

Cyngor Tref Llanandras a Norton PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20TH OCTOBER 2021 HELD AT THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BROAD STREET, PRESTEIGNE AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

Present: Cllrs. F. Preece (Mayor), D. Edwards (Deputy Mayor), D. Davies, T. Owens, R. Bamford, C. Kirkby MBE, B. Baynham, R. Bennett, P. Smith, J. Wilding.

Apologies: Cllr C. Ruby.

Absent: Cllr. N. Rogers.

In Attendance: Mrs T. Price, Town Clerk; members of the public.

Declarations of Interest: Members were requested to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests they may have in matters to be considered at the meeting in accordance with the terms of the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct Order) (Wales) Order 2008.

Personal: None.

Personal and Prejudicial: None.

MIN 3954 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th September, 2021 were approved without amendment. The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

MIN 3955 UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS

- (1) Former Health Centre/Doctor's Surgery: Cllr. Kirkby reported that the centre had still not been secured and that the building was being misused. He had received complaints from nearby residents. The Clerk confirmed that she had written to the property owner with no response. It was agreed that Cllr. Kirkby could write to the owner to request that the property be secured. Cllr. Baynham would chase the matter up with the County Council to see if it would secure the building.
- (2) Library Services: Cllr. Kirkby reported that the co-ordinator of the volunteers had still not been contacted by the current Principal Librarian. Cllr. Baynham confirmed that she was to meet the Officer in the very near future and would raise this.
- (3) New Wood Bark, Skateboard Area: Cllr. Kirkby confirmed that this was now done.
- (4) Cemetery Fees: Cllr. Kirkby reported that he had attended the recent meeting of Stapleton Group Parish Council when the matter of increased fees for persons living outside Powys had been discussed. The Parish Council was planning further action on the issue.
- (5) Cemetery Works: Cllr. Kirkby reported that a number of issues were still outstanding –
 - Mowing area still not including the areas around the edge of the car park: Cllr. Baynham said this was due to be done very soon.
 - Painting of Gates: On the list as part of maintenance works but not likely to happen very soon.
 - Fencing of unused area to allow grazing: A quote was awaited before the County Council could consider this. Cllr. Wilding agreed to get a quote.
- (6) WI Request to Plant a Tree on Went's Meadow: Cllr. Kirkby had met Cllr. Davies on site to discuss this and the WI intended to purchase an apple tree for the site.
- (7) Memorial Hall AGM: Cllr. Smith had attended. The Hall had received a £10,000 covid payment and had invested this, together with some of its own reserves, into surfacing/improvements to the car park area. The cleaner's hourly rate of pay had also been increased. The Hall Committee currently had around £29,000 in reserves.
- (8) Tree Work by Radnorshire Wildlife Trust: Noted that further work was planned at the Withy Beds.
- (9) CCTV: Members noted that the Clerk was looking into the possibility of cctv on some/all of the Council's sites.
- (10) Cllr Kirkby reported that Mid Border Arts had been successful in securing a grant of £20,000 towards a new lift. They are awaiting confirmation from PCC that the proposed lift is acceptable.

MIN 3956 FINANCE

(1) Donations: The following donation was approved –
PACDG (street cleaning) £250.00

The email of thanks from Radnorshire Wildlife Trust was noted.

(2) Payments: The following payments were approved –

Mrs T.A. Price	£1383.56
HM Revenue & Customs	£554.82
NEST Pensions (direct debit)	£130.06
T. Lloyd-John	£618.23
N. Close	£35.00
N. Close	£150.50 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Seward Precision Ltd (New Barn)	£3900.14 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Highground Maintenance Ltd	£319.57 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Broxap (new bench)	£585.60
Lyreco (stamps/diaries)	£66.32
R.G. & R.B. Williams (valuation)	£600.00
Presteigne Building Supplies	£35.56 MEADOW ACCOUNT
EDF Energy (barn)	£30.22 MEADOW ACCOUNT
EDF Energy (Wilson Terrace)	£41.73
EDF Energy (Hereford Street)	£68.60
JRB Enterprises Ltd (dog bags)	£261.60 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Highline Electrical Ltd	£392.04
CleanMy Ltd (cleaning materials)	£61.85
Cartridge People (ink toner)	£219.80 (refund to T. Price)
Artisan Print (tree weekend)	£131.85 (climate crisis grant)
Highground Maintenance Ltd (weed killing)	£138.42 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Orphans Press (website hosting)	£192.00

