**Abermule with Llandyssil Community Council – Chairman’s Report May 2019-2021.**

There has been one change to the Council Cllr. Aymes resigned in October 2019, replaced by Cllr. Meredith-Jones who was co-opted to the Council in February, 2020.

March 2020 was our last face to face meeting as the Covid pandemic took hold, with the vulnerable advised to shield and social distancing introduced. In April 2020 Councillors began meeting via ZOOM. Our Communities faced a bigger challenge and we owe a great debt of gratitude to those members of our Community who volunteered, ensuring residents especially the more vulnerable in our society received deliveries of groceries and prescriptions. Both Abermule Community Centre and Llandyssil Hall were used to drop off groceries, especially in the early days of the pandemic when our local supermarkets were unable to meet the demand for home deliveries. Volunteers have transported non-drivers to appointments or made a welcome phone call to vulnerable residents, latterly stewarding at the vaccination centre in Newtown. Thankfully with the role out of the vaccination programme we are slowly seeing the lifting of restrictions, however for some individuals, the isolation or loss of earnings has taken its toll and businesses that have been unable to trade, will all need our support to recover from the pandemic.

Major applications during the last two years have seen consultations during covid restrictions on applications for 32 dwellings adjacent the Meadows and Powys County Council for Nine Business Units on the Business Park, viewing of plans and documents at the Community Centre was arranged by this Council for those unable to view online. The application for 32 dwellings was refused by Powys County Council Planning Dept. on Highways grounds. This Council also objected to the plans for the nine business units, with both our County Councillor and myself speaking against the application in an online planning meeting on 4th February,2021 to no avail, the plans were passed by Powys planning committee.

The Abermule Business Park has remained a contentious issue on our agenda each month. Powys County Council commenced works on the Bulk Recycling Facility and Officers were initially willing to meet to discuss issues raised by the community and a rolling Q & A was set up on the Community Council website. Covid lockdown and restrictions put a stop to on site meetings. It is now apparent, we were right to be suspicious of the true intention for such a large facility, Powys County Council Officers were not open and transparent concerning the types of waste they intended to include on the licence application to NRW. They not only deceived our Community and Councillors but their own Planning Committee, full Council and Cabinet, when they categorically stated residual, black bag or wheelie bin waste would not be brought to Abermule. The consultation on their application to NRW is due to commence later this month.

In December, 2020 School pupils wrote asking the Council for a Christmas tree in the village, to raise the spirits of residents who were suffering the effects of social isolation, touched by their letters the Council were pleased to oblige with trees and lights for both villages, a gesture I hope will become a tradition.

On 26th January, 2021 we commemorated the 100th Anniversary of the horrific rail crash just outside Abermule. I was honoured to lay a wreath on behalf of this Council, we also contributed to the cost of a memorial stone, to be erected on a site yet to be identified within the village, when it is hoped we can arrange a memorial event to include the School Children who have worked on a project with ex-head master Terry Wain.

In what has been an extremely challenging two years, I wish to express my appreciation to my fellow Councillors for their support and commitment to this Council also their representation on Community associations. The Finance Committee for due diligence in particular Cllr. Jones for checking the accounts prior to audit and Vice Chair Cllr. Davis for his support and attendance at one Voice Wales and Vale of Montgomery Cluster Group. Finally, my sincere thanks to our Clerk Gwilym for his expert guidance, administration, financial accounting, updating the website and keeping us up to date on new policies, his knowledge of Council procedure is invaluable.

Thank you.

Jane Rees

Chair of Abermule with Llandyssil Community Council