

Budget Working Party Sub-Committee

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Budget Working Party Sub-Committee to be held on TUESDAY the 1st October,2019 at the Welfare Hall, Loughor commencing at 6.15pm, for the transaction of the following business:-

1. To appoint a Chair
2. To appoint a Vice Chair
3. Apologies for absence.
4. To receive disclosures of Personal Interests from Members under the Council's Code of Conduct.
(Note: Members are requested to identify the item number and subject matter that their Personal Interest relates to. Where the Personal Interest is a Prejudicial Interest they must withdraw from the meeting while that item of business is discussed).
5. To consider the Report of the Clerk (copy attached).

Dated this 24th September,2019

Clerk to the Council

**Circulation – Councillors J.Bowen,William Evans, I. James, C.Phillips,
C.Richards and R.Smith**

Agenda Item 5

**LLWCHWR TOWN COUNCIL
BUDGET WORKING PARTY SUB-COMMITTEE
Date 1stOctober,2019
Report of the Clerk**

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Agenda Item 5

**LLWCHWR TOWN COUNCIL
BUDGET WORKING PARTY SUB-COMMITTEE**

Date 1st October,2019

Report of the Clerk

1- INTRODUCTION

Members will recall that at its Meeting held on the 2nd September 2019 the Town Council resolved to convene a Meeting of the Budget Working Party to consider matters relating generally to Carbon Offsetting and re-cycling issues. It was recognised that the Council does not have a specific Standing Committee to deal with these issues and hence it was determined to convene the Budget Working Party and to expand its terms of reference.

2-TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Clerk sets out below the existing Terms of Reference for the Budget Working Party as approved by Council-

Budget Working Party

- a) Composition-shall consist of 6 Members and the Chair of the Welfare Hall Management Committee to be appointed at the Council's Annual General Meeting
- b) Quorum-a minimum of 4 Members is required for a valid Meeting
- c) Chair- The Committee shall appoint a Chair and Vice Chair from among its membership .
- d) Function-
 - i) to consider and approve the proposals for the Council's annual Budget
 - ii) when required to consider and approve any financial matter appertaining to the Council
 - iii) when required to consider any matter relating to the Council's Annual Return
 - iv) when required to consider any audit or governance issues including any proposals for amendment to the Council's Constitution
 - v) when required to consider any issues in respect of –
 - aa) risk assessments
 - bb) financial plans or strategies
 - cc) assets
 - vi)to receive and consider any Report from the Clerk
- e)Decision Making-the Working Party does not have decision making powers but can make recommendations to Full Council”

It is proposed to add the following as paragraph vii) to d) above as follows-

“vii)when required to consider any issues or matters relating to or in respect of carbon offsetting, re-cycling and bio diversity or any other environmental matter which may affect or be the responsibility of the Council.”

Members are requested to amend or approve the above addition and recommend its adoption by Full Council.

3-CARBON OFFSETTING

Members will recall that at the last Meeting of Council they considered a Carbon Offsetting Report forwarded by Swansea Council; for convenience part of the Report is set out below-

“Swansea Rural Development Partnership (RDP) recently commissioned a study into the feasibility of setting up a Community Carbon Offsetting business in rural Swansea. As a way of keeping you up to date with our work, and as we think you may be interested in the findings of the report, please find it attached. If you wish to discuss it with us, please let us know and we’ll be happy to come and meet you.”

The Clerk sets out below some extracts from the Report which was carried out by Urban Foundry who were commissioned by Swansea Council who were asked to develop the scope for a carbon offsetting scheme in the local area.

It may be useful to state what is Carbon Offsetting

“Carbon offsetting initiatives have stemmed from the 1997 Kyoto protocol, an international agreement linked to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which commits its Parties by setting internationally binding emission reduction targets. This protocol has targeted more developed countries as it recognises the high levels of emissions produced as a result of industrial booms in those countries over the past 150 years, placing greater responsibilities on such nations.

