

Cyngor Tref Llanandras a Norton PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 17TH MAY 2023 HELD AT THE JUDGE'S LODGINGS (MAYOR MAKING) AND THEN THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BROAD STREET, PRESTEIGNE AND ALSO VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

Present: Cllrs. B. Baynham (Mayor), R. Bamford (Deputy Mayor), D. Edwards, L. Firth, F. Preece, T. Owens, L. Abecasis, M. Price, J. Poster, A. Van Huls, M. Williams, J. Wilding.

Apologies: Cllr. J. Gray

In Attendance: Mrs T. Price, Town Clerk.

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.

The first part of the meeting was held in the Courtroom at the Judge's Lodgings.

MIN 4190 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR AND CHAIRMAN 2023/24

Cllr. Edwards opened the meeting by welcoming everyone. She then spoke for a short while on the highlights from her year in office with the return of much-loved events following the pandemic and with national events including the Platinum Jubilee, the death HM Queen Elizabeth II and the Coronation of King Charles III. She thanked Members for their work over the year. Projects completed during the year included the turning on of the Town Wifi, the upgrading of the street lighting thanks to Powys County Council and the new Town Investment Plan. In addition, the land for the new nature reserve had now been purchased and the project was well underway. She thanked Cllr. Baynham for her work as County Councillor throughout the year.

Cllr. Edwards concluded by wishing her successor good luck for their term in office and invited nominations for Mayor/Chairman for 2023/24.

Cllr. Baynham was proposed by Cllr. Preece. This was seconded by Cllr. Wilding. There were no other nominations and Cllr. Baynham was elected unanimously.

Cllr. Baynham would complete her formal acceptance of Office, witnessed by the Clerk. She thanked Members for her election and Cllr. Edwards for her work during her term as Mayor. She indicated that one of her charities for her year of office would be the Sleeping Dragon Fund.

MIN 4191 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR AND VICE-CHAIRMAN 2023/24

Cllr. Baynham then invited nominations for Deputy Mayor. Cllr. Bamford was proposed by Cllr. Wilding and seconded by Cllr. Owens. There were no other nominations and Cllr. Bamford was elected unanimously.

Members then removed to the Assembly Rooms to continue business.

Cllr. Baynham reminded Members of the need to submit apologies to the Clerk if they were unable to attend meetings and also asked that they reply to all emails promptly where replies were needed.

MIN 4192 REVIEW OF MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS

The following Memberships were agreed –

SITES AND BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

Cllrs. Bamford, Preece, Firth, Gray and Price.

Outside Representatives for Meadow Matters: Richard Rimington, Gareth Graham, Colin Kirkby.

Outside Representative for Allotments: Karen Lewis.

Outside representatives all confirmed willingness to serve on the Committee.

STAFFING COMMITTEE

Cllrs. Baynham, Edwards, Wilding, Vanhuls and Owens.

CLIMATE CRISIS COMMITTEE

Cllrs Poster, Gray, Bamford and Firth.

Plus two outside representatives – Jenny Mottershead, Kate Van Den Ende

Ms Mottershead had still to indicate her willingness to continue to serve on the Committee. The Clerk would confirm.

LIBRARY SERVICE/ASSEMBLY ROOMS WORKING GROUP

Cllrs. Williams, Abecasis, Bamford, Baynham.

LDP WORKING GROUP: Cllrs. Baynham, Firth, Edwards, Abecasis.

BROADBAND WORKING GROUP: Cllrs. Owens and Edwards.

LEISURE CENTRE WORKING GROUP: Cllrs. Baynham, Edwards, Preece, Firth, Gray.

Outside Representatives: Mr. C. Kirkby, Mr. P. Wright, Mr. R. Rimington.

GRANT AWARDING POLICY WORKING GROUP: Cllrs. Baynham, Wilding, Williams, Price.

