





# Lydney

## Annual Town Meeting

at

The Town Hall, Lydney

On Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at 7.00pm

All Parishioners on the Electoral Role are invited to attend the  
Annual Town Meeting

*B Berryman*

**Cllr B Berryman**

*Mayor – Lydney Town Council*

### AGENDA

(Meeting to be called to Order by the Mayor)

#### Housekeeping

1. Apologies
2. Adoption of the previous Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018
3. The Mayor's Annual Report for 2018/19
4. Annual Police Report
5. To receive the following Annual Town Council Reports:
  - ❖ Planning & Highways Committee – Chairman's Report (*Cllr A Preest*)
  - ❖ Amenities Committee Report (*Cllr C Harris*)
  - ❖ Burial Committee Report (*Cllr H Ives*)
  - ❖ Finance & Scrutiny Committee - Chairman's Report (*Cllr B Pearman*)
  - ❖ CEOs Report
  - ❖ Head Grounds Man Report
6. To receive the Annual County Councillor's Report (*CCllr A Preest*)
7. To note the annual Charitable Trust Reports;
  - ❖ Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust
  - ❖ Lydney Recreation Ground Trust
8. To receive a selection Community Reports (*Hard copies enclosed*)
9. Public Questions (*Questions submitted in advance of meeting by the general public – Submission deadline, 12 noon, Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2019*)

*Please note: Should any member of the electorate wish to raise a further question following the ATM they are respectfully requested to submit their question, in writing, to the Town Council for which they will then receive a formal response, tendered by the Mayor, as part of the Town Council's May Full Council Meeting to which they are more than welcome to attend.*

10. Close



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- ❖ **Amenities Committee Report - *Chairman's Report***
- ❖ **Burial Committee Report - *Chairman's Report***
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  - **Grants/Donations Awarded 2018/19**
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**Community Sports Clubs:**

- ❖ **Parkrun**
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- ❖ **Lydney Cricket Club**

**Lydney Town Council's Opening Hours**

**Annual Town Meeting  
Held at Lydney Town Hall, Lydney  
Monday 23 April 2018 at 7.00 pm**

**Present:**

Lydney Town Council

B Berryman (Mayor), D Biddle, R Christodoulides, C Harris, R Holmes, H Ives, W Leach, C Legg, B Pearman, A Preest and C Vaughan

Mrs J Smailes - Chief Executive Officer

Miss C Wheeler - Executive Officer

Mr R Lewis – Independent Internal Auditor, Wildin & Co

Gloucestershire Police

PS A Doyle, Forest Neighbourhood Policing Team

24 Members of the Public

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Councillor Berryman welcomed all present to the meeting and explained that no practice fire evacuations were scheduled during the event. Attendees were then informed of the location of the fire exits.

All attendees were provided with a copy of the Annual Town Meeting Report 2017/2018 (copy available to download from the Town Council's website after the meeting).

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Cllrs Greening, Pugh and White.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting dated 24 April 2017 were confirmed and approved as a true record and duly signed. **Proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Leach.** Unanimous.

3. **MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017/18** – Cllr B Berryman

Cllr Berryman read out his report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018.

4. **ANNUAL POLICE REPORT**

PS Doyle advised that an increase in crimes had been recorded this year, but felt that this may be due to the fact that members of the public were more confident in how issues could be reported to the Police. PS Doyle advised that Gloucestershire Constabulary were increasing the number of Officers for the whole of Gloucestershire and that locally Officers were actively engaged in attempting to resolve the increase which had been recorded in anti-social behaviour.

A District Councillor highlighted that problems were being experienced with vehicles racing through the Town on Friday and Saturday nights. PS Doyle advised that a number of steps were being taken to address the issue: firstly an exercise would be undertaken to educate drivers and check their vehicles: if anti-social behaviour was experienced the Police would issue a Section 59 Notice which, should the vehicle be stopped again for a similar reason, would enable it to be seized. PS Doyle advised that Operation Tom Tom had been formed to tackle anti-social behaviour both in and out of vehicles and whilst numerous reports of anti-social behaviour by vehicles had been received by the Police, a Section 59 Notice could only be issued if the registration numbers of offending vehicles were provided.

Whilst PS Doyle was unaware of the number of Section 59 Notices which had been issued in Lydney due to the fact that he had only been allocated to the Police Station at Coleford within the last four weeks, he informed Members that one of Inspector Andrew Hodgetts's priority areas was to ensure safer driving.

5. **LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Planning & Highway Committee** – Cllr Preest

Cllr Preest provided a précis of the Committee Report as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018. Cllr Preest then expressed his personal frustration with a number of issues relating to Planning, including the allocation of the majority of the District's new housing requirement to Lydney.

**Amenities Committee** – Cllr Harris

Cllr Harris read out the Committee's report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018.

**Burial Committee** – Cllr Ives

Cllr Ives read out the Committee's report as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018.

**Finance and Scrutiny Committee** – Cllr Pearman

Cllr Pearman provided a précis of the Committee's report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018.

Cllr Pearman then gave a short presentation which highlighted that the Town Council did not receive any benefit from the New Homes Bonus as this was retained by Forest of Dean District Council; provided an overview of how Lydney Town Council derived its Precept/the procedure observed by Forest of Dean District Council to derive the Tax Base.

