

Cyngor Tref Llanandras a Norton PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24th JANUARY 2024 HELD AT THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BROAD STREET, PRESTEIGNE AND ALSO VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

Present: Cllrs. B. Baynham (Mayor), T. Owens (Deputy Mayor), M. Price, D. Edwards, A. Van Huls, J. Wilding, M. Williams (via video link).

Apologies: Cllrs. F. Preece, L. Abecasis, (Six-month absence for Cllr. Abecasis approved October)
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.

Prior to the meeting Members noted their deepest condolences to Cllr. Abecasis on his recent bereavement.

MIN 4290 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20th December, 2023 were approved without amendment. The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17th January 2024 were approved without amendment. The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

MIN 4291 UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS

- (1) New Money Market Account: The new three-month money market account was now open at 4.11% for an initial three-month term.
- (2) Street Lighting and Bus Route Queries: Members noted that the Clerk had replied to these queries.

MIN 4292 FINANCE

- (1) Donations: No donations this month.
- (2) Payments: No payments.

MIN 4293 PLANNING

- (1) Planning applications: No applications to consider.
- (2) Planning Decisions: No decisions to report.
- (3) Local Development Plan: Consultation on Key Issues, Objectives and Vision: Agreed no comment to be made but Members were encouraged to submit their own personal views on the proposals.

MIN 4294 HIGHWAYS, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

- (1) Query on Car Park Charges and long/short stay car parks: Members noted that following the query raised by Cllr. Van Huls the Clerk had investigated and both the charged for Presteigne Car Parks were long stay sites hence the minimum charge being for a two-hour period. Only short stay car parks had the lower charge for one hour. It was agreed that the Clerk contact the County Council and ask what the options were for changing the charging regime in one of the car parks. Members also noted the car park usage data received as part of the car parking review which the Clerk had attended.
- (2) Dark Skies Project Update: Members noted that the official announcement had now been made and Presteigne and Norton had been covered in both local and national media. It was agreed that the next steps should be discussed by the Working Group and the Clerk would suggest some possible dates/times.
- (3) Climate Crisis: The following items were discussed –
 - Committee Meeting: Agreed to postpone and set a new date once new Members were in place.
 - Ecological Data Report: Cllr. Baynham pointed out that page 12 contained a map of Llanwrtyd Wells and needed correcting. It was also noted that five incidences of Japanese knotweed had been noted

and the Clerk would ask if these had been reported to Environmental Health so they could be treated. She would also ask for the report to be updated with the correct map. Members were pleased with report and asked that their thanks be passed on to the Officer at the County Council.

- Wildflower Grant Signs: Members considered the draft wording supplied and agreed the following - **Text for hedges sign** – ‘These hedges are being managed for nature and where it’s safe to do so will be cut less regularly and in rotation to encourage wildlife corridors and to provide more food and shelter for birds and insects.’ **Wildflower meadows sign text** **Wildflower Meadow** - In this area a native wildflower meadow is being created by volunteers for the community. Wildflower meadows provide much needed habitats and food for insects, birds and mammals. A mix of annual and perennial flowers and grasses have been planted and it will take time to grow’.
- Wildflower Project Update: The County Council Officer had visited Presteigne and was pleased with the project so far and keen for the whole grant to be spent. Cllr. Wilding suggested that the area behind the site for the sleeping dragon could be power harrowed using some of the grant money and it was agreed that this be investigated.

MIN 4295 NORTON

(1) Norton Community Trust: Members were pleased to hear that the project continued to progress well and that it was hoped that the building would be ready for opening at the start of March.

MIN 4296 SITES AND BUILDINGS

(1) Public Conveniences: The Clerk reported that the new dispenser appeared to be reducing the theft of toilet rolls and the Clerk would arrange for the new type to be installed in the two cubicles in the ladies section.

