

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

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2023**  
**HELD AT THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BROAD STREET, PRESTEIGNE AND ALSO VIA**  
**VIDEO CONFERENCING**

Present: Cllrs. B. Baynham (Mayor), T. Owens (Deputy Mayor), D. Edwards, F. Preece, A. Van Huls, J. Wilding, M. Williams.

Apologies: Cllrs. L. Abecasis, J. Gray, M. Price, L. Firth (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 start of the meeting Members heard from representatives from the Welsh Ambulance Service, Judith Bryce and Mike Jenkins, on emergency call response procedures and emergency response categories. Members raised concerns about the availability of co or first responders in the area and also the concerns of the local fire station that it was not being called out when needed. It was explained that the co-responders (fire service) would only be called to 'red' calls – instances of cardiac arrest or falls – where urgent attendance would make a difference. The Officers stressed that there was absolutely no financial issue in calling/not calling the co-responders but that there had been changes in recent years to the call out process. Previously the co-responders were called to a wide range of calls and in many of those cases they were not able to make any difference to the outcome for the patient.

The Officers agreed to provide statistics relating to response times in the Presteigne and Norton area and also to provide information on the current first responders recruitment drive. They confirmed that the local Fire Service had been offered the option of acting as First Responders but this had been refused.

Cllr. Baynham thanked the officers for attending.

**MIN 4273 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2023 were approved without amendment. The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

The Minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023 were approved without amendment. The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

The Minutes of the Sites and Building Committee meeting held on 23rd November 2023 were approved without amendment. The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

**MIN 4274 UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS**

(1) Grass Verges, Norton: Cllr. Edwards had nothing to report.

**MIN 4275 FINANCE**

(1) Donations: The following were agreed:-

- Request for donation – URDD Eisteddfod: Refused.
- Letter of thanks from the Wales Air Ambulance: Noted.

(2) Payments: The following payments were approved –

Mrs T.A. Price	£2065.04
HM Revenue & Customs	£994.79
NEST Pensions (direct debit)	£201.74
T. Lloyd-John	£421.49

N. Close	£76.00
N. Close	£196.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Border Janitorial (toilet rolls)	£94.67
Highground Maintenance Ltd	£345.89 MEADOW ACCOUNT
EDF Energy (electricity)	£18.08 MEADOW ACCOUNT
EDF Energy (electricity)	£44.55 MEADOW ACCOUNT
EDF Energy (electricity)	£143.20
Microsoft One Drive Email/data storage	£19.99 (Debit Card)
Mrs T.A. Price (expenses)	£50.64
Alan Jones Tree Surgery	£1920.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Greenfix (under PCC grant)	£283.80
Highline Electrical (installation of Xmas lights)	£747.00
JeffCo (dog fouling signs)	£159.60 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Presteigne Building Supplies	£32.03
HSBC (bank charges)	£9.00
HSBC (bank charges)	£8.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT
RB Landscaping (Norton Christmas Lights)	£240.00
Naturescape	£235.99
Emorsgate Seeds	£228.38
Border Janitorial	£104.40

(3) Review of Direct Debits: Members noted the current direct debits and approved their continuance.

(4) New Projects for 2024/25: the following projects were put forward –

- Norton maintenance and tidy up Fund
- Christmas Lights, Norton
- Grass Cutting, Presteigne and Norton
- New Council Laptop

(5) Notification of S.137 limit for 2024/25: Noted as £10.81.

(6) Confirmation of opening of Money Market Account: Noted. Interest rate of 4.23%

(7) Receipts: The following receipt was noted –

Website Advertising                      £143.00

(8) External audit for 2022-23: Members noted that this had been concluded with no issues raised.

#### **MIN 4276      PLANNING**

(1) Planning applications: The following application was considered:-

(23/1735/FUL Grid Reference: E:331285 N: 263921 Proposal: Proposed open fronted storage shed Site Address: Western Way , Broadaxe Business Park, Presteigne. Resolved no objections be raised but that the County Council be reminded of the proximity to the stream.