Cllr Pearman highlighted that it had been claimed by a member of the public that Lydney Town Council would receive an additional £64,000 in Council Tax due to the new homes being built, however, Cllr Pearman explained that once the Tax Base had been determined by Forest of Dean District Council (normally in October) any additional Council Tax collected from any houses which were built between said determination date and October the following year was usually retained by Forest of Dean District Council as they did not ordinarily rerun the calculation, this also being in addition to the New Homes Bonus.

**Personnel Committee** – Cllr Pearman

Cllr Pearman read out the Committee's report as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018.

**Youth Forum Report** – Cllr Ives

Cllr Ives read out the report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018.

6. **COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

County Cllr Preest requested that his report be taken as read.

7. **CHARITABLE TRUST REPORTS**

**Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust** – Trustee H Ives

Trustee Ives read out the Trust's report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018.

**Lydney Recreation Trust** – Trustee Harris

Trustee Harris requested that her report be taken as read.

8. **COMMUNITY REPORTS**

**Friends of Bathurst Pool** – Mr B Berryman

Mr Berryman read out the report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018.

**Forest Foodbank** – Ms S McDonagh

Ms McDonagh provided a précis of the report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018.

**Friends of Lydney Hospital** – Mr A Midgeley

Mr Midgeley provided a précis of the report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018. As it was some six weeks since the report had been submitted, Mr Midgeley provided attendees with an update on the procedure for the operation of the Citizen's Jury and the decision making process which would be followed regarding the location of the proposed new Forest Hospital. Mr Midgeley urged members of the public, irrespective of the final outcome regarding the selection of the preferred location for the new facility, to continue to support Lydney Hospital for the next four years as a need remained to fundraise for the facility.

On a final note, Mr Midgeley advised that the annual Hospital Fete would not take place this year, instead an event would take place to celebrate 70 years of the NHS, and he expressed a wish for members of the public to support the event.

**Lydney Coastal Communities Team** – District Cllr Leppington, Forest of Dean District Council  
District Cllr Leppington gave a précis of the Team's report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018 and paid tribute to the achievements of the Team to date.

**The Royal British Legion Lydney Branch** – Mr A Edwards

Mr Edwards read out the Branch's report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018.

**Lydney War Memorial Trust** – Mr S Moore

Mr Moore requested that the Trust's report be taken as read and advised attendees that the Trust were looking to strengthen its Board of Trustees. Accordingly, he encouraged anyone interested in becoming a Trustee to contact him.

**Lydney Town Hall Trust Management Committee** – Mr M Channon

Mr Channon expressed thanks to the Rotary Club for funding the roof on the kitchen area and advised attendees that the roof at the back of the stage had now collapsed, the repair of which would be covered by the Trust. Mr Channon advised that he hoped to be in a position to advise at the Trust's AGM that the Trust's Bank Account held £10-12,000.00. Attendees were informed that the Trust now possessed a new screen and projector and Mr Channon expressed thanks to the volunteers for their help in running the Town Hall.

Mr Channon stated that he had spent the last two years working at the Town Hall daily, however, he advised that he would be resigning at the next AGM and expressed a wish that the upward trend for the Town Hall would continue.

**Lydney Community Centre** – Mr D Biddle

Mr Biddle drew attention to the Centre's report which was contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018; expressed thanks to the community and the volunteers which supported the



building, which he was delighted to report was very well used.

**Lydney & District Twinning Association** – Mr J Williams

Mr Williams requested that the Association's report be taken as read. Mr Williams then informed all present that the Association was looking for new membership and stressed the importance of maintaining links with Normandy due to Brexit. Mr Williams expressed appreciation for the support given to the Association by the Council and he welcomed ideas as to how the links between the two countries could be strengthened.

**Lydney Rugby Football Club** – Mr N Nelmes

Mr Nelmes provided a précis of the report which was contained within the Council's Annual Report for 2017/2018.

9. **RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RECEIVED**

Cllr Berryman advised that one question had been received from members of the Electorate and he read out the Council's response:

**Q1** – Apologies for the lateness of this question, however we only just found the meeting announcement.

As a new resident in Lydney, I am shocked and appalled at the anti-social behaviour problems with Newerne Street Car Park, and I assume other locations in the Town.

I would like to understand:

- What are the roles and responsibilities of the LTC in the running of the car parks in Lydney?
- What actions have been taken to address this problem previously by LTC?
- What actions do you intend to take in the future?

I had hoped that my first interaction with the Town would be joining the Cricket Club; I'm sad that instead it is to raise issues with offenses under S59 of the Police Reform Act 2002.

**A** – Firstly, and as you are already aware (ref. e-mail sent to you dated 26 March 2018) Lydney Town Council owns/manages no car parks in the Town or surrounding area; as Custodial Trustee for the Recreation Trust Ground, acting in its custodial capacity, it owns/manages the Hams Road Car Park which is Trust ground.

Newerne Street car park is owned/managed, as is Bream Road Car Park, by Forest of Dean District Council. It is FODDC that imposes parking charges and receives the revenue therefrom and similarly it is FODDC that employs an Enforcement Officer to "police" their car parks. Lydney Town Council play no part in the control/maintenance of these two areas.

Given the issues faced at Newerne Street car park Lydney Town Council has, on numerous occasions, asked FODDC to consider purchasing/installing CCTV which we would then allow them to integrate with our system thereby allowing the Police to attend at these offices to monitor the situation and to gain photographic evidence, however, despite our numerous advances to date FODDC have declined our offer.

