

Cyngor Tref Llanandras a Norton PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15TH SEPTEMBER 2021 HELD AT THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BROAD STREET, PRESTEIGNE AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

Present: Cllrs. F. Preece (Mayor), D. Edwards (Deputy Mayor), T. Owens, R. Bamford, C. Kirkby MBE, B. Baynham, R. Bennett, C. Ruby, P. Smith, J. Wilding, N. Rogers (via video conference link).

Apologies: Cllr. D. Davies.

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:

Cllr. Bennett, related to residents and to a business owner in High Street, re. grants etc High Street due to Covid-19.

Prior to the start of the meeting Members stood for a moment's silence in memory of former Town and County Councillor, Garry Banks. The Clerk would write to the family to express the condolences of the Town Council.

Members then heard a brief presentation from Mr. Terry Wells on behalf of PACDG, on the text and illustrations for the new Town Information Boards. There would be three Boards, two replacing the existing boards and one new one in the Shopper's Car Park. The signs would be future proof as changes/additions could be added via an acrylic overlay. Before commissioning the signs the County Council would need to check the Welsh translation and approve the final wording and layout. The existing posts would also need to be cleaned and re-painted. The Clerk was asked to seek details from the County Council on the exact paint and colour to be used for this and to arrange for Mr. Close to do this at the appropriate time. PACDG held most of the money needed to cover the costs but was seeking an additional £500 from other sources. Mr. Wells then answered questions and Members asked that the following amendments be made –

- Add the following – Community Barn, Outdoor Gym and Skateboard Area.
- Warden Area – mark out and name Eddie's Meadow and Reservoir ground.
- Noted that a small patch of ground at the bottom corner of the Warden was actually in private ownership but it was agreed this wasn't an issue.
- Town Wifi Points to be added if possible depending on time scales.

MIN 3942 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17th August, 2021 and town walk held on 18th August, 2021 were approved without amendment. The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

MIN 3943 UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS

(1) Stocken Road: Cllr. Owens reported that resurfacing work had been carried out and that the road was considerably improved.

(2) Budget for Land Valuation: Cllr. Kirkby reported that two quotes had been received for the valuation at £900 and £600 plus VAT. A £100 contribution was on offer from a local business towards the cost. Members agreed that the valuation be requested for the lower cost and that the £100 donation be gratefully accepted. The full project would be on the agenda for discussion at the October meeting.

- (3) Meeting with Radnorshire Wildlife Trust Chief Executive: Cllr. Kirkby reported that a successful meeting had been held with the new Chief Executive and that there would be future meetings to discuss how the Trust could assist the Town Council with the management of its land.
- (4) Old Doctor's Surgery, Harpers Lane: Cllr. Kirkby reported that this had still not been secured and Cllr. Baynham agreed to chase the relevant department at the County Council.
- (5) Current Situation at Presteigne Library: Members had all received details of the current operating conditions at the library and Cllr. Kirkby raised concerns that the volunteers were said to be unwilling to return but that this was not actually the case. In fact the volunteers were very willing to return to their former duties but had not wished to return to man the door only. The Clerk was asked to email the Acting Principal Librarian, Nichola Farr and ask that she make contact with the leader of the Presteigne Volunteers. Cllr. Baynham to be copied into the correspondence.
- (6) Visibility Splay, Allotment Car Park: Cllr. Baynham had had initial discussions about possible signage/road markings to warn traffic of the exit but had not heard anything further. She would follow this up.
- (7) Gravel/Stone to front of Community Barn: Thanks to Cllr. Bennett for topping up the stone and also for recent strimming etc at the Meadow.
- (8) Bark for Skateboard Area: To be delivered and spread in the near future.
- (9) Former Sixth Form Building: Cllr. Preece confirmed that the County Council had secured the building following the recent break in.
- (10) Ramblers Cymru Project: The Clerk had provided the Officer at Ramblers Cymru, Kate Blair with more information on Presteigne and Norton in relation to this project. Seventeen areas had applied to be part of the project with just three to be selected. The final decision is to be made by Welsh Government in October/November but the money would be spent and the project carried out by the end of the financial year.
- (11) Date for Bonfire/Firework Displays: Noted that the Norton event was the 31st October not the 30th.