Since then, carbon offsetting schemes that allow individuals and companies to invest in environmental projects around the world in order to balance out their own carbon footprint have increased substantially. For individuals and businesses to engage it means weighing up costs of such initiatives: costs of inaction; direct costs; and cost of using land for trees rather than other purposes such as crops.

These projects/ schemes are predominantly run by well-established, large scale providers, charities or governmental partners and entering into this as a business will be challenging for any small organisation with immediate competition from well established, well-resourced national and global providers and swift scaling (with the attendant costs) necessary in order to effectively compete.

Key drivers

It is useful to distinguish between two key drivers. The primary driver for this research

was the notion of organisations (primarily private businesses) that produce carbon as polluters, and of introducing carbon offsetting as a means of those individual organisations offsetting their own carbon footprint. A similar process applies to individuals as consumers/citizens e.g. offsetting household carbon and/or activities that temporarily increase an individual’s carbon footprint such as travel by plane.

The typical approach towards carbon offsetting is that first the carbon footprint of the organisation as a whole (or sometimes a specific action in the case of individuals) is calculated. There are numerous online free tools as well as some more sophisticated (and some less so) paid-for services. There are then multiple carbon offset websites that act effectively as a marketing interface/brokerage for the most part (many also contain online carbon offset calculators for an ‘all under one roof’ service).

The carbon level is matched to a financial value of investment that will fund one or more accredited schemes to then offset that level of carbon and a transaction is made,

with varying levels of feedback afterwards. Costs vary dependent on the nature of the offset required but for small impacts can be quite modest, ranging to more significant costs for larger organisations involved.

There are many and varied carbon offset schemes across the world – the basic premise is that they allow both organisations/companies and individuals to balance the carbon footprint that they create (sometimes for a specific action or activity such as catching a flight, or for the entirety of their lifestyle/business) by investing in accredited environmental projects.

The substance of this commission was to explore carbon offsetting through tree planting, but it should be noted that carbon offset schemes also take other forms, such as investing funds in promulgating clean energy technology and improving insulation in homes, thus ‘offsetting’ by reducing carbon produced elsewhere. Many schemes have moved away from tree planting as other means of reduction of carbon elsewhere have proved faster, easier to monitor and manage, and can also bring other benefits, for example a more fuel-efficient cooking appliance not only reduces energy usage but is cheaper to run for a family on low income, generating socio-economic as well as environmental benefits.

There are hundreds of companies running carbon offsetting schemes in which large businesses can invest. For example, Snowcarbon, Carbonfund, Carbonfootprint and Native Energy to name a few”

As an example the Clerk sets out an extract from the Snowcarbon website-

“Snowcarbon was created to try to enable more skiers to travel to ski resorts by train, because rail travel to a ski resort creates only a fraction of the carbon emissions of the equivalent journey by plane or car, and can be a way to make the journey become an enjoyable part of the holiday. Research by Best Foot Forward (2011) has shown that typical one-way journey by plane to a ski resort creates around 122 kg of CO₂ per person; a car around 240 kg of CO₂ (per vehicle), but a journey by train only 12 kg of CO₂ per person.

The Clerk sets out below some carbon offsetting schemes from the Carbonfootprint website-

“Improved Cookstoves for Social Impact in Ugandan Communities

- Type: Household Cookstoves
- Location: Uganda, Africa

Borehole Rehabilitation Project in Uganda

- Type: Clean Drinking Water
- Location: Uganda, Africa

UK Tree Planting + Brazil Reducing Deforestation

- Type: Trees and Forestry
- Location: UK & Brazil

Turning back to the Report there are many projects that focus on tree planting-
“Ovo energy have paired up with conservation volunteers since 2015 to

encourage thousands of volunteers and community groups to 'join in, feel good' by planting native trees in community green spaces across the UK. This has subsequently led to the creation of the 'I Dig Trees' programme, providing free tree packs for community groups to plant in their local green space and opportunities for people to volunteer at organised tree planting events. To date, 728,000 trees have been distributed and planted across the UK."