We have also suggested to FODDC that if they were not prepared to incur such expense to monitor their own asset that they at least consider hiring the mobile CCTV unit from Coleford Town Council, however, to date I have not been advised they have availed themselves of this service.

We can assure you that at our monthly meetings with the Police anti-social behaviour continues to be a priority and PCSOs/Police patrols do try and visit the areas of concern regularly, however, the necessity to protect/monitor assets falls to the landowner and FODDC must therefore be encouraged to address this issue, to this end we would urge you to write to FODDC expressing your dissatisfaction.

You may also wish to lobby District Ward Members as they are in a position to address this issue.

10. **CLOSE**

The meeting closed at 8.16 pm.

## MAYOR'S REPORT

Sadly for me this is the last Annual Town Meeting that I stand before you as a Councillor and Chairman/Mayor of Lydney Town Council. After twelve years as a Councillor and eight years as Chairman/Mayor I have decided not to stand for re-election. It has been my privilege to have been in this position and to be able to promote our Town in the Forest and surrounding areas. The highlight of this was representing the Council at Buckingham Palace.



I cancelled the Civic Service and Mayor's Reception this year and donated the funds allocated for this to local charities and also the Forest Foodbank.

The Recreational Trust ground has had new drainage put in place so that more use can be made of this area and both this and Bathurst Park are still being maintained to a high standard. A new path has been constructed allowing disabled access to the Tennis Club and all local sports clubs continue to thrive. I would like to thank them all for their involvement in training youngsters in the Town.

CCTV cameras are being fitted in the area of the skateboard park and Hams Road Car Park in an effort to reduce unsocial behaviour, Forest of Dean District Council are also installing cameras in the Newerne Street Car Park where unsocial behaviour involving the use of cars is causing problems. The increase in criminal damage, litter and dog fouling all create a huge impact on Council resources however we continue to try to combat such.

Allaston Mesne has been upgraded with new equipment and improvements made to the football pitch and area in general. This has been done with help from '*The Friends of the Mesne*'.

Lydney Town Council opted out of contributing 5% of its Precept towards the funding of a Forest Youth Officer and instead has resolved to support the Lydney Hub with their intention of starting a youth club. A "right to buy" has been put in place for the Methodist Chapel in Albert Street which the group are keen to try and secure as their premises. Cllr Ives is heavily involved in this project and he, like the rest of the Council, have agreed to lend its support, earmarking already a sum of £25k that may be drawn down by The Hub subject to stringent clauses.

Flood defence meetings are still taking place and the flood defence work undertaken to date appears to be successful. The regeneration meetings for Lydney Harbour are also continuing, albeit at a slow pace.

A new network of Lydney cycle and footpaths are about to be constructed at no cost to Lydney Tax Payers. The work is being funded by the Local Enterprise Partnership via Gloucestershire County Council.

It is not only Lydney that is suffering from empty shops as many other Towns and cities are in the same position. Cllr Pearman and Cllr Preest are seeking funding from the Future High Street fund, available through Central Government and a funding bid has been submitted to Forest of Dean District Council for due consideration and upward referral.

To stop vehicles parking on the pavement in Newerne Street, Gloucestershire County Council have placed permanent bollards. This is to help prevent damage to pavements and allows movement for the disabled.

Headmaster Tom Beveridge and the Trustees of The Dean Academy continue to raise the standard within the school and there is a group working with the aim to reduce the number of pupils being excluded.

I would like to thank the volunteers at Lydney Community Centre, The Victoria Day Centre and Lydney Town Hall for keeping these important venues going.

The events funded by the Council have seen increased numbers in attendance; The Firework display, the Christmas Lights Switch On and "Party in the Park" have all proved highly successful and thanks are extended to Robert Hitchins Limited for their financial support for the "Party in the Park" event which will be held once again in July in Bathurst Park.

On a sad note two hardworking Councillors have passed away in in the last twelve months and I offer my condolences to the families of Don Pugh and Dave Street. I would also like to offer my condolences to the Derek Pomeroy's family; it goes without saying the tremendous amount of work he addressed on behalf of Lydney Rugby Club and the partnership approach he adopted to working with this council/its Trust, and in particular the CEO, to improve the Recreational Trust Ground

I would like to end by expressing my sincere thanks to all Councillors, staff and my wife for all the help and support I have had over the last twelve years, I will miss many of you.

- I wish the Council every success for the future

*Cllr Bob Berryman*

**Mayor – Lydney Town Council**

# Police Report

## Lydney Annual Police Report 2018/2019

### Local Staff

Forest Neighbourhood Inspector – Insp 2536 Andrew Hodgetts  
Forest South Sergeant (Coleford/Lydney/Sedbury) – PS 2237 Nick Rogers

Lydney beat manager – PC 2142 Hopkins  
PCSO 49252 Tom Oliver

### Crimes.

The number of crimes that has taken place across Lydney from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018 to the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019 have decreased from **658** (17/18) to **616** same period (18/19). This is an decrease of 42 crimes.

### Response Times

Each incident reported to the Police is given a grading depending on the severity of the incident. This ranges from suspects no longer at the scene, date when the offence happened and also risk to life factors.

Grade 1's require trained officers to respond with lights and sirens illuminated. In urban areas the response times are set at **10 minutes**. Rural areas are set at **20 minutes**.

Grade 2.1's require a **1 hour** attendance.

Grade 2 is as soon as reasonably practicable.

In the period – 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018 – 01 February 2019 there have been:

	Grade								Total Incs
	1		2.1		2		Other		
	Incs	%	Incs	%	Incs	%	Incs	%	
Lydney East	306	22	427	31	157	11	480	36	1370
Lydney North	22	18	37	31	18	15	45	36	122
Lydney West	63	15	115	28	39	9	207	48	424
Total	391		579		214		732		1916

# Police Report

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## Lydney Policing Issues.

- OP TOMTOM continues to run within Lydney, this was created and is still run by PC Hopkins and members of the Lydney Neighbourhood Team who patrol a designated area within and surrounding Bathurst Park, Lydney after complaints regarding Anti-Social Behaviour.
- We have an operation for 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2019 in place to deal with recent ASB including off-road motor bikes and graffiti, linking in with OP TOMTOM.
- Community Speed Watch is available for members of the community to be trained using the speed gun. Minimum of 6 people required and gun provided by Road Safety Partnership.
- Officers continue to give educational talks surrounding internet safety, road safety etc. to the local schools within Lydney. We now have a school beat officer who is taking precedence in the local schools, for your area this is PC Greg Steer.
- Ongoing targeted Patrols in Newerne Street Car Park with regards to ongoing Anti-Social driving in the area. These are to reduce due to the recent installation of CCTV cameras, which will hopefully alleviate concerns regarding the driving behaviours.
- Members of the public are now able to sign up to The Community Alert System. Your Community Alerts is Gloucestershire Constabulary's new, free messaging system that enables residents, businesses and community groups to participate in a two-way exchange of information about what is happening throughout the county. You can sign up via your local Neighbourhood Officer or via the below link:  
<https://www.yourcommunityalerts.co.uk/>
- The Neighbourhood engagement vehicle is still available to be booked as and when time allows. If there are any specific day/location requests, please email either [Thomas.oliver@gloucestershire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Thomas.oliver@gloucestershire.pnn.police.uk) or [Nicholas.rogers@gloucestershire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Nicholas.rogers@gloucestershire.pnn.police.uk)

**ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE REPORTS**

## Planning & Highways Committee Report 2018 - 19

Lydney Town Council is quite rightly a Statutory Consultee as part of the Local planning process, and I believe that we analytically examine and subsequently comment on particularly large-scale applications that are to be determined within our boundaries.

Despite the number of relatively large sites that are progressing predominantly in the Highfield area of town with permission granted in past years 2018/19 (to date) has been a fairly quiet year on the planning front.

As I have consistently reported at meetings and in this report last year, the Local Planning Authority, Forest of Dean District Council continue to frustrate. Unlike the other five District/Boroughs in our County they still have not adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy Payment Schedule which is not only detrimental to our community in Lydney, it also impacts on larger future infrastructure schemes that are delivered by Gloucestershire County Council, *(In my County Council role as Cabinet Champion for Planning Infrastructure I see first-hand just how far the Forest is lagging behind the rest of Gloucestershire on this issue).*

Forest of Dean District Council also continue to defy Government expectations by not consulting with Parish and Town Councils on the New Homes Bonus Scheme, depriving communities of further infrastructural benefits; instead it uses the New Homes Bonus Scheme to prop up its General Budget. In essence we in Lydney, who are delivering far more new builds than anywhere else in the District reap no specific benefits. ***(To see how this scheme operates well, please take a look at the Wychavon District Council model on their website).***

Localism and empowering communities do not appear to be close to the top of Forest of Dean District Councils agenda.

Nearly eight years since the first occupation on the Oakdale Estate, and thanks to the County Council Legal Team pulling out all the stops, on the 20 Feb, documentation was signed enabling public transport connectivity between Tutnalls *(via the old JD Norman rear entrance)* and Oakdale. However, GCC should never have been put into that position. I sincerely hope that the FoDDC Planning Process has learnt lessons from this. Simply building homes without ensuring basic infrastructure requirements has resulted in much inconvenience and frustration for the residents of Oakdale over an inexcusable lengthy period of time. That is not clever. The new bus lane will allow correct and appropriate connectivity, direction of travel will be two way. Buses, cyclists, private hire and taxis will be exempt. Restrictions will be in place for other vehicles, cameras will be in operation.



I would once again like to thank my Lydney Town Council colleagues that sit on the Planning and Highways Committee, and the Staff that so professionally support as we strive to work with due diligence.

In particular I would like to thank, Cllr Rose Christodoulides and highlight the continuous sterling work she does on monitoring all aspects of flood risk and prevention in relation to existing and new builds.

As I mentioned at the start of my report, Lydney Town Council are a Statutory Consultee, we are not the Statutory Decision Maker mores the pity I suggest, because no one knows Lydney, our strengths, weaknesses and requirements better than us.

*Cllr Alan Preest*

**Lydney Town Council  
Planning and Highways Chairman.**

## Amenities Committee Report 2018 - 19

This has been my seventh year as Chair of the Amenities Committee.

The Amenities Committee continue to improve the facilities and appearance of the Town, aided greatly by the Town Council's Ground Staff.

The Spring/Summer planting scheme was redesigned for 2018 and I am sure you will agree, the displays looked magnificent. We have received lots of praise from residents and visitors to the town as a result of the floral displays. We have even had approaches from neighbouring Town Councils who are considering replicating our floral schemes in their Towns, so it's nice to see that the efforts of our Ground Staff are appreciated by all.

