

St Clears Town Council
Minutes of the St Clears Town Council Mayor Making Ceremony
held in the Gate, St Clears
on Thursday 14th May 2014 at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillors RG Edwards, CM Davies, DR Phillips, JSV Rees, Dr WEVJ Davies, PJ Rogers, L L ap T Davies, KA Major, I Price

In the Chair – Councillor RG Edwards (Outgoing Mayor)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Hughes and C Ingleton.

2. Retiring Mayor's Address and Annual Report

The Retiring Town Mayor Councillor RG Edwards provided a detailed account of activities during the 2014/15 civic year.

“Fellow Councillors and guests. It gives me pleasure to present a report on our activities over the past year. Can I say that it has been a privilege for Myself and Joan to be Mayor and Mayoress of St Clears for the past year. It is only when we see and then reflect on all that has been achieved that we begin to understand the part that the council plays within our community. I consider that the role of Mayor has two main aspects. The first, as Chair of the Council, is to work alongside the Clerk to ensure the smooth running of the council's affairs. This year our new Clerk Emma, and I have worked through a number of issues together. I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for the patience and professionalism with which she has undertaken her role.

This year, along with running our regular committees and council meetings, we have been able to rationalise our position in terms of our assets, resources and contracts.

The Town Council has consolidated its position with regards to the Welfare Field and we now have regular Management meetings to oversee that development.

Our CCTV system has been updated and at the same location we have made it more tolerable to meet and work in the Mayors Parlour. We have modified that environment to make it more suitable for purpose.

There has been a rationalising of our practical equipment (tentage etc) and storage capacity, discarding much redundant equipment. All the contracts and necessary policies have been reviewed so that we are up-to-date with those requirements. I am particularly pleased with these practical steps as they place the council on a steady footing for the future.

The budget for the year was on target and we have modernised our payment system to include on-line banking for the first time. The Community Chest initiative seems to have worked well and we have been able to distribute funds to a far greater number of local organisations to support community activities.

Locations around the town have been appropriately decorated to celebrate

the changing seasons and events with flowers, bunting and Christmas lighting, installed at the appropriate times.

Communication was identified as a priority for the year. The website has been modified and a bilingual capacity added. Each Tuesday morning has been set aside so that members of the public can come and have a face to face discussion regarding any issues of concern. We were also able to hold a public meeting which identified some issues which required to be addressed. One example of this was our Events Calendar. We were able to produce this in a relatively short period of time and it has been well received.

We have installed our first notice board which is being well used to promote a range of local news and activities.

A further valuable development for us is that we have established, along with neighbouring councils, a pattern of regular meetings. These provide an opportunity for us to share common issues and concerns, discuss possible outcomes as well as learn about such topics as Policing and Footpath Management.

I would like to thank my fellow councillors for their work in attaining all these achievements.

The second aspect to the role of Mayor is the Civic role. This has been the 40th year that our area has had a Mayor and you will recall that we prepared a booklet which documented some of the highlights of the past 40 years. I was pleased to be able to mark this anniversary in such a way as this.

To celebrate this anniversary further, the Mayoress and I organised a 70s evening as a fundraising event for our chosen charities, Prostate Cancer Research and The Stroke Association. It was a great success – an evening which had St Clears rocking with disco fever!!

As a result of this and other generous donations, I was pleased to be able to present substantial cheques to representatives of those charities as well as to the Carmarthenshire Palliative Care unit at the Glangwili Hospital.

Along with the regular visits to annual occasions such as the YFC Show, Carnivals, Fireworks, Christmas lights, sporting occasions and organisations involving both young and old in our community, the Mayoress and I have been able to attend events such as The World War 1 Commemorations, the first World Alternative Games event held in St Clears and the Scarlet's Summer Rugby camp. We represented St Clears at Dinefwr Park to hear of all the interesting projects, including our own Heritage Trail, which have been achieved in Carmarthenshire with the RDP Heritage Grant Funding. We have officiated at the opening of The Ysgybor Fach nursery in Bancyfelin and also at the re-launch of ST Clears Spar shop.