The Report states to establish a carbon offset business from scratch requires a minimum of 3 to 5 hectares-obviously ,at present,the Council does not have such a land holding.

The Report then considered the issue locally-

"All the businesses that we spoke to said that they had some form of a 'green' policy. However, few had formal documented sustainable workplace practices, with only one citing a formal written policy.

Most businesses that we spoke to demonstrated good awareness and attitudes towards sustainability issues and a range of ethical behaviours were expressed which took various forms such as:

- using local suppliers (e.g. food businesses buying where possible from Swansea Market, and Gower butchers, which was about reducing food miles as well as supporting the local economy);
- minimising physical waste (e.g. hair dressers using careful measurements for hair colours, shampoo and conditioner to minimise wastage);
- reduction of waste from utilities (driven as much, if not more, by cost-savings for metered supplies as it was from an environmental perspective) with several choosing to source their utilities from Bulb because it was a more environmentally-friendly supplier;
- ensuring that cleaning products were environmentally friendly;
- adopting recyclable packaging, using glass jars, PLA bottles, and brown paper packaging;

CLERK'S NOTE

Below is an extract from the Bulb website

"Simpler, cheaper, greener

We've got three values that run through our company like the words in a stick of rock.

Simpler

We make energy simpler – so we make your life easier. You can switch to Bulb in 2 minutes.

We've got one, simple tariff for all. And you can speak to a human when you have a question.

Cheaper

We make energy cheaper – so we help you save money. We invest in technology to reduce costs. And we pass savings on to our members.

Greener

We make energy greener – so we help protect our planet. This isn't about being do-gooders; it's just about doing what makes sense for our environment and future generations.

The Report then identified the Key Issues in involvement with carbon offsetting schemes and which Members may wish to consider-

“Key issues

Cost

Unsurprisingly, given that respondents were all from smaller businesses, cost was the biggest factor with limited available

Trust/credibility

Trust was also a key issue and that went beyond knowing that the trees had been planted, that they matured and were looked after to achieve a genuine carbon offset. As important was knowing whether it was the best investment to achieve the desired outcome of carbon reduction – is it better than investing in solar panels on a works building, for example? A lack of information and understanding is a major barrier in generating trust .

Credibility of the tree planting provider was important, with many wanting to see the scheme formally registered, which brings with it all the regulation of formal offsetting.

Visibility

Some would be interested if they could identify the tree and access it – have a plaque or be able to point to where it is and for the surrounding site to reflect the aims of the project and to be well maintained and of ecological benefit. Such interest reflects that for most it was more akin to a donation than a formal offset.

In this instance, a local scheme had clear advantages over more impersonal national/international schemes – the ability to point to something locally and say ‘I/we did that’ was clearly of interest and this is clearly a ‘selling point’ for getting local businesses to buy into this kind of scheme.

Local focus

A local focus was clearly a ‘selling point’ – knowing that funding would go towards a tree being planted locally was a strong incentive for businesses to get involved and linking that with educational activities would further add attraction to funding it.

Again,

these conversations were more akin to a donation or purchase of something, rather than as a means of offsetting a negative impact on the environment in the formal carbon offsetting sense.

Recognition

Several of the businesses would want something in return for their payment of a fee

for tree planting – offsetting the carbon they had produced was generally not considered enough to warrant the investment. For example, some would want a form of advertisement or acknowledgement showing that they/their business had been involved with the tree planting project.

There was also a general sense from all businesses that if trees were planted in reasonably visible/accessible locations it would be an investment in the local environment more generally in the place where they are based and where they and their staff live, and several recognised the wellbeing benefit of this.

Tree felling locally

Finally, trees and particularly tree felling for development have become prominent and

somewhat controversial in local discourse at the time of writing with the removal of many mature trees in local city centre development initiatives driven largely by the public sector, as well as well-publicised removal of ancient trees by developers recently.