I am delighted to report the Committee has installed new play facilities at Primrose Hill Mesne and at Leaze Court which have been appreciated by the community. We have recently installed raised flower beds and a seating area at the Leaze Court site to visually enhance the site further, and we are sure that in the forthcoming months the floral displays will look wonderful.

On 11 November 2018 the Council was honoured to participate in "Battle's Over" to commemorate 100 years since the end of WW1 through the lighting of the Beacon on Primrose Hill. In preparation for this event the footpath to the Beacon was re-instated by our Groundstaff and I am sure you will agree that they did an excellent job. It was lovely to see so many of my fellow residents of Lydney attend the event to pay their respects for which I would like to offer my thanks.



During 2018/19 the Committee purchased and installed several new dog waste bins in areas identified by the public although the dog fouling issue unfortunately continues. Regrettably, the Committee receives a greater number of requests for dog waste bins than it has budgetary provision for. Whilst the vast majority of dog owners act responsibly and dispose of their animal's waste correctly, there will always be a small minority who continue to flaunt the law and fail to pick up after their animal. We would urge members of the public who witness anyone failing to collect their dog's waste to report these individuals to the Street Warden service at Forest of Dean District Council in order that they may take appropriate action.

The 2018 Christmas Light Switch-on Event was a great success and we were delighted to welcome back our local potter, Mary Rose Young, to switch on the Town's Christmas Lights. It was wonderful to see so many people attend the event this year and our thanks go to Mary Rose Young, Lydney Band, Lydney Music, the Combined Schools Choir, Lydney Car Wash and of course the main man himself, Father Christmas, for making the event such a success.

Another full year cycle complete.

*Cllr Carol Harris*

**Amenities Committee Chairman**

## **Burial Committee 2018-2019**

This has been my second full year as Chairman of the Burial Committee, which is responsible for management of Lydney Cemetery and St Mary's Closed Churchyard.

As mentioned last year, acquiring additional burial space remains our top priority. With this in mind, I'm pleased to say a parcel of land has been identified at the rear of our cemetery which could potentially increase capacity. This potential site is currently owned by the Dean Academy/Athelstan Trust who have confirmed they are prepared, in principle, to sell us the land. The next step involves the Academy acquiring formal consent from both the Department of Education and Sport England to begin proceedings – something they are currently pursuing. Planning permission would also be required and formal advice sought from the Land Drainage Officer, Environment Agency, Local Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority prior to any application being made. Ground condition testing would also be required to judge suitability for use. Quite a process, but one we hope resolves an issue that has troubled this Committee for years.

The opportunity was also taken this year to upgrade our existing cemetery management software, with a new administrative system purchased allowing interested parties (particularly funeral directors, grave diggers and mourners) to locate grave plots online. This 'Cemetery Search' feature will appear on our website shortly and is designed to improve access to local information and better support the plotting of grave spaces. We are happy to say this software is fully compliant with GDPR and hopefully of some assistance to users.

In line with assisting mourners as far as possible, last year the Committee considered its existing policy of free interment for children who pass away aged five and under. It is difficult to comprehend how upsetting the loss of a child can be, so I am pleased to say we agreed to extend this policy to all children aged sixteen and under (any fee for 'Exclusive Right of Burial' still remains). It is hoped, should the worst occur, this gesture relieves a small fraction of strain on grieving parents.

At our previous Town Meeting I stressed the need for any Registered Deed of Grant Holders to notify us if your contact details have changed. This point remains just as relevant today as it did then, lest we have another case of damage to a grave with no one to inform or contact. Whilst every effort will be made to trace you should something happen to the resting place of your loved one, if your details are outdated our options are limited.

As with last year I'd like to conclude by thanking my Committee members, Lydney Town Council office staff and Groundsman for their ongoing efforts to maintain and improve these key community spaces. We carry responsibility for all routine maintenance at both sites and as always the team have excelled themselves.

Thank you.

*Harry Ives*

**Burial Committee Chairman**



## FINANCE & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT - 2018/19



The financial environment in which Lydney Town Council operates continues to present challenges as the Council looks to, not just maintain services, but improve them. I confidently predict that as we approach Year-End the Council will once again end the year within budget. As I have stated in previous years a tier 1 council such as Lydney has no direct financial relationship with Central Government, and thus no access to windfall funds such as New Homes Bonus.

The bulk of the Council's funding comes from the community via council tax bills. Each year Lydney Town Council calculates its budget requirement, and making adjustment for a percentage of predicted income, arrives at a Precept Demand which in turn is submitted to FODDC. The Precept sum is divided by the taxbase figure – the total number of chargeable properties in the Town – in order to calculate the level of council tax that a band D property will attract for that year. For 2019/20 a Precept sum of £558,077 has been submitted, such results in a band D sum of £198.41, an increase of 4.36% year on year.

Members of the Town Council acknowledge that given its current level of 'Free General Reserves' there remains a low level of short-term risk; this is considered acceptable given the Council's desire to deliver and improve local services, however the rebuilding of 'Free' General Reserves remains a priority. It is recommended that a Council the size of Lydney should hold 'Free' General Reserves amounting to not less than 3 – 9 months average spend. Currently 'Free' General Reserves stand at £176,650 which is barely within the recommended threshold!

### Looking to the future

The pressure on Town and Parish Councils to take on non-statutory services has increased in recent years, and will likely increase further.

