



**DRAFT - MINUTES OF THE LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CLAREMOUNT HOUSE ON
MEETING OF THE COUNCIL MONDAY 12TH JANUARY 2026**

Start 7.00pm

Present: Cllr T Saunders (Chair)
Cllr C Evans
Cllr J Gregory
Cllr C Harris
Cllr S Hillier
Cllr N Holbutt
Cllr R Holmes (Vice Chair)
Cllr S Holmes
Cllr M Jones
Cllr P Johns
Cllr T Lindsay
Cllr G Phelps
Cllr E Taylor

In attendance: L Bendall (Deputy Clerk – Minute Taker)
H Sleeman (Business Administrator)

Members of the Public: No members of the public

Councillor Saunders welcomed all present and gave the usual ‘housekeeping’ announcements. A welcome was extended to the new councillors, followed by a round-the-room introduction. The new councillors will be buddied with a more experienced councillor, with thanks to Cllrs R Holmes, Johns and Harris for volunteering.

Cllr Saunders gave a brief update on ongoing staffing issues.

Open Forum

No items raised

1.	<u>APOLOGIES</u>
	Apologies were received and noted from Cllr Macklin.
2.	<u>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</u>
	To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with Lydney Town Council’s current Code of Conduct in respect of Members. No declarations of interest were received.

3.	<u>MINUTES</u>
	<p>To consider approving as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Monday 8th December 2025.</p> <p>It was proposed and seconded that the Meeting of the Council minutes held on Monday 8th December 2025 be accepted as read and correct.</p> <p>Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p>
4.	<u>REPORTS</u>
	To receive <u>urgent</u> reports from Members of the Town, District and County Councils
	<p><u>County Council Reports</u> No reports received</p> <p><u>District Council Reports</u> No reports received</p> <p><u>Town Council Reports</u> No reports given</p>
5.	<u>FINANCIAL MATTERS / RFO REPORT</u>
5.1	<p>Payments</p> <p>To approve accounts for payment as detailed by the RFO</p> <p>Chair proposed that payments totalling £10,619.28, together with an additional £300 for the six local business winners of the Christmas Window display be approved.</p> <p>Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p> <p>A query was raised regarding an invoice to GAPTC for a Clerk's networking event with a request this be queried before payment made.</p>
5.2	<p>Income and Expenditure Reports/ Earmarked Reserves/ Bank Reconciliations for 31.12.25 and Cashbook Statement for 31.12.25</p> <p>To receive and approve the above financial reports</p> <p>Chair proposed for the Income and Expenditure Reports, Earmarked Reserves and Bank Reconciliations for 31.12.25 and Cashbook Statements for 31.12.25 be approved.</p> <p>Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p>
5.3	<p>Direct Debit Card Report</p> <p>To note the Debit Card report for December 2025</p> <p>Noted</p>
5.4	<p>To approve the PRECEPT/Budget for Financial Year 2026/27</p> <p>To receive and approve the PRECEPT/Budget for the financial year 2026/27</p> <p>It was proposed and seconded for the 2026/27 Precept of £826,658, representing a 5.84% increase from the previous year's Precept be approved.</p> <p>Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p> <p>A thank you was extended to the Finance Assistant for their hard work on undertaking this work.</p>
6.	<u>TOWN CLERK'S REPORT</u>
	<p>To receive an update from the Town Clerk</p> <p>Town Clerk's report was received together with municipal meeting dates for 2026/27</p>