That has led to some conflict but also some progression in the form of the development

of an emerging Tree Forum locally. “

Is Carbon Offsetting naturally acceptable-

“The concept of carbon offsetting as a whole is quite controversial as an ecological tool

for tackling climate change – there is an argument that it dissuades people from making better use of resources and instead just ‘assuages guilt’ rather than tackling the root causes of the problems of carbon pollution and so measures to encourage this, particularly state sponsored ones, could create as much harm as good (though this debate is by no means resolved).

There is an increased focus now (both at a policy/strategy level as well as at a business level) on reducing impact in the first place, rather than offsetting impact.”

Members views are sought generally as to whether, in principle, the Town Council could be involved in joining a form of carbon offsetting scheme and/or adapt any working practices. Possible example of a suitable scheme might include a donation towards or sponsoring tree planting locally.

The Clerk has requested further information from Swansea Council as to whether there are local tree planting schemes and the costs involved and sets out below the response-

“I have spoken to the team and they have come back with the following:

Coed Cymru- <http://coed.cymru/index.html>

Swansea tree Forum- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2439390016097430/>

Woodland trust- <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/wales/>

Coeden fach- <https://coedenfach.org.uk/>

For further information the Clerk sets out below an extract from the Woodland Trust website-

“What you can dedicate

- Individual trees
- Woodland areas
- New benches
- Pre-installed benches
- New marker posts
- Simply tell us the reason for your dedication, then select a wood and how you would like to dedicate - from single trees, to larger areas of woodland with personalised benches and marker posts

What you’ll receive

To say thanks for your dedication, we’ll send a dedications pack comprising:

- A certificate personalised with your own special message.
- Information about the chosen wood and a map to help you find the dedicated area.”

Finally an extract from Coeden Fach

“Coeden Fach is currently carrying out a feasibility study to consider the financial viability of a community led carbon offset project. We are hoping to relaunch ourselves as a carbon offsetting CIC, offering individuals and businesses the chance to begin to offset their carbon emissions through tree planting. We will remain a community, not for profit organisation growing local provenance trees and working with volunteers.”

4-RE-CYCLING

Members requested details of the current re-cycling processes utilised at the Welfare Hall. The Council have an ongoing contract with Swansea Council for the collection of trade waste from the Welfare Hall-the collection is weekly from a wheelie bin and it is a general collection ie black bag. The last invoice from Swansea Council covered the period 1st April 2019 to the 30th September 2019 and was for the sum of £364.00.

The Caretaker reports-

1- there is very little re-cycling at present in respect of any waste generated by the use of the Welfare Hall

2-the Caretaker and some Members do place cans and bottles into green bags on eg the occasion of the Council’s Annual Dinner. The Caretaker would then take such green bags back to his private address for collection or place them with other green bags at neighbouring properties to the Welfare Hall

3-there is not a large amount of waste being generated, at present, by the users of the Hall; the greatest amount of waste is produced by Welsh Wood Crafts in the form of sawdust, which, although may be capable of re-cycling is now routinely placed into black bags

4-a noticeable amount of litter is generated outside the hall by passers by and particularly students; the caretaker routinely collects such rubbish and places it in the Council’s wheelie bin

Members may wish to speak to the Caretaker directly concerning these matters.

Going forward-

1-the Council could eg introduce re-cycling containers in the Hall perhaps similar to those utilised by the University at their Singleton Campus

2-examine the possibility of replacing the existing use of polystyrene cups .

Like many plastics, polystyrene is slow to biodegrade. In the UK, it will likely not be recycled if you include it in with other recyclable plastics.

Are there alternatives?

The Clerk has completed some initial research-

“PLA lined paper is the most sustainable option. PLA stands for polylactic acid and is a resin made from corn starch. PLA is used to make clear compostable containers. It is also used as an impermeable liner in paper cups and containers to keep the paper from getting soggy.