(3) Receipts: The following receipts were noted –

Broad Sheep (donation for new Barn)	£100.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Anonymous Donation (play equipment Wilson Terrace)	£1000.00
Anonymous Donation for Bench	£488.00
Lottery Community Fund Grant	£9998.00
Powys County Council (Transforming Towns Grant)	£3599.20

(4) Review of Internal Audit Arrangements: Members noted the internal audit papers supplied and resolved that –

- that the document outlining the scope of the internal audit for the 2021-22 year be confirmed unchanged apart from the addition of the following – to review the Council internet banking arrangements.
- To re-appoint Mr. L. Stephens for the 2021-22 year audit.
- The planning and reporting arrangements for the 2021-22 internal audit were agreed unchanged.

(5) Budget Update to the end of September: Members noted the budget update and the Clerk confirmed the following –

- The expenditure on new benches had been met by donations.
- Maintenance costs on the Meadow account included the purchase of dog bags.

The Clerk would circulate the accounts to date so the full breakdown of the maintenance costs could be seen.

(6) Bank Balances: The following balances were noted -

Money Manager £31,234.19	Meadow Account £22,186.53
Allotment Account £0.00 (now in Meadow)	Warden Reserve Account £1017.13
Capital Account £30,651.63	Treasurer Account £55,337.63

The receipts listed in (3) above were included in these totals.

(7) Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales draft Annual Report Consultation: Members noted the draft report and Cllr. Kirkby drew Member's attention to paragraph 13.16 relating to the taxation of the £150 allowance. This was still the subject of negotiations between Welsh Government, One Voice Wales and HM Revenue & Customs. Resolved no comments be made on the draft report.

(8) Completion of mid-year interim audit: Members noted that the half yearly internal audit had been completed without any issues being raised.

- (9) Inspection of invoices by Chairman: Members had noted that this had been completed.
- (10) Transforming Towns Grant: Members approved the payment of the transforming towns grant of £3599.20 to the Salty Dog.

MIN 3957 PLANNING

(1) Planning applications: The following planning applications were considered –
21/1370/RES Grid Reference: E:331758 N: 264485 Proposal: Reserved matters application following planning approval 19/0777/OUT in relation to appearance, access, landscaping, layout and scale. Site Address: Erection of A Rural Enterprise Dwelling, Broad Street, Presteigne. Members noted that comments had been received from one resident. Resolved as follows - to express concerns about the location of the proposed garage being too close to the adjacent property; the location of proposed sewage treatment works, again close the boundary with the adjacent property and the location of the sewage treatment plant, given the proximity of the River Lugg. Subject to the satisfactory resolution of the above the Council has no other objections.

21/1385/HH Grid Reference: E:331305 N: 264381 Proposal: Installation of hand rail to flat roof area
Site Address: 1 The Barn, Presteigne. Resolved no objections be raised.

(2) Planning Decisions: No decisions this month.

MIN 3958 HIGHWAYS, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

(1) Active Travel Route: Members reviewed the early weeks of the trial. It was felt that the new road markings had helped reduce the initial problems but that earlier warning of the new one way would be beneficial and the Clerk was asked to suggest additional signage by the mini roundabout. They had all received copies of a large number of emails from both residents and non-residents over the one-way trial and these comments were noted. Members were advised by Cllr. Baynham that it was not illegal for emergency services to travel the wrong way down a one-way street.

