and responds to what the ward's communities need now, which has been important in ensuring that the community council remains relevant, community councils may need to evolve in similar ways. But they certainly have a key role in our communities.

In terms of the capacity of digital technology and new technology to improve decision-making processes, there is a need for a central procedure to have web-based software for all

community councils to be working to the same standard and guidelines. With over 700 town and community councils in Wales, charging them £52 each, the equivalent of £1 a week, would mean £36,400 a year to pay for a central scheme. Professional systems require investment.

Data

can then be collected following an appropriate schedule. (Everyone may need to give £2 a week to make this a success)

Community councils should be structured and supported to ensure that community councillors fully appreciate and support the ambitions of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and structure the community council to attract members that represent the seven aims of the Act:

1. A prosperous Wales
2. A resilient Wales
3. A healthier Wales
4. A more equal Wales
5. A Wales of more cohesive communities
6. A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
7. A globally responsible Wales

Community councillors should then ensure that issues such as the planning and allocation of social housing in a village or town are fully approved and that they are scrutinised by the community council. This would include approving housing letting policies. In some cases, the community council would approve allocations before their final approval. This would ensure that the linguistic balance of Welsh-speaking communities is protected. Feedback from community councils would inform the well-being plans of county councils, Public Service Boards and Regional Boards.

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