PLA lined paper is suitable for hot and cold cups or containers.

It can withstand temperatures between **32 and 185 degrees Fahrenheit** before distortion.

Advantages-PLA lined paper is made from paperboard that is lined with polylactic acid, a resin generated from plants rather than petroleum.

The plant-based resin acts as a barrier which prevents the paper part of the cup from absorbing the liquid and becoming soggy or leaking.

Disadvantages-PLA lined paper has **poor heat transfer**, causing the exterior of the container to become hot to the touch.

It is compostable at the end of its life.

It can be expensive”

The Clerk will investigate further with the Council’s current suppliers and may be able to give a verbal update at the Meeting.

A simpler alternative may possibly be to utilise the Council’s existing stock of china cups for Meetings and Events .

3-The Council may be able to re negotiate its existing trade waste contract with Swansea Council so as to include re-cycling collection.The Clerk has contacted Swansea Council and received the following reply-

“Nigel

You currently pay for 1 x 360 litre non-recycling waste bin @ £14.00 per fortnight.

Depending on the volumes of recycling we can offer;

360L glass/can bin @ £2.75 per week.
Flat packed cardboard – no charge (weekly)
Paper - £7.00 per roll of 20 bags (weekly collection)

We do not have any other businesses in Woodlands Road, so if you only have small volumes I'd suggest you put the items in green bags and recycle as per the neighbouring houses.

We do not have a plastics collection round for commercial plastics, so again would suggest you utilise the household pink bag system.

Hope this helps.

Regards,

Nigel Fletcher

Commercial Waste & Recycling Officer / Gwasanethau Gwastraff Masnachol
City & County of Swansea / Dinas a Sir Abertawe.
(01792 761761

* nigel.fletcher@swansea.gov.uk

4-Do Members wish to approach Swansea Council to install more litter bins in Woodlands Road(possibly on the pavement outside the Welfare Hall?) so as to reduce street litter?

5-It may be possible to work with other public bodies to eg create pressure groups. Members views are sought generally on this issue.

The Clerk sets out below an extract from Pennard Community Council's website-

“ As most of the ideas put forward on the Vocaleyeyes Platform have been of an environmental nature. This has given the Community Council the impetus to declare a Climate Emergency for Pennard Ward. During the next six months we will be seeking advice and working with the Community to produce a plan for a carbon zero future for Pennard. If you are interested in helping us achieve these goals, we would love to hear from you. Our vision is to include all demographics within the Community. The motion agreed unanimously by the recent meeting of the Full Community Council was:

Pennard Community Council will:

1. Declare a 'Climate Emergency'
2. Launch an inclusive consultation to develop an action plan over the next 6 months to:
 - make Pennard net-zero carbon as soon as possible;
 - increase local resilience to climate impacts;
 - maximise local benefits of these actions in other sectors such as health, agriculture, transport and the economy;
3. Raise awareness throughout Pennard by forming a working party from within the community.

4. Call on Swansea County Council to join us in declaring a Climate Emergency working toward a carbon neutral future.
5. Call on Wales and UK Government to provide the support and resources to make this possible.
6. Work with other local areas, particularly the community councils and other partners in the Gower Biosphere;
7. Report within six months with the actions the Community can take to address this emergency, for example increasing the energy efficiency of the Community Hall.
8. Discuss with Renew Wales how they might support this process.”

5-BIO DIVERSITY

Members may be aware that the Council has a duty, along with all other Town and Community Councils in Wales, to produce a Report prior to the end of 2019 under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 on what they have done to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions.

The Clerk sets out below an e mail recently received from OneVoiceWales

“Dear Clerk

As you may be aware public authorities (including Community & Town Councils) are required under the Environment Wales Act 2016 Section 6 to prepare and publish a plan setting out what it proposes to do to comply with the duty to Maintain and Enhance Biodiversity **within their current work areas**.