MIN 3944 FINANCE

(1) Donations: The following donations were approved –

Norton Sports Committee	£250.00 (precepted)
Sheep Music (Presteigne Fireworks)	£500.00 (precepted)
Radnorshire Wildlife Trust	£250.00 (precepted)
Royal British Legion (wreaths)	£60.00 (precepted) (by cheque)

The letter of thanks from Presteigne Memorial Hall 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	£606.23
N. Close	£14.00
N. Close	£221.04 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Watco (bitumen for MUGA- via refund to T. Price)	£100.02 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Pitchcare (via refund to T. Price)	£36.12 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Highground Maintenance Ltd	£319.57 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Presteigne Building Supplies Ltd	£185.81 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Border Janitorial Supplies	£74.40
Beaumonts Electrical Services	£1284.00
F. Preece (refund of Mayor's expenses)	£137.25
C. Hazel Haulage (work to benches)	£618.00
Barrington Print (information boards)	£270.00

Noted that bunting licence was paid for by Highline Electrical and so was reimbursed to the firm at a cost of £111.00. (Original intended direct Payment to County Council was on August Agenda)

(3) The following receipts were noted –

Powys County Council (second instalment of precept)	£23,171.00
J. Kendall (donation for bench refurbishments)	£515.00
Norton Community Trust (donation for use of Meadow)	£50.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Chatterbrook WI (donation of use of community barn)	£50.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Knights (performance of As You Like It – donation)	£100.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT

(4) Application for allocation of Climate Change Grant Monies for Tree Event: Cllr. Bamford stated that expenses and workshops planned for the tree weekend in October were expected to cost a maximum of £450, including printing, advertising, hire of the Assembly Rooms and the running of forest school sessions. It was agreed that up to £450 could be spent on the event. Monies to come from the climate change grant/project reserve.

(5) Council Banking: The Clerk explained the forthcoming changes to HSBC banking arrangements and the introduction of bank charges for Council accounts from November. She outlined the costs for both Lloyds and Unity Trust banks which were very similar overall. The main charge would be a monthly fee for each current account of £8, with the Council currently having three such accounts. Members considered the options available and agreed to remain with HSBC but that the Allotment Current Account be closed and the balance transferred to the Meadow Account. Members also asked that at renewal the Clerk stress to allotment tenants the additional cost to the Council of paying by cheque (£1.50) and ask that if possible payment be made by electronic transfer.

(6) Bank Transfer: The transfer of £225 (net amount) from Warden Reserve Account to Treasurer Account (information boards – Barrington Print) was agreed.

MIN 3945 PLANNING

(1) Planning applications: The following planning applications were considered –

21/1116/FUL Grid Reference: E:331463 N: 263902 Proposal: Erection of an extension to existing unit Site Address: Unit 4, Broadaxe Business Park, Presteigne. Resolved to support the application.

21/1523/FUL Grid Reference: E:331399 N: 267686 Proposal: Change of use of holiday let to residential dwelling Site Address: Faraway, Stonewall Hill, Presteigne. Resolved that no comment be made.

21/1487/LBC Grid Reference: E:331377 N: 264546 Proposal: Re pointing of listed wall (beginning to take place on the side facing Saint David's Street) Site Address: Court Cottage, 1 St David's Street, Presteigne. Resolved no objections to the application.

21/1592/HH Grid Reference: E:331205 N: 264501 Proposal: Erection of a two storey side extension to existing dwelling Site Address: 33 Castle Road, Presteigne. Resolved no objections be raised providing the neighbours are happy with the proposals.

(2) Planning Decisions: The following decisions were noted –

21/1167/HH 33 Castle Road, Presteigne – Refused 11th August.

