

**Annual Town Meeting (Parish Assembly)  
Held at, Lydney Town Hall, High Street, Lydney**

**Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

**Time: 6pm**

**Present:** Lydney Town Council

T Saunders (Mayor), S Cave (6.02pm), C Harris, S Hillier (6.07pm)  
R Holmes (Deputy Mayor), S Holmes, M Howard, P Johns, M Jones,  
T Lindsay, and E Taylor

Mr M Greenfield – Town Clerk  
Mrs L Bendall – Assistant Clerk (Minute Taker)

Present: 18 Residents

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Cllr Saunders welcomed all present to the meeting and explained that everyone had access to a copy of the Annual Town Meeting Report 2024/2025.

It was noted that a digital copy of the report is available on the Town Council's website.

<https://lydneytowncouncil.gov.uk/annual-town-reports>

1. **APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

To note the Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024 were duly signed at the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024 by the Chairman of the Council (Mayor).

It was noted that the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024 were signed at the Full Council meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

It was proposed and seconded that the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024 be approved.

**Resolved: Majority Approved**

3. **THE MAYOR'S REPORT**

The mayor commented that the Annual Town Meeting Reports for 2024/25 were available for residents within the documentation provided, it was noted that reports from Council Committees, Lydney's Councillors, Bathurst Park & Recreation Trust, Lydney Recreation Trust and various community organisations were included.

The mayor thanked the organisations for their contributions to the Annual Town Meeting Report 2024/2025.

4. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**

The mayor reminded residents that unfortunately the council were unable to answer questions on behalf of other organisations including Highways, County Council, Forest of Dean District Council or the Environmental Agency.



- (i) **Sheep** – a resident commented on a recent social media post that the council had posted on who to contact with any sheep issues. One of the contacts details were incorrect and they queried how up to date the council information was.

**RESPONSE:** Lydney Town Council acknowledges that the initial social media post regarding sheep-related issues included incorrect contact details. These details had been provided to the council by the Forestry England on the same day the post was published. As soon as the error was identified, the post was promptly updated. Forestry England has since been informed that the contact details they supplied were inaccurate.

- (ii) **Speed Cameras on Highfield Road** – concerns were raised again about the lack of signage alerting motorists to the speed limit and the presence of Vehicle Activated Speed (VAS) cameras on Highfield Road. A query was also raised about the possibility of installing a VAS camera that displays actual vehicle speeds.

**RESPONSE:** Cllr Harris confirmed that there are currently two operational VAS cameras installed on Highfield Road as you enter Lydney. Cllr Harris agreed to raise the suggestion of additional or alternative VAS signage at the next multi-agency Highways meeting.

- (iii) **Traffic Lights on Newerne Bridge** – repair works to Newerne Bridge are not scheduled to begin until July/August 2025. In the meantime, the current traffic light system is causing significant tailbacks during peak times. A query was raised regarding why the bridge has been reduced to a single lane, with the feeling that this may be unnecessary.

**RESPONSE:** It was reiterated that the traffic light system falls under the responsibility of Highways. While the Town Council has held multiple discussions with Highways regarding the issue, the final decision rests with them. The single-lane restriction remains in place for safety reasons, due to a substantial section of the bridge parapet being missing. It was also noted that space must be maintained for pedestrian access.

- (iv) **Albert Road Junction to Primrose Hill** – concerns raised at the very poor condition of this stretch of road, particularly on the bend before The Mesne.

**RESPONSE:** The Town Council has raised the matter with Highways, who are fully aware of the issue. It has been confirmed that the road requires full resurfacing, as patch repairs are not viable. Due to the cost of the works, it is currently scheduled within the 2026/27 Highways Budget. However, should funding become available sooner, the works may be brought forward.

**COMMENT:** A resident shared positive feedback about the *Fix My Street* portal, noting it as an effective way to report issues and receive updates.

<https://fixmystreet.gloucestershire.gov.uk/>

- (v) **Flooding** – a Lakeside resident raised concerns about the ongoing flooding issues, noting that their property remains in a poor condition and likening it to a building site. They also expressed disappointment that no local councillors had visited the site, stating it was the first time they had experienced flooding in 24 years.