DARK SKIES/INTELLIGENT LIGHTING WORKING GROUP

Cllrs. Baynham, Williams. Outside Representative: Leigh Harling-Bowen.

ALLOTMENT LIAISON MEMBER: Cllr. Preece.

YOUTH REPRESENTATION MEMBER(S): Cllrs. Bamford and Abecasis.

MIN 4193 REVIEW OF APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The following representatives were agreed -

Presteigne Primary School

Cllr. Preece.

One Voice Wales

Cllrs. Baynham and Bamford

East Radnorshire Care

Cllrs. Edwards and Van Huls.

Presteigne and Norton Community Trust - Cllrs. Edwards, Bamford, Van Huls and Wilding.

Warden Guardian Foundation

Cllr. Bamford.

MIN 4194 REVIEW AND CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL DOCUMENTS

(1) Standing Orders: Confirmed unchanged. New model standing orders expected from One Voice Wales in due course. The serving of the summons to attend meetings was re-confirmed.

(2) Financial Regulations (including direct debit and internet banking policy): Confirmed unchanged.

(3) Other Policy Documents: Council Complaints Procedure, Data Protection, Freedom of Information Documents, social media Policy and Staffing related policies: All confirmed unchanged.

(4) Continued adoption of the revised Code of Conduct (under Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016): Confirmed.

(5) Remuneration payments to Town Councillors: The following payments would be available in the municipal year May 2023 to April 2024:

- An annual sum of £156 per year per Member, paid in arrears (mandatory).
- An annual sum of £52 per Member for expenses, paid in arrears (mandatory).
- To continue to reimburse the cost of travel expenses incurred for travel on Council business outside the Community Council area.
- To refund the cost of care expenses up to the current stated approved cost per month (mandatory)
- The payment of the Mayor/Chairman's Allowance as per the budget allocated plus a separate budget for expenses.

(6) Grant Awarding Policy/Procedure: Confirmed unchanged.

(7) Annual Report 2022/23: Agreed that publication be via a copy in the library and on the Council website. The Clerk confirmed that she was in the process of drafting the report.

MIN 4195 MEMBER ATTENDANCE

Member attendance records for 2022/23 were duly noted. Cllr. Baynham congratulated Cllrs. Edwards, Owens, Poster and Williams for their 100% attendance.

MIN 4196 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

Members noted that the general power of competence was now available to eligible Councils subject to this being declared at the annual meeting. Unfortunately, although two of the three conditions had been met, as less than two thirds of the Council had been formally elected it was not possible to use the power at present.

The Annual Meeting closed at 7.34pm.

The Annual Meeting was followed immediately by the ordinary business meeting.

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY BUSINESS MEETING HELD ON 17TH MAY 2023
HELD AT THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BROAD STREET, PRESTEIGNE AND VIA VIDEO
CONFERENCING**

Present: Cllrs. B. Baynham (Mayor), R. Bamford (Deputy Mayor), D. Edwards, L. Firth, F. Preece, T. Owens, L. Abecasis, M. Price, J. Poster, A. Van Huls, M. Williams, J. Wilding.

Apologies: Cllr. J. Gray

In Attendance: Mrs T. Price, Town Clerk, one member 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 4197 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19th April, 2023 were approved without amendment. The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

MIN 4198 UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS

(1) Leisure Centre Representatives: Attending June meeting.

(2) Police: Attending July meeting.

(3) Donation to Sleeping Dragon Fund: Pete Smith notified of the amount allocated and he will let the Clerk know when he needs the money transferred across.

(4) Maintenance of Grass Verges: Report received from volunteer noted – *Regarding cutting around the seat on Castle Road bank. Following on from your suggestion when we last met about the new PCC 'Its for Them' signage I strimmed a path to the bench this afternoon & a small area in front. I cannot remember exactly where the orchids were growing the year before last there, except it was in front of the bench & cut by the mowing round it last year. I have placed last year's simple sign there as an indicator to cutters. The path is at an angle between the daffodils purposely because this will avoid the orchid area and hopefully they will return this year if left unmown. Now the path has been cut once it will be easier to continue to keep this way. As I went about the verges I came across a lot of yellow rattle plants. The plugs we put in last April & extra seeding before the hard winter (which it likes) has paid off & they will start to really get working on the longer grasses this year.'*

(5) Working from Home Member Allowances: Members were advised that the SLCC has published the advice for claiming the allowance/tax relief generally and regarding payment towards expenses it would seem that only one amount can be claimed not one per employer so for any Members wishing to claim their £156 already getting a wfh payment or tax allowance they cannot do so again and so the £156 would still need to go through payroll. Members to check with the Clerk if they remain unsure about their specific situation.

(6) Stakeholder Consultation - Forest Management carried out by Natural Resources Wales (SA-FM/COC-007116 / SA-PEFC-FM-007116): The Clerk confirmed that the comments had been submitted.

(7) Clearance of Sites after Felling: Further to the question raised at the April meeting the following response had been received *'We generally leave brush on site because it contacts nutrients which are beneficial to the soil and future tree growth, as well as it storing carbon and protecting the soil post-clearfell'*.

MIN 4199 FINANCE

(1) Donations: No donations this month. The letters of thanks from Presteigne Festival and Warden View Methodist Church were noted.

(2) Payments: The following payments were approved –

Mrs T. Price (salary)	£1495.00
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HMRC (Tax/NI)	£586.51	
NEST (Pension)	£139.37	DIRECT DEBIT
T. Lloyd-John	£628.23	
N. Close	£60.00	
N. Close	£156.00	MEADOW ACCOUNT
Highground Maintenance	£345.89	MEADOW ACCOUNT
Amazon (refund T. Price)(cctv signage)	£17.98	MEADOW ACCOUNT
Border Janitorial	£94.67	
EDF Energy (Wilson Terrace Toilets)	£3.03	
Information Commissioner (data registration)	£35.00	(direct debit)
Cartridge People (ink toner)	£132.90	
HSBC (bank charges)	£8.00	
HSBC (bank Charges)	£8.00	MEADOW ACCOUNT
Nature Reserve Payments –		
RM Group	£777.08	
Ron Smith & Co.	£9923.40	
Key Clamp Store (refund R. Rimington)	£134.35	
Presteigne Building Supplies	£933.53	
Presteigne Conv Store and Powys Environmental Ltd (refund O.Rimington)	£128.65	

(3) Receipts: The following receipt was noted:-

Powys County Council 1st Precept Payment - £24,312.60

(4) External Audit/Annual Return and Governance Statement: Member considered and approved the Annual Return and Annual Governance Statement for submission to the External Auditors together with associated papers but subject to the posting of the necessary notice of elector's rights a copy of which was still awaited from the Welsh Audit Office.

(5) The following Bank Balances as at 2nd May 2023 were noted:

Treasurer	£9592.71	Money Manager	£33,433.37	Meadow	£38,852.63
Warden Reserve	£1021.08	Capital Reserve	£30,803.65		

Members noted that the latest lottery refund for project expenses was still awaited.

(6) Bank Signatories: Confirmed unchanged.

(7) Coronation Medals – Agreed payment of £679.99.

Budget allocation as follows - £500 as per Coronation Budget, £66.66 Mayor's Allowance, £113.33 VAT.

(8) Amended payment amount for SLCC Membership Note as £236.00 not £279.00 as expected.

(9) Bank Transfer: The transfer of £20,000 from the Money Manager account to the Treasurer account to cover the ongoing project payments for the new Nature Reserve was agreed.

MIN 4200 PLANNING

Cllr. Edwards left the room for the duration of the following item due to her position on the County Council planning committee.

(1) Planning applications: The following planning application was considered –

23/0575/HH Grid Reference: E:329198 N: 265672 Proposal: Formation of new access (retrospective) Site Address: Lower Ackhill, Presteigne, Powys, LD8 2ED. Resolved no objections be raised.

