

## INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES TO ASSETS & SERVICES CONSULTATION

1. This survey concentrates on buildings rather than services, taking over and maintaining certain buildings to retain services in the spaces they already operate in. Of course, it would be wonderful if various organisations had their own spaces, but this simply may not be possible. Ongoing maintenance and refurbishment costs for these old buildings may well be considerable. The community may not be able to support everything so some creative thinking is required! We have churches and church halls, some with catering facilities. The new headmaster at the school is clearly keen for the community to use facilities there. Is it inconceivable that, for instance, The **Circle** could operate out of the Memorial Hall? How many hours would a **Council office** be used for? Does it need a dedicated space? The **Community Support** office is small, with most of the other large space they use is given over to storage for donations which seem to be turned around quickly. With the **old school** and the **Drill Hall** I really do think it is either/or and the **Old School has facilities**, parking and access which the Drill Hall does not. The question about the **library** service seems to be out of step with what is currently being discussed in town. I would have liked to have seen the Council/community step up to discuss options a while back, and then set in place the part-funding the library service to ensure its future and would happily support an increase in the precept to do this, even if I didn't use the service myself (which I do, a lot). Why wasn't the community asked about this earlier? The library is a true community-wide service which is well used and valued. However, the Council seems to have been reluctant to work on a plan and in future of this service now seems to rest with the formation of yet another Trust to maintain and run a building which will require a considerable amount of money to repair and maintain. Sledgehammer to crack a nut? The **Friends of the Library** which will work with the **Assembly Rooms Trust** has not yet been properly formed and will face considerable challenges very early on. It is not "simply" a question of finding volunteers to clean and help behind the desk but also fundraising to pay for some of the hours of the professional staff.
2. Is there a real need to acquire and maintain 2 separate buildings (**Old School & Drill Hall**) when another space such as the **Memorial Hall** is available? Surely some services and activities could be run from the same location. Of the £44 precept referred to in this consultation, approx 37% is accounted for by admin/wages/insurances. Has there been a cost-saving analysis of this to see if any savings could be made in this area that could be used elsewhere? If PCC do not want to relinquish the **Hereford Street car park**, why pursue it? I understood that PCC was planning to make the **bypass car park** pay & display but so far this has not happened. Why not approach PCC about making this a **pay-if-you-can car park** on behalf of the community? It is close to the Memorial Hall and only a short walk from the High

Street. Alternatively, PCC could be asked about turning the **shoppers' car park** behind the High Street into a pay-as-you-can.

3. Most importantly are the **car parks**. If we want Presteigne to prosper – not just on high days and holidays, but every day – we want to **encourage folk to come to Presteigne** rather than Kington or Knighton for their daily bread. This increases prosperity and wellbeing – not only for shop owners — but for us all, as Presteigne will increasingly be seen as the place to visit. All the other projects which the Council funds would be more likely to become self-funding if Presteigne was seen as an inviting place to come to regularly and folk got into the habit of so doing. This starts with town **parking** which should become completely free for all everywhere.
4. There needs to be further **information** offered regarding discussions with PCC regarding options for the **transfer** or retention of assets and services. **Open meetings** on ongoing negotiations should be scheduled and options for residents should be well publicised. Residents need to understand **how PNTC intends to employ the survey results** this is not explained i.e. Do the highest scoring assets / services incur a precept charge? If they come in at a lower score do they receive less support or not be taken up by PNTC? If PNTC decides not to take up an asset or a service, what happens then? Would there be a trial period? Or do they close or get sold off? If they are sold off will they be put onto the open market? Or could something else happen? What is the role of Powys County Council in the sales or transfers? None of this is made clear. This information could be detailed **and made immediately available on the Town website**. There is no mention of any possible need for **volunteers to maintain services**. The **cultural aspects of Presteigne** are vital for generating income from **tourism**, as well as for the community. These could take a hit given the current anxiety regarding the pressures on day-to-day support services, even though the income and economic activity they directly or indirectly generate for the town is significant. If **precepts** are to be added or increased, when would this happen? The outcome rather depends upon whether PNTC councillors adopt a crude or thoughtful approach to the results of this survey, and whether they are able to drill down into the results following this second town survey.
5. I have heard a lot of talk about a "**community hub**" – nearly all of the services it would provide are already being provided by the library. Setting up this community hub would be in direct competition with the library and seems like a waste of money. It's very clear our mayor is at best indifferent towards the **library**. Secondly, putting so much money towards **extending the cemetery** is essentially putting the needs of corpses ahead of the needs of living people! Surely in this day and age people should find sustainable plans for when they die; expanding a field of graves

indefinitely seems very silly. How about moving the gravestones to the edge and start again? Churches have been doing that for centuries.