Caryl Le – Roux, Welsh Government gave a presentation on this subject at the One Voice Wales Innovative Practice Conference on 10th July 2019 when she informed those present that a FAQs, Good Practice Guide and Reporting Guidance would be circulated to Community & Town Councils.

Welsh Government have informed One Voice Wales that the Guidance will be issued shortly but in the meantime, responding to a request from some Councils that wish to begin to prepare their plans, they have provided a copy of FAQs and a draft Reporting Template that will be included with the Reporting Guidance, as an Annex.

Welsh Government advise that the template should not be seen in any way as being prescriptive, as it is just an example of how the report might be compiled and what could be included in it. Every public authority (Community & Town Council) is free to decide how they should report on the duty and although the template will be useful by itself, the guide will provide more detailed information on the reporting framework and will give clarity on the various fields in the template.

Also attached is a copy of Carmarthenshire County Council’s guidance to its Community & Town Councils on how they can meet the duty under Section 6 of the Act referred to in Caryl Le Roux’s presentation”

The Clerk sets out below extracts from the WG presentation-

“Public authorities **must seek** to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.

WG are therefore looking for a proactive approach but taking into account Guidance issued by them

Nature Recovery Action Plan

The Duty to Maintain and Enhance Biodiversity

•Further detailed information in the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales (NRAP) to contribute to reversing the decline of biodiversity in Wales:

–**Embed biodiversity into delivery, and raise awareness of its importance**

Commitments, Sustainability and procurement policies, management plans, community engagement, awareness raising, **all** functions

–**Safeguard special sites and species** and improve their management

Local nature sites, protected species e.g. bats, great crested newts, birds

–**Restore and create habitats**

Churchyards, play-spaces, village greens

–**Tackle key pressures like pollution, and Invasive Non Native species**

Himalayan balsam bashing, reducing the use of pesticides

–**Use and collect biodiversity evidence**

Citizen science, Local Environment Record Centres

CLERK’S Note

Himalayan Balsam is an invasive non-native plant so robust and vigorous that's it's become a real problem in the Lake District, smothering and pushing out other indigenous plants in vast swathes along riverbanks and lakeshores.

Carmarthenshire Council has already issued Guidance to its Councils as follows

Can your green space be better - *for people and wildlife?*

- As Town and Community Councils you have been managing your own land for years and recently more parks and sports grounds have been leased to many of you from the County Council.
- As well as managing these sites as important sites for public recreation, there are opportunities within most parks to manage suitable areas for wildlife as well.
- For Town and Community Councils the Welsh Government’s Environment (Wales) Act 2016 places a duty upon them to ‘seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity’ when they carry out their functions, including when managing land.
- Managing areas for wildlife can provide opportunities for community groups, volunteers and schools to become involved, contributing to their health and well-being.

- The healthier Carmarthenshire's natural environment is, with a variety of habitats and species, the more resilient it will become. The parks and public open space you manage can contribute to this.

- Changing the management of your green space does not need to cost extra money, in fact in some cases it may be possible to make a saving. Read on for some suggestions as to how you can do this.

Hedgerows are vitally important as they provide food and shelter to many species, including those that need particular help such as dormice and bank voles which use hedges to move around. They are also important habitats for nesting birds.

- Can you lay the hedge to improve the structure?
- Is there an opportunity to plant/restore a hedgerow - especially if it connects existing habitats?
- Manage your hedgerows in the winter months when the woody growth is dormant. All work during the bird nesting season (March to August) should be avoided.
- Allowing your hedges to grow for 2-3 years before cutting will provide a plentiful supply of berries for birds over the winter. Berries usually form on 2-year old wood, so aim to cut less than half your hedges each year.
- Can you plant more trees? If grassy areas are not regularly used then why not try something else - it could save money in the long run.
- If you have to fell a tree, replace it with two or a small group!