(2) Dark Skies/Lighting: The following items were discussed -

- Heritage lanterns for Broad Street: Resolved to utilise the existing monies held in reserve for the project and the money raised from the online funding page (in part) to meet the additional cost of the Pudsey Diamond light fittings as these were more in keeping with the character of Broad Street.
- Resolved that the Clerk make an application to Welsh Water Community Fund to further support the Dark Skies Project.
- Street lighting Refurbishment: No time scale was yet available for this work.

(3) Climate Crisis: Update:

- Updated Climate Crisis Policy: Members approved the updated policy as circulated with the meeting papers.
- Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill: Resolved that no action be taken.
- Nature Reserve: Cllr. Bamford outlined the list of estimated running costs for the project and asked for approval for the grant application to be submitted. She added that the purchase of a cut and collect machine was an option for further consideration and that this could reduce regular maintenance costs. Cllr. Wilding stressed the need to keep running costs as low as possible. Cllr. Bamford added that the projected costs were generous in order to present the worst case but that she expected to be able to keep the costs below those listed. Members supported the submission of the grant application and thanked Cllr. Bamford for her hard work on the project so far. Cllr. Bamford had produced a short leaflet to advise neighbouring residents of the project and would distribute these shortly.

(4) High Street Grant: Members noted that the grant process was now complete.

(5) Welsh Water Sewage System Upgrade Update: Members noted the compensation claim drafted by McCartneys. This would now be submitted. The Clerk confirmed that Welsh Water had agreed to place information on the project works at the works site in Presteigne.

(6) Presteigne Woods Forest Resource Plan Consultation: No further information was available. Cllr. Bamford would inform the Clerk if the item needed to go on a future agenda.

(7) Caring for God's Acre Update re. Presteigne Roundabouts: Members noted the information supplied on the work done since the project commenced.

(8) Proposed Speed Limit, Coombe: Members noted the plan drafted by the County Council, the suggested 30 and 40 mph lengths of road from the residents around Broadheath/Coombe, and the various emails from those residents. The Clerk informed Members that while the County Council had drafted a plan for a speed

restriction it had advised that the scheme was low in the rankings and therefore unlikely to be carried out for some time. There was, however, an option to pay for the process at a cost of £3303. After consideration Members confirmed their agreement with the resident's suggestions for a 40mph section starting by Broadheath Farm and leading to a 30mph section starting at the point marked originally by Powys County Council. However Members did not feel that this was a cost the Town Council was able to meet but it would strongly put the need for the limits to the County Council. The Clerk would contact the County Council and inform Herefordshire Council and the Coombe/Broadheath residents of the position.

(9) Lugg Bridge: Members noted that both Balfour Beatty and Powys County Council had stated that no surveys had recently been carried out on the bridge. The Clerk was instructed to contact Powys County Council to ask that it carry out a formal inspection and assessment of the bridge as the Town Council had concerns over cracks in the fabric of the bridge and that the pointing was falling out. Cllr. Kirkby pointed out that the bridge was integral to the flood alleviation scheme.

(10) Fold Farm Footpath Update: The Clerk had written to the Chief Executive as requested at the September meeting and also chased a reply. Both times acknowledgements had been received but no full reply. Cllr. Baynham had therefore followed this up with the senior officer responsible for that service area at the County Council and had now received a reply indicating that the matter would be expedited as soon as possible and hopefully within the next couple of months. Cllr. Baynham was asked to reply to this stating that the Town Council was very pleased to hear this as it had been on the verge of making a formal complaint and that it would now wait until 1st January, 2022 for the matter to be determined before taking any further action. The Clerk was asked to send Cllr. Baynham a copy of the planning inspectorate directive which instructed the County Council to determine the application by March, 2020.

(11) Further Resident Comment on footpath along Clatterbrook: Members noted the comments of the resident and that these had been passed to the Footpaths Officer. The Clerk was asked to contact the Officer again to ask for the works to be done as soon as possible.