We entertained the Scouts in the chamber, explaining how the council works and giving them a chance to provide their own ideas on how things could change in our area.

The Mayoress attended a vintage tea party to raise money for Harefield hospital. We have unveiled a mile stone in Bancyfelin to replace the original which had been damaged. Then last Saturday we gathered with Lynn Bowen's family to dedicate the Bench on Peillac Way to his memory. It was a fitting way of paying tribute to Lynn and for the sterling work he did within our community.

As I said at the beginning, it has been a privilege to represent St Clears as mayor for the past year. We have enjoyed the role even though it has had one

or two challenges along the way. I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of the year. Finally, I wish Mark and Helen all the very best as they take up the chain and lead the council into the next year. Thank you.

3. To formerly appoint the Town Mayor for the civic year 2015/16.

Councillor Edmund Davies moved that Councillor Mark Davies be appointed Town Mayor for the civic year 2015/16. The motion was seconded by Councillor Philip Rogers. Council were in agreement. RESOLVED that Councillor CM Davies be formally appointed as Town Mayor for the 2015/16 Civic Year.

Councillor CM Davies accepted the appointment and made the statutory declaration of acceptance of office and was invested with the Chain of Officer by the retiring Town Mayor. Mrs Helen Davies received her chain of office from the retiring Mayoress Mrs Joan Edwards.

The Town Mayor thanked the outgoing Mayor and noted that it had been a privilege and a pleasure to work with him. Gifts were presented to the outgoing Mayor and Mayoress by the new Mayor and Mayoress.

The Mayor thanked Councillors for his nomination and noted that he was looking forward to developing Council business through the committee structure. He wished the Clerk, Emma Smith well as she was due to go on maternity leave within the next week and noted that he looked forward to welcoming back a familiar face, Elfyn Williams who would be covering the Clerk's absence.

The Mayor noted his intention to listen to the voice of the community and look for new ways, including social media, face to face contact and continuing the 'Meet the Mayor' sessions in order to do this.

The Mayor confirmed that his charities for the year would be the local Taf QT Club who do lots with in the community to support people with dementia and their carers and secondly the Bowel Cancer Trust as many people within the local community had been victim to this illness in recent years. The Mayor asked for everybody's support in his fundraising efforts for these two charities.

The Mayor said that he would listen to young people and the older generation and foster links with organisations, community groups and new residents. He noted that it was a duty to give something back to the electorate and that Council should always be trying their best to do this.

The Mayor thanked Council for trusting him to serve for the year and noted it would be an honour to serve as Mayor. He also thanked the Mayoress for her support and also to friend and family for attending the evening.

4. To formally appoint the Deputy Town Mayor for the civic year 2015/16.

The Mayor called upon Councillor RG Edwards to propose the Deputy Mayor for 2015/16. Councillor RG Edwards move that Councillor DR Phillips be appointed as Deputy Mayor for the 2015/16 Civic Year. The motion was seconded by Councillor I Price. Council was in agreement/
RESOLVED that Councillor DR Phillips be formally appointed as Deputy Town Mayor for the 2015/16 Civic Year.

Councillor DR Phillips made the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

5. Vote of Thanks

The Mayor called upon Councillor JSV Rees to propose a vote of thanks to the retiring Town Mayor Councillor RG Edwards. Councillor Rees thanked the retiring Mayor and Mayoress for their continuation of community links, enthusiasm and sensitive approach during the year and thanked the Mayor for chairing meetings with tact and consideration. Councillor WEVJ Davies seconded the proposal noting that Councillor Edwards had been a wonderful Mayor. Council seconded the motion and a vote of thanks was given.

At this point Councillor LL ap T Davies moved that the remaining agenda items be deferred to the next council meeting on 19 May. Council agreed the proposal. **RESOLVED that the remaining agenda items should be discussed on the 19 May 2015.**

6. Civic Reception

Following the Ceremony the Town Mayor, Councillor CM Davies invited all present to join in the civic reception.

Ceremony terminated 19.45pm