Research shows that abundance of both flowers and flower-visiting insects increases significantly with reduced mowing, helping pollinators. Why not experiment and vary the mowing regime in different areas and see what works best for pollinators - and people!

- The easiest thing you can do is identify and enhance existing areas that have the capacity to provide a food source and shelter for pollinators. This is often the most cost-effective way as well.

- Can you cut some areas less often and cut higher to allow more plants to flower?

Grass

will grow at a different rate depending on the weather during the growing season but why

not delay your first cut until mid-April and then mow to every 5-8 weeks and see what happens? Use signs to explain why you are doing this. Setting the mower blade at a minimum of 50-60mm should allow lowgrowing species like daisies, clover and selfheal to flower. They can keep their heads below the mower or have time to spring up and flower again.

- Can you collect up the mowings? This will help encourage more flowering plants in the

grass. If your mowing machine cannot collect then for smaller areas can local volunteers

help rake it up and create a habitat pile or compost heap?

- Are there some areas of grassland where you can let the grass grow long and manage like

a hay meadow? Here you would ideally cut the grass in late summer and remove the cut

material, helping to make the grassland more flowery. Are there local contractors who could undertake this work or perhaps a local farmer could cut and bale it for the use

of the hay?

- In some areas you might wish to sow seed mixes that benefit pollinators. Choose these areas carefully. It might be better to manage the habitat that is there already, to encourage the flowers that are already within it. Also choose your seed mix carefully - ensure that the seed or plants that you are introducing are native and preferably from a local source.

You may well have formal areas that you wish to maintain but there are still opportunities to help biodiversity here.

- If you have formal areas of planting, flower beds/containers or hanging baskets, select a

proportion of plants from pollinator-friendly species of shrubs, annual or perennial plants

to provide food for pollinators from spring to autumn.

- Pesticides are harmful to pollinators and other invertebrates that help sustain our natural environment and are the food for other wildlife.

- You might use herbicides to control weeds and grass. Apart from invasive species is their

use really necessary? Could you save money by using less?

- Peat usage - there are viable peat-free composts that, if used, will help save our important peat habitats.

There are a myriad of opportunities to take positive action. You and your communities know

your sites - however small the area there are always options.

- Do you know what wildlife lives in or uses your park - are there any important/protected species? If so, how can you enhance the site for them?

- For biodiversity projects 'tidiness' is not a priority, sometimes just leaving a small area

go wild can be beneficial.

- Create habitat piles - dead wood and piles of leaves are good for a range of species!

- Are there opportunities to erect bat and bird boxes or to build a bug hotel?

- Invasive species - It is illegal to allow Japanese knotweed or Himalayan balsam to spread -

can you take action to tackle them?

- Why not become a 'Bee Friendly' community and make Wales a pollinator-friendly country

by taking action as part of Welsh Government's scheme?

Continuing with the presentation

"The duty to Plan

'A public authority must **prepare and publish a plan** setting out what it proposes to do to comply with the duty.'

This need not be a standalone plan -it can be included in any other plan you are making, and should be proportionate to your activity and functions.

It can include:

- How biodiversity will be incorporated into policies and strategies;

- What initiatives will be introduced to raise awareness within your organisation;
- What practical biodiversity programmes will be introduced;
- What partnerships will be developed.

The duty to Report

‘A public authority must, before the end of 2019, and before the end of every third year after 2019, **publish a report** on what it has done to comply with the duty.’
Again, this need not be a standalone report –it can be included in any reporting format.

It could include:

- Identifying what steps have been taken to consider biodiversity in across your functions;
- Identifying practical actions taken on the ground;
- Outlining any partnership initiatives on biodiversity have been set up and what they have achieved;
- What you have done to help raise awareness of and communicate the importance of biodiversity.

Your s6 plan must be reviewed after publication of the s6 report.