The Town Council receives **NO** element of Business Rates, New Homes Bonus, Community Infrastructure Levy or Local Council Tax Support Grants

### Budgetary consideration relating to local projects

- The Coastal Communities Team is likely to require financial support in relation to the Harbour project.
- Lydney Rail Station Car Park, currently under the control of GCC may be offered to the Council.
- Forest Youth Initiatives – A sum of £25k has been 'earmarked' for Youth Initiatives in Lydney – More may be required.
- Public Conveniences currently within the control of Forest of Dean District Council could be offered to the Town Council, with the risk of closure as an alternative.
- Burial Provision – the Council is rapidly running out of burial space, and more land will be required.

The above is not a comprehensive list of items considered during our financial/budgetary process, but it does demonstrate the Council's commitment to future service provision.

*Cllr Brian Pearman*

**Finance & Scrutiny Committee Chairman**

## GRANTS & DONATIONS AWARD BY LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL 2018/19

<u>Grants</u>	-	<u>Civic Donations</u>	-
Lydney Rugby Football Club	£ 2,000.00	Lydney Tennis Club	£ 150.00
Colbalt Unit	£ 750.00	Lydney Tennis Club - Difb	£ 500.00
WildBoar Weight Lighting	£ 500.00	Relay for Life	£ 150.00
Lydney Community Centre	£ 500.00	Lydney Cricket Club	£ 150.00
Lydney Festival	£ 500.00	Forest Food Bank	£ 150.00
Forest of Dean Sea Cadets	£ 350.00	Charles Cancer Support	£ 100.00
Sara	£ 900.00	Lydney Boxing Club	£ 150.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 5,500.00</b>	Lydney Royal British Legion	£ 500.00
		Lydney Band	£ 100.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 1,950.00</b>

<u>Trust Donations</u>	-	<u>"Ear Marked" Grant Funding (Pending Release)</u>	£25,000.00 Youth Provision - Lydney Hub
Bathurst Park & Recreation Ground	£ 38,000.00	General	
Bathurst Park & Recreation Ground	£ 18,500.00	Litter Collection	
Lydney Recreation Trust	£ 20,515.00		



## PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT 2018/19

This year I am writing my report before the Annual Staff Appraisals, a time when we discuss and up-date the Personal Development Plans for each staff member.

Feedback from staff at our regular staff meetings reinforces the value of the PDP process, with staff having a better understanding of the ambitions of the Council, and Council having a much greater understanding of the ambitions, needs and concerns of our staff members.

The work of the Grounds Staff is clearly visible around the Town, be it in the Park, the Cemetery, the Recreation Ground and the Town itself. Equally important is the work of the Office Staff who provide support to the Members and action council resolutions/decisions and oversee the financial management and protocol governance; all of which is governed by a myriad of legislation.

Both the Grounds and Office Staff have experienced changes during the year, resulting in a review of working practices. These changes were taken on board in a very positive way by all staff members. This is a credit to the staff members and the professional way the changes were managed by our CEO, Jayne Smailes.

The position of Personnel Chair is probably the part of my role as a Councillor which I find most satisfying, and I thank all the staff for making this so.

Another excellent year, and let's look forward to more of the same in 2019/20

Thank you!

*Cllr Brian Pearman*  
**Personnel Committee Chairman**



## Town Clerk (CEO) Annual Town Report – 2018/19



The Council as an organisation is in a sound state. It has good governance procedures and operates in an efficient manner. The services provided are in the public eye and the standard of work remains high, and recognised as such by independent examination.

The Council remains a “Quality Gold Council” (*it has held such status since 2012, previously known as ‘Quality Status’ before applying under the new staged scheme when it was awarded the top accreditation; at the time only the second Quality Gold Quality Council in England*).

The Council’s administration and governance, necessary for a public organisation spending public money, is carried out efficiently. The challenge in the last financial year, and into the future, is to maintain these standards whilst facing the external pressures that the economic recession and reduction in public spending bring with them. Indeed, it is at these times when the need for the services the Town Council provides is at its greatest. The Council’s Five Year Action Plan clearly maps its future strategic aims and objectives; it will provide a process and means by which to achieve its visionary goal.

In financial terms the year was a good year. The Council has a sound budget setting process, delivered via the **Policy, Budget, Precept** process; a record of operating strictly within financial targets can be evidenced via its meeting minutes and audit reports. The Council’s General Reserves are nearing a reasonable level which will provide for a community ‘buffer’ allowing the Council to ‘manage’ the delivery of local services should further service provision cuts by FODDC become apparent.

The town continues to benefit from the work performed by its dedicated and hard-working Town Councillors, supported by a team of professional employees who, despite claims to the contrary, only ever action decisions taken by Members as can be evidenced from reading relevant meeting Minutes.

It would be wrong to mention individuals as all make a contribution to the Council’s success, I would therefore instead like to express thanks to those Councillors who are now nearing the end of their term of office for their positive input in relation to moving Lydney forward; one Member in particular, namely Cllr Derek Biddle however deserves further recognition for he has worked tirelessly for this town for over 30 years – *thank you Derek!*. I would also like to thank the staff for their hard work and dedication which they continue to demonstrate on a daily basis, sometimes in the midst of adversity.

In our every changing society the most powerful and enduring changes are those built from the heart, from a passion to succeed and to excel; this is because these are often real, substantial changes that matter most, the foundation of such changes continue to remain strong because the resolve to ensure success is built with human ‘spirit’.

For me and indeed the majority of Lydney Town Councillors, serving the Electorate builds on the foundation of being true to oneself and one's values; of doing what is in the best interest of the community as a whole, despite being criticized by the few.