2) Planning Decisions: The following decisions were noted:-

- 23/1342/REM, Westering, Stonewall Hill: Approval 30<sup>th</sup> October.
- 23/0859/FUL, Surgery, Harpers Lane, Presteigne: Approval 10<sup>th</sup> November.

(3) Bute Energy: Cllr. Edwards reported that she had attended the recent meeting in Llandrindod Wells and provided Members with some details on how the proposed community benefit fund was expected to work although nothing was definite as yet.

(4) Planning Enforcement Update: The Clerk updated Members on the planning enforcement case and advised that planning applications were required to regularise the situation.

#### **MIN 4277      HIGHWAYS, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT**

(1) Dark Skies Project Update: Nothing to report at present.

(2) Climate Crisis Update: Nothing to report.

(3) Review of Parking Restrictions/possible updated Traffic Regulation Order: Members noted that the County Council Officer had stated that there was no full review planned in the foreseeable future.

(4) Removal/change to Bus service: Cllr. Baynham had raised this with the relevant officer but that there was nothing that could be done.

#### **MIN 4278      NORTON**

(1) Norton Community Trust: Cllr. Wilding reported that the sewage connection was planned for mid-January and that following that it was hoped that the building would open. A connection date from BT was awaited. It was agreed to provisionally hold the March Council meeting in Norton subject to a suitable broadband connection.

(2) Christmas Trees: Members congratulated all involved in the wooden Christmas trees which looked wonderful and added to the village festive decorations.

**MIN 4279 SITES AND BUILDINGS**

(1) Public Conveniences: The following matters were discussed –

Stealing of toilet rolls, Hereford Street Site.

Purchase of new toilet roll dispensers.

Agreement of Community Payback to paint the Wilson Terrace Block (inside and out) in the Spring.

Contractor still to paint the internal walls/ceiling of the Hereford Street block.

(2) Allotments - Request to site Polytunnel: Members considered the request from the PNAA to site a small polytunnel between plots 29 and 30 on the site. It was provisionally agreed to allow this for a period of 12 months after which it would be reviewed and subject to the following conditions –

- polytunnel to be kept in a good condition
- to be available for use by all tenants on the site
- PNAA to be liable for any repairs/insurances.
- Town Council not accepting any liability.
- adjacent plot holders to be asked if they were happy with the proposal (Clerk to contact to check).

(3) Meadows: The following matters were discussed –

- Vandalism much reduced although some broken tiles at the toilet block.
- Tree works now complete.

(4) Grant Application Update – Table Tennis/storage/games: The Clerk outlined some of the options and it was agreed that the Clerk and Cllr. Baynham finalise the grant application, setting aside £2500 for the storage container and the remainder for games/benches.

(5) Recommendations of the Sites and Buildings Committee: Members considered the recommendations and decided as follows:-

**Allotments:**

Agreed to review the condition of main gate and consider repair/replacement. Quote to be obtained for wooden and galvanised gate options.

Agreed that the rent per allotment remain unchanged for a further two years (to March 2026).

Agreed that tenants be again reminded of the need for insurance as part of the renewal process.

**Meadows:**

Acceptance of the quote for various strimming works for 2024.

Agree that the community payback team be asked to strim/cut back the footpath between the Mill and the Day Centre.

Draft budget recommendations for 2024/25 noted as follows –

Weekly Inspections (inc defib checks)	1650
General Maintenance	1500
Dog Bags	1750
Grass Cutting/weed killing	3600
Professional Inspections	225
MUGA / New Barn Reserve (to reserve)	2000
Allotments (funded via rental income)	0
Utilities	350
Misc.(to include bank charges)	200
	<b>£11,275</b>

Recommendation that the above budget be part funded using monies held in the Meadow account to reduce that balance noted. Would be reviewed during the budget setting process.

Agreed to purchase of fire-retardant paint for use on the new Community Barn. Approximate cost £1200-1300.

Agreed to seek quotes for the cutting out and re-stoning of the path running alongside the skateboard area/bike track.

Recommendation that the above two projects to be funded using monies held in the Meadow Account noted.

Recommendation that the suggested café/bar/storage project be set aside for the time being and re-considered at the April/May Committee Meeting noted.

#### **Toilets:**

Continued good work of the current cleaner noted.