Cllr. Edwards returned to the room.

(2) Planning Decisions: None this month.

(3) Bute Energy Wind Farm Development: Cllrs. Baynham and Edwards reported on the meeting in Builth Wells which had largely centred on the pylon route rather than the turbines themselves. It was noted that the decision on both the turbine development and the pylons/grid connection would be made by Welsh Government with the County Council only a consultee. Cllr. Edwards would advise of any further updates as needed.

(4) Powys County Council - Information on Developments of National Significance: Noted. Members had received the link to the information.

MIN 4201 HIGHWAYS, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

(1) Dark Skies Project Update: The application was due to go off in the next week.

(2) Climate Crisis Update: Cllr. Bamford reported on progress of the Nature Reserve Project as follows-

- Proposed Information Board to include QR code with link to a dedicated page on the Council website.

- Four training sessions organised on plant, insect identification etc.
- Open Day on 3rd June from 2pm and Members asked to attend if possible. Parking would be in the Primary School playground.
- Bottom Pond draining more than expected. Contractor to review.
- Julian Jones appointed to carry out project evaluation.
- Gateway made and being painted. To be installed shortly.
- Grass Cutting Machine to arrive in the next week.
- Pond Water tested and was clear with no phosphates.

Thanks were noted to Cllr. Bamford and all her volunteer helpers.

(3) Oak Trees, Maes Corton: Noted that the contractor had confirmed the dead trees will be replaced.

(4) Welsh Water: Phosphate permit now granted. This should enable planning permissions to be obtained without conditions or restraint.

(5) Update re Roundabouts: Members noted the message from Caring for God's Acre and that a selective Spring scythe cut on the roundabout had been done and several bags of grass removed. All looked very good and they felt it was becoming a very nice meadow area with a lot of interesting plant species starting to proliferate.

MIN 4203 NORTON

(1) Community Trust Update: Work was progressing well and it was hoped to open in a few months.

(2) Grass Cutting: Cllr. Owens asked that an additional strip of grass be cut at the bottom of Hare's Green to improve visibility. Cllr. Edwards to report.

(3) Norton Show: To take place on 30th July.

MIN 4204 SITES AND BUILDINGS

(1) Public Conveniences: Nothing to report.

(2) Allotments: The Allotment Association had carried out further rabbit proofing.

(3) Meadows:

- Vandalism: Members noted the further vandalism which seemed to be abating slowly.
- Use of New Barn: Members noted that use had re-started with the better weather with a number of mornings/evenings now booked for regular classes. There had also been a small surge in enquiries following the temporary closure of the Memorial Hall
- Use for Transition Presteigne Event - 17th June: Noted.
- Reminder Sheep Music Event on 20th May.
- Toddler Swing at Wilson Terrace due to be installed very soon.
- Scout Hut Maintenance Day: Members congratulated Cllr. Preece and all the volunteers for their hard work in spring cleaning and painting the Scout Hut on the recent Bank Holiday Monday. The work day had been featured on BBC news.

(4) Community Storage Update: Draft plans had now been produced by Owen Rimington. Cllr. Wilding suggested that the size be increased (within the scope of that allowed without planning permission being needed) in order to maximise the space available once completed. The Clerk would circulate the plans and feedback the suggestion re the building size to Mr. Rimington.

(5) Sites and Buildings Recommendations:- Members considered the following recommendations:-

Allotments: None.

Meadows:

Work day to be arranged by Chairman for March 2024: Noted.

Offer to mow the back field from the Carnival Committee Contractor: Agreed - mowing to be carried out up to a fortnight before the event. Payment/expenses would be provided if required.

Sites and Buildings Committee to review the Meadow and produce a map of areas that could be used as wildflower meadow sites for Council review. Grant applications to be sought once a plan agreed by Full Council.