6. **Full credit to the Town Council** for considering taking on so much of what should be run by Powys County Council. If the Town Council does take on the running of ex-Powys run amenities, I trust our **contribution to Powys will drop accordingly?** No, I thought not ... not the Town Council's fault at all, but it does seem as though we will effectively be paying twice.
7. Did Powys CC put the money from the sale of Cemetery Cottage into **Presteigne Burial Board**? Could the **chapels** be sold to a business or converted to houses? Will the local council become an employer of full-time staff? What will it cost to maintain the fabric of the properties that will be taken over? If you want to take over a **carpark** it should be the High Street one!
8. Spoken to several people who would like to make an annual **donation to the library** to provide a financial cushion, £100 per year was suggested.
9. It seems to me that there is an enormous amount done in Presteigne for the community. While this a good thing are so many venues really necessary could not more venues be put to more use so enabling the council to **sell the old school and the drill hall**. I am now extremely old and do not seek advice from "mum's net" or any other mentoring service on **bringing up children**, but why can't young mothers organise themselves into small groups in their own homes larger formal groups really aren't necessary to bring up well-balanced citizens for the future.
10. Please try and **get a supermarket here** and also please do something with the old **Kaye's site** as it becoming an eye sore for the town.
11. **TIC** moved to central location in High Street. Make the **carnival** bigger and better.
12. **Thank you** all for the hard work you put in on behalf of the community of Presteigne. The town would not be the same without the **community spirit** and the facilities for all the different clubs and organisations that make use of them.
13. Danger of spreading resources too thinly if **Drill Hall** retained
14. One problem with this questionnaire is the **lack of any overall vision**. We are asked separately about the future of the Library, the Assembly Rooms, the Drill Hall, the Memorial Hall and the Old School, and a new use is suggested for the Drill Hall. But if the town council is considering continuing to run, or taking over, all five of these,

then the scope for **rationalisation** should be considered. The most obviously vulnerable is the **Drill Hall**, if its present user is moving out, and no new users (apart possibly for the town council), are moving in. It is also the furthest from the town centre. The suggested new use, by the council itself, is scarcely full time. It would be much better to have the **town council** in either the Assembly Rooms/Library complex or the Old School, concentrating the use in a smaller number of sites, and making fuller use of all of them. **Derelict industrial land**, of course. Just look at Google Earth, and see what a high percentage of Presteigne that is!

15. In 2021 when PCC have to renew the lease of the **Assembly Rooms** this would be an ideal opportunity for them either to up the rent **MBA** pay or to close the whole building. MBA is now struggling to obtain grants and would not be able to pay a substantial increase in rent. The result could be that the Assembly Rooms would be sold off by PCC.

16. Why can't **one building be utilised** by Circle, Community Support, Scouts etc.

17. The **play park at Wilson Terrace** needs improvement as it is unsafe for children to play in now.

18. Some new thoughts on the difficulties with **parking for service vehicles in the main High St.**

19. Anything that keeps our **town thriving and attracts visitors** should be supported and kept going especially for the **younger and older residents**.

20. I'm not sure I agree with your plan to make **parking free** for visitors and not for residents. I would imagine most visitors would expect to pay for parking and if asked to give a donation to the community would be happy to do so. Having chosen to travel to visit Presteigne I don't think a small parking fee would deter them. Residents on the other hand are already contributing to the community by choosing to shop in Presteigne. It is far more expensive and inconvenient (it's a bit of a trek to carry bags full of groceries to any of the car parks) to **shop in Presteigne** than it is to shop in a supermarket, but we do it to help to preserve the town. I disagree very much with having to pay to park to support my local shops but would feel under some sort of moral obligation to pay if I was being asked to **make a donation to the community**.

21. Could the **Old School** be used more? E.g. move **PNCS** to it?

22. Many people are trying to **start their own businesses**. Take over the Drill Hall and support a not for **profit co-op** to develop it into a site for micro-businesses with shared facilities and affordable rental and running costs.
23. I wonder how many Presteigne residents would be prepared to donate £5 per month towards local services, just 200 would realise £12,000 pa!
24. Will PCC be reducing their **tax**? Can we have the **leisure centre** renamed Presteigne?
25. Many of the buildings you want to take over are in need of urgent repair – you make no mention of **building maintenance costs**. The **chapels at the cemetery** should be offered for sale in order to purchase the land. '**Pay if you can**' in the **car park** sadly means that many people will be laughing at you! What Presteigne needs is **more people, young people and houses** for them to live in now not in 20 years' time!
26. No more **cemetery land** because cremation is more environmentally responsible these days. The public **library** is a VITAL heart of the community and needs a better space (The Old School or Drill Hall?) a proper **IT suite**, more public access to computers and restoration of opening hours, it could also house an exhibition space and /or community museum? Council should bite the bullet and increase precept for this.
27. **Community services** and facilities are VERY important and we should be prepared to pay for this.
28. More spaces through town.
29. Suggest **building more** small bungalows for the elderly who wish to live alone but enjoy communicating with others. Many residents own a property which requires constant upkeep and would like the **opportunity of a smaller property**.
30. Sell the **Drill Hall**, waste of money. You're not made very welcome at the **Judge's Lodging**. Christmas **lights**, yes; **Fair**, no. **PNCS** have shop, barn and Drill Hall, put them all into one. **Bring Site** is an eyesore, plant some trees.
31. Compulsory purchase **Kaye's site** for £1, and develop low-cost housing.
32. I feel the **Christmas lights** are important but do not think the council should be giving money to the **Christmas Fair** – it should be self-funding. I do not understand why the council needs to take over all the buildings in the town – could the **Drill Hall** and youth centre share a building? I am concerned about the **rises in council tax**. As an