21/0999/FUL Seconds & Co, Presteigne – Consent 26th August.

21/1095/HH 52 Castle Road, Presteigne – Consent 7th September.

21/1400/TREE Garden Cottage, Broad Street, Presteigne – Approval 7th September.

21/0741/HH 30 Warden Close, Presteigne – Refused 8th September.

MIN 3946 HIGHWAYS, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

(1) Active Travel Route: The signage for the one way on Hereford Street was now in place and the trial was expected to start in the last week of September subject to some works to connect lighting to some of the signs. Powys County Council would be putting out information to the press on the trial very shortly. The suggested routes identified through the County Council consultation were noted. Cllr. Baynham reminded Members that there were no routes in Presteigne or Norton in the current list and that it was unlikely any further work would be done in the near future.

(2) Dark Skies/Lighting: Members noted that the new light fittings were on order. Members noted the possible change of fitting in Broad Street given the cost of the heritage lanterns and Members agreed to consider funding the additional cost via money held for dark skies by both the Council and, if agreed by the Directors, within the Town Trust.

(3) Climate Crisis: Update. Members considered the following -

- Local Places for Nature Webinar: attended by Cllr. Bamford and the Clerk. No packages available for Schools but Cllr. Bamford linking schools with Radnorshire Wildlife Trust which has some funding for similar projects.
- Activities for Big Green Week: More information to be provided in due course.

Cllr. Bennett left the room for the duration of the following item.

(4) High Street Grant Update: The Clerk reported that the necessary planning permission had now been obtained and that the awning had been ordered. She had submitted the claim form for 80% as applied for and was awaiting a decision on payment.

Cllr. Bennett returned to the room.

(5) Welsh Water Sewage System Upgrade Update: The following matters were raised –

- Site meeting 22nd September: Clerk and Cllr. Wilding to attend.
- Maps/plan of new pipework on the Meadow still not received: Clerk to chase.
- Access to new pipe over bridge still a concern and considered to be something Welsh Water should deal with. Agreed it should be raised again at the site meeting.
- Norton Treatment Works now commissioned and a twenty-eight day trial was now underway.
- Welsh Water to be asked for an update on work at the Presteigne plant and if an information board could be put on the site boundary as had been done in Norton.

(6) Fly Tipping, School Parking, Slough: Members noted the email from a resident. The matters included were not within the Town Council remit and it was noted that the County Council had made a reply on the school parking issues raised. Cllr. Baynham reported that waste management had attended and had not found any evidence of fly tipping. The Clerk would respond to the resident and was also asked to write to the School to ask if it could remind parents not to get to the school too early, to not leave engines idling while waiting, to use the active travel route and park further away if at all possible. The same request to be sent to the Playgroup management. The Clerk also to ask the school at what time the gates were opened and if this could possibly happen earlier to allow access and alleviate the double parking. Cllr. Baynham would also ask County Council Highways if there was anything else that could be done.

(7) Parking Outside Lloyds Bank Cashpoint: Members noted the reply from the County Council and the difficulties as motorists could not be fined immediately they stopped on the double yellow lines. Parking on the dropped kerb was however an offence and the Enforcement Officer would be asked to keep an eye on the area. It was noted that the police could take action if the vehicle was causing an obstruction. The Clerk was asked to write and request that the location be targeted by the Officer when in the town.

(8) Fold Farm Footpath Update: Members were very disappointed to hear that it was likely to be some time before any further progress would be made and Cllr. Kirkby reminded them that it was now nearly ten years since the matter had first become a concern. The Planning Inspectorate had instructed the County Council to determine the matter by March, 2020 and this had not been done. Action was particularly important as the route was currently blocked. The Clerk was asked to write to Dr. Turner at the County Council, copying in the Planning Inspectorate and the Officer involved, asking for immediate action and that the Officer be given adequate time and resources to deal with the matter fully and for a decision to be reached.