MIN 3959 NORTON

(1) Community Speedwatch Update: Members noted that the Whitton group had carried out a session in Norton. No other update, given the absence of Cllr. Ruby.

(2) Community Hub/Church Update: Cllr. Wilding reported that the changes to the Presteigne and Norton Community Trust were in progress. The long-awaited planning permission had still not been received. A grant application had been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

(3) Cllr. Wilding informed the meeting that the Norton Bonfire & fireworks would take place on Sunday 31st October with the Pumpkin judging being done by the Mayor, Cllr. Preece and County Councillor Baynham.

MIN 3960 SITES AND BUILDINGS

(1) Public Conveniences: Members noted that the Wilson Terrace toilet block would be closed down for the Winter after the November bonfire/Fireworks.

(2) Allotments: The Clerk informed Members that the tenant of plot 36 had accepted the offer to move to a newly vacated plot and suggested that given previous discussions on the size of the plot she not re-let the plot until after the Sites & Buildings Committee meeting in November when it could be discussed further. Members agreed that the plot should not be re-let for the time being.

(3) Meadows: the following matters were discussed –

- Use of Barn for Tree Weekend 23rd October: Noted.
- Date for the November Sites and Buildings Committee Meeting: Clerk to arrange via email.
- Report re. feeding of rats: Members were concerned to hear that someone was deliberately encouraging rats at the old Barn and discussed any further action that could be taken. Cllr. Baynham agreed to contact Environmental Health to see if they could recommend anything and if it had a list of qualified contractors.
- Possible Work to Pond: Cllr. Bamford reported that the expert she had consulted over possible ponds on the proposed nature reserve had also looked at the pond on Lower Went's Meadow. They had felt that the pond had no invasive species although it would benefit from the removal of some scoops of mud at some point to deepen it. They had also recommended removal of a self-seeded ash and an alder from the bank as these were both shading the pond and also dropping leaves into it. Neither were desirable. The Clerk was asked to see if the contractor due on site to carry out some tree work in the coming weeks would be able to also remove these two trees.

(4) Lugg View Playground: Members noted the success of the grant application for equipment at the Lugg View play area. The equipment had now been ordered. The Clerk informed the meeting that the County

Council was therefore able to install an inclusive orbit roundabout at Wilson Terrace (instead of the see-saw originally planned). It had been hoped that the see-saw would also be able to be installed but the Officer had since indicated that this wouldn't be possible. The Clerk would discuss this further to explore other options for using the donation.

(5) Boulthorpe Weir: Cllr. Smith reported on the site meeting held with an Officer from the Wye/Usk Foundation and the proposal to install willow 'fish scales' along the bank to slow the water flow and enable the bank to re-build. He was not however able to deal with any work to the structure of the Weir itself. There were no grants available and the estimated cost was £2636 although this could be reduced if a local hylac/digger could be sourced. Permits would be required given the area is a SSSI. It was agreed that this be put into the draft budget for consideration in January. Cllr. Smith also reported that the trees on the inside of the meander above the weir were also felt to be an issue and the Officer had recommended pollarding them to remove the stress and so to secure the ground and prevent the meander being washed away, something which would radically alter the direction of the water flow.

(6) Adopt A Bench: Cllr. Baynham had chased the insurance query up with the Officer but not yet had a reply.

(7) Refurbishment of Town Benches Update: Members noted that this was complete and the final new bench was in place outside the Primary School.

MIN 3961 CORRESPONDENCE/GENERAL ITEMS

(1) Mayor's Chain Update: Cllr. Baynham reported that it seemed increasingly unlikely that it would be possible for the Radnorshire Chain to be given to the Town Council. Cllr. Kirkby had already carried out research into options for refurbishment of the pendant, adding links to the chain etc. and it was felt that this option should now be considered in more detail. The possibility of a presentation board for past Mayor's was discussed as an alternative solution. Cllr. Kirkby agreed to carry out more research and get costings for presenting to the budget meeting in January.