**RESPONSE:** A significant amount of clearance work has been undertaken by Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) on land owned by both GCC and Lydney Town Council. During this work, a completely blocked culvert was discovered and has since been cleared. It is hoped that this action will help reduce the risk of future flooding in the Lakeside area. Residents are advised that the appropriate contact for ongoing concerns is the GCC Flood Risk Officer.

The Town Council continues to host multi-agency meetings to coordinate efforts to mitigate flooding across the area. While there has been an increased dedicated flooding budget, it is allocated across the entire Forest district, and it is not yet known what proportion will be assigned to Lydney.

It was disappointing to hear that no local councillors had visited the site; this feedback will be passed on to the County Councillor for their attention.

- (vi) **Vandalism** – concerns were raised regarding increased antisocial behaviour and vandalism at the former JD Norman site and a nearby bat sanctuary. Reports indicated that individuals appear to be sleeping in the sanctuary and leaving significant amounts of rubbish, which is falling into a culvert, causing blockages and increasing flood risks. The area is extremely dangerous, and ownership of the site is currently unknown. It was noted that the police have been notified.

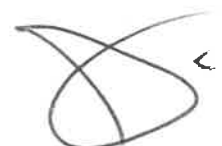
**RESPONSE:** The Council has previously worked with the local police to address issues within the bat sanctuary, including clearing rubbish and securing access to the site. Residents are encouraged to continue reporting any further incidents to the police. The Council will also raise the matter again with the local policing team

- (vii) **Highways/Canal** – a resident queried the continued use of tarmac for resurfacing by Highways, expressing concern that it contributes to surface water run-off and localised flooding. They also highlighted that debris, along with items dumped into the brook, causes blockages and increases flood risk. A further query was raised about when the brook and the Lyd would be cleared.

**RESPONSE:** Lydney Town Council has no authority over the materials used by Highways for road surfacing. Responsibility for the brook and the River Lyd lies with the Environment Agency. These concerns will be passed on at the next Multi-Agency Flood Defence Meeting.

- (viii) **Police Presence** – concerns were raised about the lack of visible police presence in the town, particularly on foot patrols.

**RESPONSE:** As recently reported in the local press, Gloucestershire Constabulary is reviewing PCSO staffing levels, with a proposed reduction in numbers. The long-term aim is to increase the number of Neighbourhood Officers. The Mayor, Cllr Saunders, has been in discussions with other Town Mayors to express concern over the proposed cuts and the noticeable lack of visible policing. Lydney Town Council maintains a positive working relationship with the local PCSOs and Police Officers, who regularly attend and engage in multi-agency meetings.



- (ix) **Planning Appeal on Primrose Hill** – it was confirmed that a planning appeal hearing has been scheduled following an appeal by developers whose application to build approximately 80 new homes near Primrose Hill was previously refused by the Forest of Dean District Council (FoDDC) Planning Department. A query was raised regarding whether Lydney Town Council would be attending the hearing or submitting further comments.

**RESPONSE:** Lydney Town Council's Planning & Highways Committee acts as a consultee in the planning process and had strongly objected to the original application on several grounds. The committee will review the current appeal documentation and determine any further actions or submissions as appropriate. Residents are encouraged to submit any new concerns directly to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration during the appeal process.

- (x) **Uneven Paths** – concerns were raised about uneven surfaces along the path around the lake, which has dips causing walkers to divert onto the grass. Additionally, the track over the railway bridge by the river and a well-used path through the churchyard were noted to require resurfacing due to muddy conditions.

**RESPONSE:** The Council confirmed that these areas will be assessed, and the matter will be discussed at the relevant committee to determine any necessary remedial works and agreed actions.

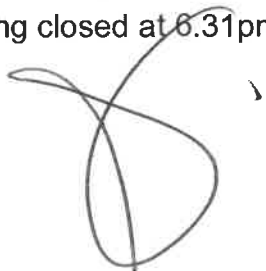
- (xi) **Council Tax Rebate** – a resident affected by recent flooding queried whether a rebate on their council tax bill could be offered.

**RESPONSE:** Lydney Town Council expresses sincere sympathy to all residents and businesses impacted by Storm Bert. However, responsibility for setting and administering council tax lies with the Forest of Dean District Council. Any enquiries or rebate requests should be directed to them.

## 5. **CLOSE**

Cllr Saunders encouraged residents to visit the stalls situated around the room and to speak to their local councillors to raise any queries and questions.

The meeting closed at 6.31pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'S' followed by a smaller, less distinct mark.