(9) Reply from PCC re. Presteigne Cemetery Fees: Members noted the letter from the County Council that there would be no change to the increased burial fees for persons living outside Powys. Cllr. Kirkby had forwarded the information to Stapleton Parish Council.

(10) Presteigne Woods Forest Resource Plan Consultation: Cllr. Bamford would look into this and get more information. Deferred until the October meeting.

(11) Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill: Members had all received a copy of the email asking for the Council to support the Bill and declare an ecological emergency. Cllr. Bamford suggested that the Council acknowledge an ecological emergency to form part of the Council's existing policy on the climate crisis but there were concerns that the full implications of this needed to be properly considered and included within the Council's Climate Crisis Policy. Cllr. Bamford was already working on and it was agreed that a revised policy be drawn up by the Climate Change Working Group and submitted to the next possible meeting for consideration.

(12) Grass Cutting: Email on Cutting of Verges: Information noted. Cllr. Baynham reported that a full cut was due to take place week beginning 20th September and that volunteers would be needed to rake up the grass afterwards.

(13) Large Vehicles using Broad Street: Cllr Kirkby reported on this issue which had been raised by a resident concerned at the safety of large vehicles using Broad Street/Hereford Street, particularly on the corner by the Assembly Rooms. The car parking spaces opposite the Farmer's Arms were again felt to be adding to the problem and although these were on the list for the next traffic regulation order it was agreed that the Clerk raise this again with the County Council as an urgent issue. Members agreed that there was nothing that could be done re. the use of the road but asked that the Clerk check with Herefordshire Council re. the structural soundness of Lugg Bridge and whether or not there was currently any weight limit or if one should be imposed. Cllr. Kirkby also thought that Herefordshire Council might be considering work on the bridge and the Clerk would ask this at the same time. It was noted that the bridge was 50% in Herefordshire and 50% in Powys. Cllr. Kirkby also asked that the Clerk request a copy of the recent survey of the Bridge

undertaken by Powys County Council. The Clerk was also asked to put a post on the Council's facebook page to ask that people not park on the corner/yellow lines as vehicles struggle to get around and this was causing problems, particularly for larger vehicles.

MIN 3947 NORTON

(1) Community Speedwatch Update: Ongoing. Whitton Speedwatch Group had offered to assist by carrying out sessions in Norton. Training of additional volunteers was still awaited.

(2) Community Hub/Church Update: Cllr. Wilding was hopeful that planning permission would be given soon. The fund-raising day on the Meadow had been very successful.

MIN 3948 SITES AND BUILDINGS

(1) Public Conveniences: Members discussed the most recent vandalism and thanks were noted to Cllrs. Bennett and Edwards for assisting the Clerk with the clear up.

(2) Allotments: Cllr. Wilding had nothing new to report. In progress.

(3) Meadows: The following matters were discussed –

- Request to plant tree and plaque on Went's Meadow: Request for fruit tree agreed but Members did not agree to the erection of a plaque.
- Meadow use request – new barn for overnight camp – 11th December Radnor Scouts Explorers: Agreed.

(4) Former Reservoir Ground Information Boards (Waterworks Museum): Cllr. Kirkby reported that the Boards were now complete and would be featuring in the Easter Exhibition for the Museum. Further details on the exhibition nearer the time.

(5) Adopt A Bench: Members considered a possible scheme for the newly refurbished benches. In general Members had no problems with this although they asked that issues be reported to the Clerk not direct to Mr. Close. The Clerk had asked the County Council for permission and also to see if its insurance would cover any voluntary work but had not yet received any reply. Cllr. Baynham would chase this. The general refurbishment of the benches was now complete and it was agreed that a letter of thanks be sent to Mr. Kendall for funding the works.

(6) Boultribrooke Weir: Members noted the reply from Natural Resources Wales and it was agreed to follow up their suggestion to contact the Wye and Usk Foundation for advice. The Clerk was asked to chase the awaited reply from CPAT.

