

## TREFRIW COMMUNITY COUNCIL

### PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE OF OUR VILLAGE PLAY PARKS AND PUBLIC TOILETS

Trefriw Community Council (TCC) have consulted with Ward residents via a public meeting at the village hall on 18 January 2020 and an online survey between 18-31 January about future funding for our village playparks and public toilets. In addition, residents were also invited to email or phone the Clerk to TCC. Circa 40 residents attended the public meeting, 84 responses to the online survey were received and several contacted the Clerk directly.

#### **Summary of consultation**

Residents were asked to respond to a specific set of questions about the future of - and funding for - the playparks at Gower Road and Bro Geirionydd, and the public toilets at Gower Road. These non-statutory services have been marked by CCBC as being 'at risk' to due budgetary constraints at County level, and TCC were asked to consider contributing to their running costs (and in the case of the toilets, taking them on). The following is a summary of the views expressed by Ward residents during the consultation phase.

One very significant overriding point to emerge is residents' general sense of frustration at what is perceived as CCBC's abrogation of their responsibilities towards our community. In the context of a likely rise in council tax, green bin charging etc, raising the precept to enable TCC to take on the toilets and contribute to the playparks costs due to funding cuts at County level was perceived as unfair. Regardless of which body is asking for more money, they are all demands on the same household purse. Following a request made during the consultation, TCC have drafted a template letter for residents who wish to register their concerns with CCBC which is available on our website.

Reviewing all the feedback from residents via various channels, the general consensus seems to be that:

- both of our playparks and the public toilets are essential to the village and should be retained if at all possible
- a slim majority of those who responded to TCC consultation would be willing to pay more on their precept if the alternative was to lose these facilities
- charging for the toilets, fundraising and looking into other revenue streams were supported as ways of offsetting the costs

#### **Next steps**

TCC are mindful that increasing the precept is by no means universally supported by residents. Therefore we are going to formally respond to CCBC that we will not consider adopting the toilets until the County council have published their updated local toilets strategy as per their obligations under the Public Health in Wales Act 2017. We understand this strategy is due to be published this spring and we will keep residents updated.

Regarding the playparks TCC are anticipating a demand from CCBC for a contribution towards the revenue costs of these facilities in 2021/22 (this includes grass cutting,

inspections and low-level repairs/maintenance of equipment). We are awaiting further details of the level of contribution being sought.

In order to safeguard the future of both the playparks and the public toilets, at the TCC meeting on 4 February 2020 the Council voted to increase the precept to £26,441 for 2020/21 (the precept is collected as part of our Council Tax and then redistributed to TCC by CCBC). For a band D property this will increase the precept to £70.01 for the whole year, which equates to an additional £0.98 per month compared to 2019/20 (note Council Tax is only payable for 10 months of the year). This increase will allow TCC to start building a capital reserve to meet the future costs of maintaining the toilets and playparks should funding be withdrawn by CCBC as previously indicated. Should County funding continue then these additional funds could be used towards the 2021/22 TCC budget.

**Trefriw Community Council**

**5 February 2020**