7.	<p><u>COMMITTEE BUSINESS REFERRED TO THE COUNCIL AND REPORTS FROM THE CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES, SUB COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES AND FROM LEAD COUNCILLORS</u></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Harris advised that a planning application relating to Lydney Baptist Chapel had been objected to by the Planning & Highways Committee, based on a number of considerations, including ecological concerns regarding bats. District Cllr McDermid will liaise with District Cllr Topping to advise of the Council's decision to object to the application and to request that the application be called in to committee rather than determined under officer delegation. • Cllr Johns confirmed that the final parts of evidence for the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) were being collated to be submitted to Forest of Dean District Council (FoDDC). • Cllr Taylor confirmed that a recent meeting had taken place with a local funeral director and stone mason to re-affirm cemetery rules, a burials committee meeting is scheduled for 26th January. • Cllr Hillier attended a Zoom meeting with an officer from GCC Highways regarding a Street Works Warden pilot in which Lydney has been invited to participate. The purpose of the pilot is to help Highways manage the numerous roadworks and ensure they comply with the relevant permits. The council will have direct access to a reporting portal to raise any concerns. Training is required for this, and it is hoped that it will be undertaken at the Chambers. Further details will follow. Councillors were asked to indicate their interest in the training, and responses were noted. • Cllr R Holmes gave an update to the Dean Forest Gateway project which it is hoped to be submitted for planning within the next month. • Cllr Saunders and Cllr Harris are attending a Yorkley Solar Farm Funding meeting at West Dean Parish tomorrow, 13th January, to review any applications received. It is noted that this funding is available to organisations throughout Lydney. • Cllr Saunders and Deputy Clerk have a meeting on Wednesday 14th January with Market Towns Officer to discuss proposed development and regeneration of the Bus Station. • Cllr Saunders is attending a meeting at Severnbanks School on 30th January to look at plans for redevelopment of their premises. Cllrs were invited to join her. • Cllr Holbutt raised a query concerning bats and the impact on planning, advice was given and a recommendation to visit the FoDDC website where more information can be found. • Cllr Saunders advised that following a request from Lydney Youth Football Club, a Youth Grant of £100 had been made to support the teams Christmas event, ensuring all children within the teams were able to benefit. <p>It was noted that the council had received a supply of FloodSax, donated by FoDDC, to be used within the community.</p>
8.	<p><u>CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE</u></p>
8.1	<p>To consider a response to any correspondence received To receive and note an Eco report regarding the Dean Forest Gateway Noted</p>

9.	<u>STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2030</u>
	To review and update the Strategic Plan for 2023-2030 Update to staffing structure was noted and a recommendation to add a picture of the newly installed Gruffalo sculpture. No other updates identified at this time.
10.	<u>BIODIVERSITY DUTY POLICY</u>
	To review and update the Biodiversity Duty Policy Following review, no changes were identified
11.	<u>CHRISTMAS EVENT</u>
11.1	To approve the date for the Christmas Event 2026 Following discussion, it was proposed and seconded for the Christmas Event for 2026 to be held on Sunday 29 th November 2026. Resolved: Majority Approved
11.2	To receive an update from Glos County Council (GCC) regarding the Igloo and to agree on the process for its sale The update from GCC was noted, and it was proposed by the Chair that the sale of the igloo be delegated to the Amenities Committee, with the following considerations: that the igloo is kept within the Forest area; submission of a letter of bid outlining the community value the igloo will provide; and that the igloo be retained for a period of time and cannot be re-sold within this period. Resolved: Unanimously Approved
12.	<u>SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT CRITERIA FOR 2026/2027</u>
	To review and approve the new Service Level Agreement criteria for 2026/2027 Following review and discussion, it was proposed and seconded to approve the new Service Level Agreement (SLA) criteria for 2026/2027, with the agreement that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisations must meet all core criteria. • Acknowledgment from the SLA organisation on their website and communications that funding has been received from Lydney Town Council (added as a core requirement). • Any events, if relevant, that the organisation is hosting will be shared with Lydney Town Council and included in the council's newsletter (added as a core requirement) • Organisations must meet at least 50% of the flexible SLA criteria. Resolved: Unanimously Approved It was noted that SLA's will be determined by the Finance & Scrutiny Committee
13.	<u>NEW VEHICLE</u>
	To receive an update on the new vehicle and to consider approaching Lydney Recreation Trust and Bathurst Park Trust for a contribution towards the cost of the vehicle. The Chair proposed that the council does not request a contribution towards the new truck from Lydney Recreation Trust and Bathurst Park Trust. Resolved: Majority Approved It was agreed that costings to install trackers and to badge the vehicles with Lydney Town Council be obtained and presented at the next council meeting for discussion.

14.	<u>COMMUNITY MINIATURE LIBRARY & SEED EXCHANGE</u>
	<p>To consider a request for the installation of a miniature library and community seed exchange on the Oakdale noticeboard.</p> <p>The Chair proposed that the council was unable to grant permission for the installation of a miniature library and community seed exchange on the Oakdale noticeboard, as the council is not the landowner. The applicant was advised to seek permission from the landowner.</p> <p>Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p>
15.	<u>COUNCILLOR DROP-IN SESSIONS</u>
	<p>To review and agree future councillor drop-in sessions</p> <p>It was proposed and seconded that, initially, future councillor drop-in sessions be held quarterly and remain at the Town Hall, with further consideration to be given to the locations of future surgeries.</p> <p>Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p>
16.	<u>DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING</u>
	Full Council – Monday 9 th February 2026, 7pm, in the Council Chamber, Claremont House, High Street. Lydney

Meeting closed at 8.54pm