MIN 3949 CORRESPONDENCE/GENERAL ITEMS

(1) Christmas Lights: The Clerk reported that the bunting licence had been granted. The remedial work to the anchorage points was yet to be completed. Members confirmed that they wished the Norton lights to go up this year and the Clerk would look at the budget and report to Cllr. Wilding.

(2) Mayor's Chain Update: Deferred to October meeting.

(3) Community Broadband: Deferred to October meeting.

(4) Town Wifi Scheme SMART towns: Cllr. Ruby informed Members that the grant application was due to go in any day.

(5) Notes from the County Council Briefing meeting: As included in Clerk's Report. Noted.

(6) Working Group - Queen's Platinum Jubilee: Cllrs. Preece, Baynham and Edwards agreed to form a working group to make plans for the Jubilee Weekend.

(7) Response from Fire Service re. removal of land-rover: Members had all received a copy of the response from the Fire Service. Cllr. Kirkby pointed out that one ford ranger was currently unallocated and that the skoda was suitable as a co-responder vehicle only as it carried no fire fighting equipment. The Clerk was asked to write requesting the remaining ford ranger be located in Presteigne.

(8) Review of County Council Wards - Decision of Welsh Government: Members noted that Norton would not be part of the Presteigne Ward at the next County Council elections.

(9) Draft local elections (principal areas) (Wales) rules 2021 and draft local elections (communities) (Wales) rules 2021- Consultation: Members noted the comments included in the Clerk's separate report. No comment to be made as a Council but Members encouraged to respond as individuals.

(10) Text for Tourist Information Boards: Members confirmed the requests made earlier in the meeting. No decision was made on providing extra funding pending further discussions.

(11) Welsh Government Consultation on local taxes for second homes and self-catering accommodation: Resolved no comment be made. Again Members were encouraged to respond as individuals.

(12) Updated Guidance from Ombudsman for Wales (Code of Conduct): Noted.

(13) Email and letter re. sale of former Works Depot Site: Members noted the emails received and the Clerk's response. They had nothing further to add and asked that the Clerk further respond stating that any change of use of the land would require planning permission and that the issue of contamination could be addressed at that stage when Members could consider the particular circumstances pertaining to the application.

(14) Mid Border Arts Emergency Meeting Report: Cllr. Kirkby reported that the Organisation was looking to raise £25,000 to fund works to replace the lift which has been condemned and was commencing a fund-raising campaign. Mid Border Arts was still awaiting the final draft of the new lease from the County Council for consideration.

(15) Future of Education in Presteigne Update: Presteigne was included in the second wave of areas for consideration in 2022-24.

(16) Review of Parliamentary Constituencies – Initial Proposals Consultation: Resolved no comment be made.

MIN 3950 TOWN COUNCIL SURGERY

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

MIN 3951 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr. Baynham reported that she had attended a Governor's Meeting at the Secondary School earlier in the evening and they were planning to go ahead with an application to re-route the footpath across the School Field. The suggested route was largely along the new active travel route with a short length at the far end of the field from the Kings Court access to the road. The Vice-Chair of the Governors, together with Cllr. Baynham, would pursue the re-routing and it was agreed that the Town Council write in support.

MIN 3952 CASUAL VACANCY

The Clerk reported that no formal election had been called and it was agreed that notices for co-option be posted with a closing date of 31st October. Applications would then be considered at the November meeting.

MIN 3953 URGENT BUSINESS INFORMATION

(1) Mayor's Sponsored Walk: Cllr. Preece reported that she had completed the walk and raised over £1000 for the two charities.

(2) Memorial Hall AGM: Cllr. Smith had attended.

(3) Playground Equipment: The Clerk reported that quotes had now been received by the County Council for three items of equipment for Lugg View and also for a new seesaw at Wilson Terrace. As previously agreed she had applied for an Awards for All Lottery Grant to fund the Lugg View equipment. The County Council had agreed to supply the necessary grass matting.

The meeting closed at 10.15 pm.