Be assured I take my role as Lydney Town Council's CEO and the responsibilities such entails very seriously. I address all tasks honestly, professionally and with integrity; those who know me or who have researched the Town Council know this to be the case.

Neither the Council or I are a 'push over', a soft touch or punching bag for keyboard warriors - if you poke at our very core you will be assured of a strong response; it may not be a response you like but it will always be factually accurate and easily demonstratable as such for anyone wishing to follow the document trail for transparency in all matters remains of the utmost importance to us.

To clone a quote from J D Rockefeller; '*.... there is no quality more essential to success of any kind than the quality of perseverance and determination, for they overcome most things*', be therefore assured Lydney Town Council's 'corporate' resolve and its continued desire to serve its Electorate to the best of its ability will far out see the recent malicious attempts to undermine this council, its Members or its Officers.

*Jayne Smailes*

**CEO – Lydney Town Council**





## Head Groundsman's Report

### Lydney Town

The Groundstaff are always very hard working and contentious about the work they undertake throughout the Town.

Our main concern is to keep Lydney clean, safe and beautiful for residents and visitors alike. To also keep up the high standard we set ourselves personally and as a team

As Head Groundsman I have really enjoyed changing the design of both winter and summer flower beds in town and have received positive comments from visitors and local residents about how beautiful and colourful they were. We made sure everywhere was weed killed, leaves were brushed up, litter tidied up when needed as well as places painted, repaired and looked after.

### Bathurst Park

The Park is a well-loved area for both residents and families, with many positive comments about how they have enjoyed "the beautiful Park". The flower displays were changed and, like the Town, were well received with more bulbs planted and new benches put in with access for disabled persons improved.

Everything is looking really positive for the Park.



I was particularly happy with the events that took place in the Park – the Easter Egg Hunt, Party in the Park and the Fireworks Display all running smoothly and enjoyed by everyone.

### St Mary's Churchyard and Cemetery

The Groundstaff take pride in this area being respectful at all times.

We cut the Cemetery every week and make sure it is clean and tidy.

### Lydney Recreation Trust

The Grounds team have been busy keeping this area safe and well maintained.

We cleaned out the River Lyd again and maintained picnic tables, benches, paths, trees and grass. We also helped with the drainage of playing fields and the construction of animal habitats.



### Lydney In Bloom

It is very rewarding for both myself and my team to look after all the flowers in the Town. After a slow start to the summer wildflower area we eventually had some rain and they looked better than ever, with the hard work in maintaining them paying off.

### Overview

All the Groundstaff take a personal interest in every aspect of the job because they all live in the Town and want to make sure everywhere is beautiful, clean, safe and tidy.

We are always looking at ways to improve areas within the Town.

We all enjoy our jobs as Groundsmen and feel very lucky to work outside in beautiful areas, as well as helping the Town in times of emergency. As Head Groundsman I am happy and proud to work for Lydney Town Council and would like to thank Jayne (CEO) and the office staff for their help and support throughout the year.

I would also like to thank my team of Peter Edwards, Tommy Wales and Ryan Berryman for their hard work and dedication which they demonstrate every day.

*James Young*

**Head Groundsman**



## Lydney Town Council Health & Safety

Once again, I am pleased to report on another year at Lydney Town Council where our Health and Safety programmes and training have contributed to another accident and incident free year.

Our on-going staff training programme has included courses on manual handling, ladder safety and fire marshalling, all of which adds to our knowledge and awareness of matters relating to working safety in public areas.

As always, all tasks are risk assessed and written down. Currently we are working to computerise our risk assessments and associated documentation in order that they may be updated by Groundstaff, all of which will help with efficiency and convenience.

All the staff at Lydney Town Council are to be congratulated and thanked for their efforts and diligence.

- *We can all be proud of our efforts.*

*Peter Edwards*

**Leading Hand**

## Lydney's Multi-Agency Stakeholder Flood Defence Group 2018 – 2019 Report

The Flood Defence Multi-Agency Group have met regularly throughout this past year to provide the fora which enable positive partnership working to take place. It is by having all stakeholders around the same table that complex issues can be shared, discussed and resolved.

The ability to work together on flooding issues has enabled progress to be made to reduce the risk of flooding in Lydney. Without doubt, the increasing frequency of extreme rainfall events as a result of climate change, will increase the chances of flooding as drainage systems need enhancement to cope with increased flow rates in the catchment. Furthermore, large new housing developments need to build in their own drainage systems to help manage the flow of water through the system.

The Stakeholders attending these Lydney Flood Defence meetings include developers, land owners, Lydney Town Council, the Forest of Dean District Council with its flood engineers, Town District and County Councillors, the Environment Agency, Severn Trent Water, and the Highways department from Gloucestershire County Council.

Through the sharing of ideas, solutions, funds and fundraising potential, a number of flooding problems have been progressed. Often, the initial question about a flooding problem is around ownership and responsibility. Once this has been established, further tests and site visits clarify the situation and then a decision can be made on how best to resolve it.

A number of projects have been developed through this multi-stakeholder approach and they include:

Lakeside Avenue, Cookson Terrace, Mead Lane, the early warning system, the Penstock, and liaison with the new housing developments upstream of Lakeside Avenue. New flooding issues have continued to be monitored as they have come to the attention of the group.

It would be fair to say that these projects are ongoing as the need to increase system capacity for a growing population and the need to upgrade both sewerage and surface water run-off drainage infrastructure is expensive and time consuming.