(2) Allotments – The following matters were discussed -

- rent reminders to be sent shortly
- siting of polytunnel: Members reviewed the comments of the two adjacent tenants and also considered the need for regular maintenance to ensure the polytunnel did not become unsightly. It was agreed therefore to refuse the request from the PNAA.
- request to add new joint tenant to plot and remove previous joint tenant: given the new joint tenant was at the top of the waiting list it was agreed to allow the change to the tenancy.

(3) Meadows: The following matters were discussed –

- Review of budget for dog bags: agreed an additional budget of £300 but also that the Clerk place a bulk order as normally done in April in order to secure the best price per box and using the budget for the new financial year.

(4) Nature Reserve: Members noted the concerns re. the water run off from the site. Members noted that the road drains needed clearing and that the new speed hump needed a drainage channel through it to prevent water build up. Cllr. Baynham had asked that the drains be unblocked. Cllr. Wilding would review the run off from the ponds in the Spring.

(5) Grant Application Update: No update to report.

MIN 4297 CORRESPONDENCE/GENERAL ITEMS

(1) Welsh Ambulance Service and Local Response Times: Members noted the Clerk’s report and also the reply received that morning indicating that the service was currently too busy to reply for a while.

(2) Leisure Services Review Update: Cllr. Baynham would be attending a meeting in a couple of weeks to learn the findings of the review.

(3) Memorial Hall Update: Members noted that the Clerk had been told that the issuing of a temporary licence to open the Hall was not possible. Cllr. Wilding pointed out that if the County Council believed it could not delegate the running of the Hall then it was surely incumbent on them to open it themselves. The Clerk was instructed to write to the relevant officer, copying in their Director and the Portfolio Holder, and asking that the Hall be re-opened by the County Council as a matter of urgency.

(4) Powys Community Broadband Stakeholder Group: Agreed to appoint Cllr. Owens as representative to attend these meetings

(5) Report on meeting with Mid Wales Tourism: Cllr. Owens reported on the meeting between himself, the Clerk and Mid Wales Tourism. The project was to produce an app and website for local businesses to promote offers, discounts. The Clerk was awaiting further information from MWT and it was agreed that the chamber of trade (CONNECT) should be sent any further information as the impetus for the project needed to come from the traders themselves.

(6) Transforming Towns Grant: Cllr. Wilding had noticed the availability of this grant and felt it could be useful for the High Street. He was willing to help promote the grant if it was decided to apply. It was agreed that he and the Clerk would get more information and report back to the February meeting. If the project went ahead then Members would consider forming a working group.

(7) Launch Weekend, Presteigne Festival: Members noted the dates for the launch weekend on 11/12th May.

MIN 4298 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cllr. Edwards reported the following:-

- Draft Count Budget produced;
- Various Norton issues being investigated;
- Knighton Hospital League of Friends provision of audiometer for Hospital.

Cllr. Baynham reported the following:-

- Dealing with parking issues at Lugg View;
- Part of employment committee and had taken part in the employment of new directors recently;
- Draft budget agreed by Cabinet with a proposed 7.5% Council Tax increase. This would now go before Full Council. Members noted that this increase would not secure the current level of services;
- Broadaxe Speed Hump: Now re-tarmacked as needed following removal;
- Congratulations sent to the Mayor of Ligne for receiving an honour recently;
- Vandalism/Glass Broken in Shoppers Car Park cleared by Cllr. Baynham and a small number of volunteers. Matter now in the hands of the police.
- Attended school governors meeting on transport to discuss students using the public bus service.

MIN 4299 CO-OPTIONS/RESIGNATIONS

Members considered the applicants for co-option and it was agreed to co-opt Colin Kirkby and James Ramsay to the Council.

Members noted the further resignations of Cllrs. Firth and Gray. The formal notice of the vacancies had been posted and the County Council would advise in due course if a formal election had been called. This was the first stage before proceeding to formal election or co-option.

MIN 4300 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS

Agreed to defer until new Members were in position.

MIN 4301 URGENT BUSINESS INFORMATION

(1) Community Payback: Members had received praise for the work of the team in the cutting back of brambles.

(2) Potholes: Cllr. Williams would raise this matter at the February meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm.