

**Cyngor Tref Llanandras a Norton**  
**PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TOWN COUNCIL**

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**INFORMAL NOTES FROM THE SITES AND BUILDINGS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**HELD 21ST NOVEMBER 2022**  
**AT THE GREEN ROOM, ASSEMBLYROOMS, BROAD STREET, PRESTEIGNE AND VIA**  
**VIDEO CONFERENCING**

**Present:** Cllr. Preece

Outside Representatives: Ms. K. Lewis, Mr. G Graham, Mr. C. Kirkby, Mr. R. Rimington.

**Apologies:** Cllrs. Bamford and Firth.

**Absent:** Cllrs. Gray and Price.

**In Attendance:** Mrs T. Price, Town Clerk. One additional allotment association member.

**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 and the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016.

*Personal: None.*

*Personal and Prejudicial: None*

*Please note, in the absence of a quorum of Members (3) Cllr. Preece agreed to chair and those present agreed that they wished to discuss matters informally now rather than postpone until a future date. The Clerk would take informal notes to be circulated to Members. Those present asked that their disappointment at the low attendance was noted.*

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 2022/23**

Deferred as insufficient Members present.

**2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN 2022/23**

Deferred as insufficient Members present.

**3. ALLOTMENTS**

The written report was noted and the following matters discussed –

**Rabbit Problem:** The PNAA Chair reported that this had become a massive problem over 2022 and had led to a number of plot holders becoming disillusioned as they were unable to grow any crop to maturity. Efforts had been made to mend the fencing which had failed in a number of places but given the additional access available via the roadside end of the site due to Welsh Water works many rabbits were now on the site and it was thought they were burrowing beneath the shed etc. A further problem was damage caused to the roadside fence and posts following the recent hedge trimming.

The Clerk reminded everyone that the Council was aware of the problem and intended to look at the fencing in December once vegetation had fully died back and to allow full viewing of the fence itself and the chicken wire inside it. She also reported that two quotes for formal pest control had been obtained and were £800 for three months and £2000 for a year with visits approximately fortnightly.

It was noted that the allotment rules permitted the fencing of individual plots.

**Recommended Action:** that Council inspects fence as soon as possible and consider action to rectify before the new growing season.

**Recommended Action:** that pest control be considered once the fencing had been repaired and made secure.

**Plot 36:** The micro plots project had seen initial take up soon dwindling to just one person who had eventually started cultivating the whole plot as the others had not done so. The suggestion of the PNAA was that plot 36 be re-instated as a regular plot and that it be offered to the micro plot holder at a reduced rent. The Clerk reminded the meeting that the Council had considered the matter of reducing the rent in December 2020 and had decided that as all the plots were of varying sizes this was not advisable. She also pointed out that there was a waiting list for plots and so it may be seen as unfair that the micro plot holder avoided that list.

**Council to consider ongoing rent for plot 36.**

**Council to consider whether to rent plot 36 to the current micro tenant or refer to waiting list.**

**Extra Green Waste Bin:** PNAA Chair reported that the guerrilla gardeners had complained that the extra bin paid for by the Council was often full with waste from the allotments and that she had suggested the bin be stored at one of their properties. This they had been unwilling to do. She suggested that the bin be located behind the Old School and agreed to put the bin out for emptying if this was acceptable to the Youth Project Board. The Clerk would find out if this was possible and the Council would then decide how to proceed.

**Council to consider whether to continue providing and paying for a green bin for the guerrilla gardeners.**

**Council to consider re-locating of the bin to the Old School (subject to agreement from the Youth Project).**

**Path Maintenance:** The PNAA Chair reported that the contractor had only attended on a few occasions and then stopped. It was hoped to set up a volunteer rota for 2023. The Clerk reminded her that the Council had agreed to contribute towards the cost of the contractor and that details should be submitted to her for payment as soon as possible.

**PNAA to submit request for costs.**

**Expenditure 2022-23 to date:** Noted. It was also noted that the project balance held was a little under £3000.

**Waiting List Report:** Currently eight on the waiting list. Five had been waiting for over a year.

#### **4. WENT'S AND EDDIE'S MEADOWS, MUGA, FOOTBALL PITCH**

**Grass Cutting/Weed Killing Arrangements:** Considered to be very satisfactory. Discussion then took place around the best way to deal with the car park field prior to the Carnival. Mr. Graham also reminded the meeting of the need to clear into the corners and might possibly know someone willing to top the field if this enabled a fuller and tidier cut. In 2022 the contractor booked had been unable to clear the field due the amount and height of the grass and this had meant that the field had been cut roughly at the last minute in order to provide access.

**Mr. Graham to get in touch with his contact and get cost for topping.**

**Council to agree and appoint a contractor to do this approx. 7-10 days before the carnival.**

**Maintenance Plan for 2022-23:**

**New Sleeper Steps for Stage:** Noted as being very slippery. Mr. Rimington agreed to get covered with chicken wire to provide grip.

**Dead Tree in hedge line:** To be removed in due course.

**Earth Mound:** This was left from the barn project and was creating a rough untended area so need removal/levelling.

**Drain Cover near old barn:** Risen proud of surface and ideally in need of lowering.

**Quote for regular strimming works:** Recommended acceptance.

**Quote for replacement of timber steps at Skateboard Area:** Recommended acceptance of the one quote provided given that obtaining quotes was very difficult and the quality and reliability of the contractor providing the quote.

**Quote to replace loose/rotten posts at Skateboard Area:** Recommended acceptance of the one quote provided given that obtaining quotes was very difficult and the quality and reliability of the contractor providing the quote.

**November 2021 Minutes – Alteration of Knighton Road Entrance:** Recommended that no further action be taken given the amount of work and cost for relatively little gain.

**November 2021 Minutes – Wall, Ligne Garden:** This had been looked at last year and had been set aside as impractical to repair given the amount of damage. Mr Graham to approach a contractor and ask them to quote for the work.

**Report on Annual Visual Tree Inspection/Tree Works:** Clerk had carried out a visual inspection of the trees on the Council sites with no immediately dangerous issues to report. The two-yearly formal tree survey was due in 2023.

**Rospa Inspection Report:** Noted. Mr. Kirkby raised concerns on the comment re the MUGA surface and the Clerk reported that this related to some small holes/breaks in the surface and that repairs would be carried out. All other matters either listed above under maintenance or in hand/completed.

**Budget Consideration for 2023-24:** The Clerk advised that it was likely that there would need to be increases for the regular inspections, utilities (given the current fixed contract would expire in September 2023) and in the amount allocated for dog bags. Deferred for Council.

**Grant Applications:** None at present.

**Arrangements for next Tree Survey:** Three quotes requested. Two declined to quote. Agreed to recommend appointment of third contractor who had also carried out the survey in 2021.

**Future of ‘sheds’ on Meadow:** Those present felt the sheds were useful at present but agreed that in future they should only be made safe and not repaired generally. Mr. O. Rimington to be asked to assess the condition of the second shed in case it was not in a state to be retained.

**Land for a Community Garden:** It was felt that it would be appropriate to try to allocate a site for this at the bottom end of the field below the skateboard area. There were though concerns over the security of the site given it would not be fenced and also of damage from rabbits. There was also a concern over ongoing maintenance if the group folded. The left-over soil from the barn project could be used on the area to assist the project. Agreed to support in principle and refer to Council for a decision.

**Hourly rate offered to the contractor/handyman:** The last increase was implemented from April 2020 and the Clerk advised that a lot of the works carried out were skilled and would cost considerably more if separate professional tradesmen were employed. It was agreed to recommend an increase of £2 per hour from April 2023.

## 5. TOILET BLOCKS

**Report on year to date:** All well apart from a few relatively low-level incidences of vandalism.

**Cleaning Arrangements/Contract for 2023-24:** Deferred to full Council. Current contractor had offered to fix the price for two years.

**Maintenance Work:** None needed in 2023-24.

**Possible Extension to opening season for Wilson Terrace Site:** The Clerk reported that this issue was raised by one or two people regularly but that opening the site for a full year was problematic as there was no heating to prevent pipes freezing in cold weather. Agreed to suggest an extension to the opening season of one week at each end of the present season.

**Budget Consideration for 2023-24:** Deferred for Council consideration as a finance matter. Note the possible budget implications from the item above.

## **6. UDPATES:**

**New Nature Reserve:** The Clerk confirmed that on completion of the project the site would come under the Sites and Buildings Committee.

**Future of With Beds Site:** Meeting to be held between Town Council and County Council Officer later that week.

### **Summary of Full Council Decisions Required –**

#### **Allotments:**

*Council to inspect fence as soon as possible and consider action to rectify before the new growing season.*

*Council to consider pest control be considered once the fencing had been repaired and made secure.*

*Council to consider ongoing rent for plot 36.*

*Council to consider whether to rent plot 36 to the current micro plot tenant or refer to waiting list.*

*Council to consider whether to continue providing and paying for a green bin for the guerrilla gardeners.*

*Council to consider re-locating of the bin to the Old School (subject to agreement from the Youth Project).*

#### **Meadows:**

*To approve maintenance items as listed above and acceptance of the three quotes provided for the skateboard steps and fence and regular strimming. (Note a quote for cutting the car park field will be supplied in due course for Council agreement).*

*To agree no further action re alteration of Knighton Road Entrance.*

*To accept the quote for the 2023 tree survey.*

*To review the retention of the sheds on site and if retained to agree that only repairs to make safe be carried out.*

*To further consider the request for land for a community garden.*

*To consider increasing the hourly rate offered to the handyman as suggested.*

*Draft Budget for 2023/24 – consider deferring to January Budget Meeting.*

#### **Toilets**

*Cleaning contract for 2023/24 and 2024/25 to be awarded.*

*Consider extending the opening season for Wilson Terrace by one week at either end (Note: This will have budget implications).*

*Draft Budget for 2023/24 – consider deferring to January Budget meeting.*

The meeting closed at 7.53 pm.