In spite of these difficulties, the stakeholders have worked well together again this past year and will continue to do so to reduce and better manage Lydney's flood defence potential.

*Cllr Chris McFarling*

**Cabinet Member for the Environment, Wildlife, Heritage & Culture  
Forest of Dean District Council**

## County Councillor Report 2018 - 19

Consistent and positive investment in Lydney and beyond has been demonstrated since May last year.

### Transport for our community

#### Growth support for Dean Forest Railway

Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) has provided more than £900,000 in funding for the modernisation of the GCC owned rail crossings, which are operated and maintained on the council's behalf by Dean Forest Railway. One of the crossings is located where the rail track crosses the A48 Lydney town by-pass and the other is on Harbour Road. The Dean Forest Railway, along with its Link with the main railway network is a vital element in the tourism economy of the Forest of Dean.

Dean Forest Railway, along with Lydney company Mabey Bridge must also be congratulated on the restoration and reinstatement of the 127 year old St Mary's footbridge, which on the 9th March was officially reopened.

#### Commuter and tourism Support

On the theme of Railways, GCC are continually monitoring the performance of services, on the Cheltenham (Lydney) Maesteg route (and return). Since 14 October last year, the service, which is now operated by Transport For Wales on behalf of the Welsh Government has seen a significant deterioration in timetabled services. GCC have written to Transport For Wales expressing concern, and the Office of Mark Harper MP has been kept up to date on the issue.

On the Buses. Stagecoach West until the 31st March are running a comprehensive "Network Review and Consultation" focusing mainly on the Forest Area. Among their starting principles are: ensuring retained peak-time capacity across the Forest into Gloucester as the primary local centre and improved connections to Lydney as a local centre.

However, it is imperative that as many people as possible engage with the consultation. You can do so by post, (Stagecoach West, Freeport GR 1497, 65 London Road, Gloucester, GL1 3HF), by email, ([west-enquires@stagecoachbus.com](mailto:west-enquires@stagecoachbus.com)) or by telephone (01452 418630).

#### Growing our Communities

At GCC we believe in empowering our Councillors to make a real difference in our local communities by investing through our "Growing Our Communities" fund directly to local organisations potentially benefiting a wide range of people.

In my Lydney/Aylburton Division over the last 11 months, significant financial support has been awarded to Dial a Ride, the Forest Sensory Group, the Cricket Club, the Relay For Life, Forest Exiles Cricket Club, the Rugby Club, the Football Club, the Victoria Centre, Lydney Tae-Kwon-Do, Bathurst Pool, the Town Hall, the Tennis Club, Bathurst Park, the Boxing Club, the Yacht Club and Aylburton Parish Council.

### Defining and Delivering Infrastructure

Work continues under my GCC Planning Infrastructure remit to ensure that GCC Highway Planning becomes a stronger and integral part of the Local Planning Process. In essence a more common-sense approach. Among key local decisions recently have been the application for a Funeral Home at Neds Top in Lydney North, where residents views were

heard and acted upon, and, of course the B & M Stores application in Hams Road which has the potential to transform and reinvigorate that area of town.

At this point it is also appropriate to thank both the GCC Highways team and the GCC Legal team for the sterling work that they have had to do in picking up the pieces on the Oakdale Estate Bus Link and resolving the issue.

Recent Highway carriageway resurfacing has taken place in Church Road and Station Road, and a much needed Bus Shelter is due to be erected at the junction of Allaston Road with Court Road.

The Chepstow Transport Study, a Report has recently been published. I am a member of the GCC Team that will form part of a cross-Authority working group that has been set up specifically, based on the Report, to look at initiatives to ease congestion along that transport corridor.

In what is a ground breaking scheme for Gloucestershire (Stonehouse and definitive connections between Gloucester and Cheltenham will follow). GCC recently secured £1 million of funding from Gloucestershire First Local Enterprise Partnership (GFirstLEP). The primary rationale for the scheme is to improve connectivity by the delivery of enhanced improvements to walking and cycling links. This falls within the context of the Lydney Transport Strategy and the GCC Local Transport Plan. The scheme will create a pleasant, safe and accessible network of pathways around Lydney, linking Aylburton, Lydney town centre, the railway stations, Dean Academy and nearby residential developments. Since 2013 a tremendous amount of positive collaborative partnership working between Lydney Town Council and GCC has enabled this project to develop and fulfil the key objectives and stringent requirements of GFirstLEP.

Aylburton Parish Council, Lydney Football and Cricket Clubs approached me for clarification on specific route concerns. That was easily remedied by arranging for a 5 strong GCC engineer team to visit in February and first hand expertly clarify. Work on the scheme will commence in the spring.

GCC met in February to formulate and set its budget for 2019/20.

Key highlights include:

- £179m Capital investment into Schools, Community Facilities and Highways.
- £11m extra into Children's Services.
- £2m extra into Adult Services.
- £150k investment into Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service.
- £150k to help fund the pressures in maintaining subsidised Bus Services.
- £50k to help tackle School Holiday Hunger.
- Locally specific:
  - £10k in the Forest District towards a Youth Initiative Scheme.
  - £25k specifically for Local County Councillors to spend on "minor" Highway improvements.

As usual no false promises from me, I will continue to work positively, fight our corner (when the need arises) for the betterment of the Lydney Division.

*Clr Alan Preest*

**Gloucestershire County Council  
Lydney Division.**