Cleaning Contract continuing until March 2025.

Painting of both blocks to be completed in due course.

Recommendation of a budget for 2024/25 of £12,000 with £5000 of this amount to be met from the allocated general works toilet reserve. Noted.

#### **MIN 4280 CORRESPONDENCE/GENERAL ITEMS**

(1) Update on current situation – Presteigne Memorial Hall: Members were pleased to learn that the necessary works should soon be complete and considered the options available to enable re-opening in the near future. Council Standing Orders were suspended in order to allow the representatives of the Hall Committee present to comment. It was heard that a public meeting was to be held in January (provisional date 9<sup>th</sup>). At that meeting those present would be asked their views on the future of the Hall and interest in forming a new management committee would be ascertained. After some discussion on the implications and the need to consider risks and liabilities in more detail before making a formal commitment it was agreed that the Town Council was willing, if necessary, to enter into discussions with the County Council over a transfer of the trusteeship, providing that the County Council share all the legal advice it had received. It was agreed however that nothing could be considered further until after the public meeting when the views of the public and potential new committee members would be known. In order to facilitate the opening of the Hall as soon as possible it was agreed that the Clerk ask the County Council to consider the issue of a temporary 12-month licence to the Hall Committee while the legal matters were sorted out.

(2) Update on Leisure Services Review: No further information at present.

(3) Education in Presteigne: Cllrs. Baynham, Owens and Wilding had attended a meeting with the Secondary School Head and Head of Campus. Members noted the need to replace Cllr. Abecasis due to his leave of absence and Cllr. Owens agreed to act as Liaison Councillor temporarily. The Clerk would notify the school.

(4) Welsh Government Consultation - Road Safety Strategy Consultation: Noted. Resolved no comment to be made.

(5) Reply from Welsh Blood Service: Members noted the reply and Cllr. Owens reported that he had met a representative of the service to discuss the use of the Football Club as an interim measure and that this would now be considered by the Service.

(6) Mid And West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Draft Community Risk Management Plan Consultation: Noted. Members to respond as individuals.

(7) Further reply from the Welsh Ambulance Service: Noted.

(8) Draft Report of Independent Remuneration Panel – Consultation: The Clerk reported that no changes were proposed. Resolved no comment be made.

(9) Complaints re. lack of street lighting, Roseland/Church House area of Broad Street: Cllrs. Baynham and Williams reported that a new street lighting column was needed as the current fitting was attached to a building and the work was being scheduled.

(10) Police and Crime Commissioner: Police Funding Survey: Members asked to complete with their own views.

#### **MIN 4281 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

Cllr. Baynham reported the following:-

- New Chief Executive now in post.
- Work being done in relation to County Farms.
- Public consultation on single transferrable votes to go out to the public in the Spring.
- Increasing Budget Pressures for 2024/25.

#### **MIN 4282 CASUAL VACA/NCIES**

Members were reminded that the closing date was 31<sup>st</sup> December.

#### **MIN 4283 URGENT BUSINESS INFORMATION**

(1) Car Parking Charges: Cllr. Van Huls asked that the difference in charges between Presteigne and Brecon car parks be queried. The impression was that charges were equitable across the County but this did not appear to be the case with Brecon (adjacent to Morrisons) charging £1.40 per hour while Presteigne was £2.50 for two hours with no one hour option. The Clerk would investigate.

**MIN 4284 CONFIRMATION OF DATES FOR JANUARY MEETINGS:**

17<sup>th</sup> Budget Setting Meeting  
24<sup>th</sup> Main Council Meeting

**MIN 4285 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS DUE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS ITEMS**

*Resolved under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following business because of the confidential nature of the following items.*

**MIN 4286 STAFFING COMMITTEE**

The following matters were agreed:-

- Annual Appraisal noted. (Emergency Work Plan now written by the Clerk.
- Clerk's hours unchanged.
- Payment of Hours worked for Allotments: Arrangements - unchanged.
- Draft Budget Recommendations –  
Annual Salary including employer's pension and national insurance payments £28,880 with any balance to come from free reserves  
Training: to come from existing allocated reserve.
- No additional Staff to be appointed.

The meeting closed at 9.23 pm.