(2) Town Wifi Scheme SMART towns: Members had been made aware that the grant application had been successful and that the project was expected to be complete by the end of March, 2022.

(3) Tourist Information Boards Update: Cllr. Kirkby reported on the situation relating to the extra £500 needed and following discussions with some of the previous Trust Directors he believed that the current Directors could confirm to PACDG the allocation of a full £1000 to the project.

(4) Open Consultation on Proposed Guidance on "Principles of Good Administration" and "Good Records Management": Noted.

(5) Community Broadband Scheme: Members considered the benefits of this proposed project which would offer fibre to the premises connections to the Presteigne and Norton area. Following discussions on the details Members agreed that the project go ahead and agreed to form a Working Group to run the Project. Members of the Group to be Cllrs. Davies, Owens and Bennett. The Clerk would arrange an initial meeting with the Community Broadband Officer and Broadway Partners.

(6) Letter from Llandrindod Town Council re. hybrid meetings and request for Welsh Government funding and support: Members fully supported the letter written by Llandrindod Wells Town Council and the Clerk was asked to write in support.

(7) Reply from Jane Dodds MS on dental provision in Powys: Noted. Cllr. Baynham reported that the Powys Teaching Health Board had recently announced that Powys dentists will take on approximately 269 new patients per week across the county. This plan is part of a Wales-wide dental recovery plan.

(8) Reply from Chief Fire Officer re. siting of new vehicle: Members noted that the request for the unallocated vehicle to be located in Presteigne had been refused and the vehicle allocated to Abercrave.

(9) Further correspondence re fly tipping, Slough Road: Members noted the further comments. The Waste Awareness Officer had visited twice and not found any problem. The resident had been offered the opportunity to meet Cllr. Baynham and the Officer on site but had not as yet stated they wished to take up that offer. No further action needed at present.

(10) Presteigne and Norton Community Trust: Members noted the changes to the structure of the group and confirmed the four Town Council trustees as Cllrs. Wilding, Bamford, Smith and Kirkby.

(11) Welsh Government Consultation: Consultation on Updating Earnings Thresholds for Council Tax Recovery: Resolved no comment be made.

MIN 3962 TOWN COUNCIL SURGERY

No surgeries currently being held. Agreed not to re-start at present.

MIN 3963 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr. Baynham reported the following –

- Residents could now access their Council Tax bill online. Members were asked to encourage sign up to this service.
- County Council currently had a number of vacancies including in areas such as planning when training costs would be covered (subject to remaining in post for two years after completion). A percentage of the full time salary would be paid during the training period.
- Covid cases high in the Presteigne and Knighton area.
- Budget 2022/23 discussions had commenced.

MIN 3964 CO-OPTION

The Clerk reminded Members that the closing date was 31st October and the co-option was planned for the November meeting.

MIN 3965 URGENT BUSINESS INFORMATION

(1) Vintage Car Rally: Cllr. Preece reported that the Group had thanked the Town Council for the use of the Meadow and the town of Presteigne for its welcome. Members considered that for future years it would be useful to consider better arrangements for parking for the weekend for example by using the Shopper's Car Park or the Meadow.

(2) Attendance via Video Conferencing: Cllr. Owens apologised the two disconnections during the evening.

(3) Boultonbrook Weir: Cllr. Kirkby asked if a reply had yet been received from CPAT and the Clerk stated that nothing had been received yet.

(4) Tree Weekend: To take place on 23rd and 24th October.

(5) Large Oak, Secondary School Field: Cllr. Baynham reported that the application to protect the tree via a Tree Preservation Order had been accepted and was now going through the legal process.

(6) Process for reporting Abandoned Vehicles: Confirmed that there was an online form to report any such vehicles.

(7) Presteigne Doctor's Surgery: It was reported that residents were still having issues accessing face to face appointments with Doctors.

The meeting closed at 10.03 pm.