Tree works: Alan Jones Tree Surgeon to be appointed to carry out all the works listed as per the quote supplied. Mr. Jones to also be asked if he would chip the orchard prunings and include this within the cost.

Work in progress to produce a hedge management plan for Council review: Noted. Final report would come to Council in July.

New Management Plan for Eddie's Meadow: Agreed to commission a new plan from Mid Wales Ecology at the cost quoted of £175.20. Monies to come from the Climate Crisis Fund.

Progress of the design for a Community Storage area: Noted.

Grant Application: Clerk to investigate costings and grant applications for outdoor table tennis table(s) and report to Full Council in due course.

Community Payback Team be asked to repair and replace the steps from the footpath onto the meadow (subject to County Council approval if needed).

Toilets:

Clerk to seek quotes for the work to internally paint both sites.

MIN 4205 CORRESPONDENCE/GENERAL ITEMS

(1) Town Wifi Update: The Clerk reported that the units were still not in place at the Assembly Rooms and that the Officer at Powys had said he was still waiting for a 4g router for the install. Cllr. Wilding had met with the Officer and the company doing the work to discuss installing a unit at the Memorial Hall and it seemed this was likely to go ahead, again using a 4g router. The Clerk had spoken to the company and it was waiting for more information from the County Council. A further site meeting was planned in Presteigne for the following week.

(2) Community Broadband Scheme Update: Members were disappointed to learn that changes to the funding from UK Government had led to the project being halted while Broadway Partners had discussions with the relevant Government Department. All those registered had been emailed with an update.

(3) Presteigne Memorial Hall: Cllr. Wilding reported that he and other members of the Committee had met with the Fire Officer to discuss the essential works needed before the building could re-open. However further issues had been raised and PAVO was now assisting the Committee in its discussions with the County Council. Cllr. Wilding confirmed he was no longer serving on the Committee. Members wished the Hall Committee success in its negotiations and hoped the building would be able to re-open soon.

(4) Ambulance Service –

- EMERTS Consultation (Air Ambulance Base Review): Consultation events continued.
- First and Co-Responders: The Clerk had asked that the Council's concerns be relayed upward to Senior Management and had been chasing for a reply but nothing had been received as yet.

(5) East Radnor Leisure Centre: The South Powys General Manager, Richard Gealy would attend the June meeting. Members agreed to consider any questions they might have and to submit one to the Clerk by the end of Wednesday 24th May. One question confirmed was the reason for the recent reduction in opening hours. Members then considered the possible installation of solar panels and the benefit to the centre in greatly reduced energy costs. Cllr. Firth would liaise with Cllr. Baynham to try to get more detailed information on the building and current systems in order to enable a more accurate quote to be obtained. Members felt that if the County Council and Freedom Leisure worked together to make the building more energy efficient – installing new double glazing, more insulation and solar panels the building thus improving thermal efficiency - it could be at the forefront for change and an example of an eco friendly centre for others to copy.

(6) One Voice Wales - Request for motions to put to AGM: None put forward. Cllr. Wilding pointed out that a motion from the Town Council relating to business rates had still not made any progress. The Clerk confirmed she did chase this periodically but would do so again.

(7) Powys Local NHS Heroes Scheme - Offer for Council to award to an individual or team that benefits the local community: Noted. Not applicable for the Council area.

(8) Message from High Sheriff Noted. Noted. To be invited to opening of new Nature Reserve.

MIN 4206 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cllr. Baynham thanked Cllr. Edwards for organising the Coronation Picnic.

Cllr. Edwards reported the following –

- County Council AGM 18th May.
- Critical Planning Services Report from Audit Wales.
- A number of comments received on the grass cutting which she was following up.

MIN 4207 URGENT BUSINESS INFORMATION

(1) Nature Reserve: CPRW had attended to finish the tree mulching.

(2) Agenda Items: Members were reminded to notify the Clerk in good time if they required an item on the agenda.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm