**Report to Abermule Community Council Meeting 6th January 2016**

**From: County Councillor Wynne Jones – Elected Member for Dolforwyn Ward.**

1. **Powys County Council Provisional Budget settlement.**

* **Cut in Councils RSG by 4.1% announced on 9th Dec**
* **Poorest settlement in Wales, with Ceredigion at -3.4% and Monmouth -3.1%**
* **Wales average settlement -1.4% ( Cardiff -0.1% did best)**
* **Funding to Councils determined by formula based around, population, number of school children, free school meals entitlement, and number of benefit claimants (3 categories).**
* **No ‘floor’ arrangement proposed by WG.**
* **Single Environmental Grant cut by 5%**

1. **Where do we go from here ?**

* **WLGA proposal to WG to provide Councils that have low settlement (Powys, Ceredigion and Monmouth) with a Rural Stabilisation Grant.**
* **If granted and based on 3%, would provide an additional £1.93million for Powys.**
* **All Mid Wales AM’s and several Councils supporting this proposal.**
* **Work continues to get a change of formula for future years( Welsh Local Government Association Distribution Committee have provided ‘worked up’ proposals to WG)**
* **Political pressure to get formula change.**

1. **Where does this leave Powys County Council**

* **Awaiting WG response to Rural Stabilisation Grant proposal and unable re-balance the budget in mean time.**
* **4.1% cut mean a £7.147million cut in funding, which combined with about £5m of growth pressure means the Council need to find approx. £13m of savings in 2016/17.**
* **Have been planning for 5% cut so better off but ‘inference’ that we must enhance Education budget by 1.8% and ASC by 2%. If this is so then it means that Council planned 3 year budget will be ‘out’ by £6million.**
* **Full Council will meet to agree budget on 25th February (meeting will be webcast).**
* **Full Council meeting to agree Council Tax will be on 9th March ( this meeting will also be webcast). Cabinet proposal at this moment is for a Council Tax increase of 4.25% ( likely to be about average for Wales)**

1. **Local Development Plan.**

* **The amended Local Development Plan was agreed by Cabinet in December**
* **This will now be submitted to Welsh Government and will go before the ‘examiner’ in April 2016.**
* **All being well it is hoped that the plan will be adopted by end of 2016 for immediate use.**
* **Proposals for Abermule, Llandyssil and Aberbechan. No changes from the original deposit version.**

1. **Local Authority amalgamation in Wales.**

* **Following publication of Drat Bill, so further progress on this issue can be made by Welsh Government until after May Assembly elections.**
* **Minister for Local Government, Leighton Andrews has decided that he will not take forward the current recommendations from Boundary Commission regarding ward boundary changes in ANY authority in Wales.**
* **This means that he has reversed his previous decision with regards to Powys, where we were supposed to be reducing from current 73 Councillors in May 2017, to 64 councillors.**
* **This will now happen for 2020 elections ( 2017 Council election will be for a short 3 year term). Then after 2020( another 3 year Council Term), the Boundary Commission will start their work all over again, with a view to further ward boundary changes, which will result in different proposals for 2023 election.**
* **Ministers decision means a projected saving of £175k as from May 2017, as a result of a reduction of 9 councillors will not be achievable. This has been included in the draft budget and this saving will now have to be found elsewhere.**

1. **Residual waste collections**

* **As a result of the 3 weekly collection of residual waste we are able, as part of the saving to reduce the number of lorries and crews.**
* **This will obviously mean that there will be a rescheduling of some rounds.**
* **New Wells and Landyssil ( Cemetery Road and Landyssil to Montgomery) will now be rescheduled so that their 3 weekly collection will be on wc 18th January ( Friday) and then 3 weekly thereafter.**

1. **Matters relating to Millfields Amenity Land Trust**

* **Railings around the stream discharge grid have now been replaced by WTJ.**
* **There are 7/8 rails on the fence line adjoining the river that are rotten and need replacing in near future.**
* **Hedge at bottom of ‘football field’ needs siding on Land Trust side.**
* **Some general tree and shrub ‘tidying up’ needs to be undertaken this year**
* **Propose a trustee ‘walk around’ in spring.**