The template produced by the WG so far-
Annex 1: Simple Reporting Template

Name of Public Authority

Short description of PA & its functions and context in relation to biodiversity (e.g. management of land, influence over land management, or indirect influence through procurement, funding projects, etc)		
Action carried out to:		Monitored by:
-embed biodiversity into decision making & procurement		
-raise awareness of biodiversity & its importance		
-safeguard principal species and habitats		
-restore & create habitats and resilient ecological networks		
-tackle negative factors: for e.g. reduce pollution, use nature based solutions, address invasive species		

-use, improve and share evidence		
-support capacity, and/or other organisations		
Key outcomes: use narrative and metrics where possible		
Review points, for e.g. enablers and barriers to action, improvements to forward plan		
How and when will the s6 duty be monitored and the s6 plan reviewed?		

What does this mean for Llŵchwr Town Council?

Welsh Government have informed One Voice Wales that the Guidance will be issued shortly.

The Clerk will also be attending a SLCC regional Meeting on the 10th October in which this duty will be discussed.

It may therefore be prudent to await the Guidance before the Council produces a definitive Plan but Members views are sought generally in the meantime.

Members may also be interested to know that Gorseinon Town Council has produced a Report already and which is set out below

“ASSESSMENT OF BIODIVERSITY ACTIONS WITHIN GORSEINON TOWN COUNCIL AREA

Under new Government Biodiversity legislation (Environment Wales Act 2016 Community and Town Councils duty under section 6) the Town Council is required to make an assessment of what actions it is taking to enhance **biodiversity** within its area, and publish the results. During the latest Financial year 2018/19 the Town Council has funded/delivered the following relevant activities within its area;

1. Continuing its annual programme of **wildflower planting** on public sites within the Gorseinon/Penyrrheol area.
2. Continuing its annual programme of **bulb planting** on public sites within the Gorseinon/Penyrrheol area.(new daffodil planting areas Pontarddulais rd, Penyrheol/ Argyll Gardens), and providing bulbs for resident groups to plant in their grass verges where practical.
3. Continuing its annual programme of providing **Summer Hanging baskets / trough baskets and pyramid planters** in the main shopping areas , bus station and local parks, as well as subsidising hanging baskets on shopfronts in main shopping areas.
4. Continuing its annual programme of providing Winter **Hanging baskets / trough baskets** in the main shopping areas and bus station and local parks.
- 5.Continuing its annual programme of **planting tree whips and tree planting** in local parks around the town.
- 6.Responding to planning applications within its administrative area , and ensuring **biodiversity interests** are promoted where possible on new development sites.
- 7.Arranging bi **monthly litter picks** within its area and parks to promote environmental awareness within the community.

8.Supporting and promoting the **designation and protection of Sites of Special scientific interest and biodiversity** within its area (eg wild flower /orchids areas in Parc Melin Mynach)

9.Funding **grass cutting and wild flower areas** within local parks (Melin Mynach/Parc Y Werin/Argyll Gardens)

10.Supporting and funding **flower planting in the community** by local resident groups.(eg Grants to Parc Y Werin committee Assn. for flower areas in park/ floral displays out side community centre)

11.Planting Xmas tree as community festival focus in Argyll gardens.”

So taking into account the WG presentation,the Carmarthenshire Guidance and Gorseinon’s Plan what issues might Llchwyr Town Council consider for inclusion in its bio diversity Plan?

1-The Council now pays Swansea Council for a 500 sq.metre medieval carpet of wildflowers at Cwmladron Rounabout

2-The Council also paid Swansea Council £4,927.00 in respect of the Hanging Basket Scheme to include

33 Lamppost brackets

3 base units

13 Troughs

3-The Council does not manage land or parks as such and therefore seemingly some of the advice from Carmarthenshire will not be relevant eg mowing,hedgerows but could possibly consider sponsoring tree planting or other environment Schemes?

4-Are there any matters raised in the Gorseinon Plan which could be adopted by Llchwyr?

Dated this 24th September,2019