ordinary working family it is a struggle with rising costs. Its Ok to say only £1 or £4 increase a year, but once you add all those things up and then add on the increase charged by Powys County Council it is not easy. It's fine for wealthy people who have sold houses elsewhere in the country and moved to the area but not young working class families.

33. Nice to be able to have our say. As a town we are extremely **lucky to have these assets / services**. It is important to be able to preserve these for the good of all. In the TC taking over many it means PCC cannot impose actions that may not benefit the people of Presteigne.
34. The TC should also move asap to increase the precept to take over both the **grass cutting** and **green maintenance**, and **street cleaning** within the Presteigne and Norton town boundaries.
35. I would like to see the **TC rent the town carparks** – or at least one of them – to provide flexibility for free parking for shoppers and visitors to boost shopping and **tourism** and to use them for e.g. open air markets, social events, similar to Knighton's agreement with Powys for their animal market car park.
36. The **day centre**: needed so much. Many people want this service.
37. The **town council need to take control of Presteigne** again so we are not ruled by outsiders. The running and organising of Presteigne **Memorial Hall**, it needs a change of responsibility
38. The Town Council clearly recognises what Presteigne needs. Good luck.
39. The **Day Centre** is VITAL!
40. Looking after the **young** and **old** is very important. The young shouldn't feel they have to travel miles to find entertainment and the old should be on a list for fellow residents to look after in some way, be it for travel or food etc.
41. Not sure what is left for PCC to do – perhaps **all services** should be put under Town.
42. Better **broadband** service.
43. Having spent over 2 years working in The **Drill Hall** I know how poorly insulated it is. Very cold in winter and very hot in summer. The heating costs were picked up by the Army so "hidden" from the running costs of the Community Support. I feel that doing

this building up could be throwing good money after bad, unless the function was for an activity like DIY/Youth Club where the building could be improved on a volunteer basis.

44. Keep it up, **I think you're wonderful.**

45. Perhaps the **main street could be swept** now and then, or don't they have brooms anymore?

46. The **car park off the bypass** is always empty and the High Street full with parked cars. The High Street should be allocated to **Blue Badge holders** only, to cope with the aged people in the community (which is increasing). All other traffic should be encouraged to use the car park which should be free.

47. It is very important that Presteigne has its own **cemetery**. It is very important that the **Day Centre** stays open.

48. I think a voluntary **litter collection** around surrounding lanes would be good. I would volunteer for this.

49. We need to look at **using existing buildings** that could be used by several different groups and agencies, rather than several buildings used by a couple of groups or agencies. This would reduce keeping buildings rarely used and running at a loss. Having the **brownies** and the **guides** use the day centre is a great idea. Could we use the **library**, on days that it is shut for community use? Just an idea.

50. I have no interest in restoration of the **chapels** within the cemetery. Simple repairs to gutters would be totally adequate. Who uses or would use the chapels? I think it's a totally terrible idea for the TC to take over the **Hereford St car park**. All the cars from the recycle area would simply shift down the hill to Hereford St. It would become permanent free parking for many, leaving nowhere for our precious visitors to park. **Discretionary parking fees** mean zero contributions, and totally clogged up town centre. Shop keepers and residents would fill the car park. Goodbye to Presteigne town centre parking and toilet facilities. Absurd. Whose idea was this? Someone on Hereford St perhaps?

51. The amounts needed seem very modest to me, or am I being unrealistic. The **Library hours** are confusingly varied – maybe make them consistent. I understand that the sale of any buildings would only benefit the PCC which is grossly unfair, so should be resisted.

52. I think if the TC takes over **Hereford Street car park** I think the first hour parking should be free to all and then a charge made for all.

53. Is it necessary to have a permanent **chamber for the council** to meet, the cost would be high to provide one?

54. I wish I had the time to pop into the sessions you held in the old school building to go over these issues, however I have given my best answers based on the information given. That being said this did raise more questions for me than it answered. This may however not be the fault of the info presented as I'm working off a smart phone. Although I feel strongly about **community support activities for young and old** I believe location is not as critical. Is it not possible to use one of the spaces more effectively rather than keep two open? i.e. do the **town chambers / office** need to be in the **drill hall**? If the **library** is not taken over by the town council but run by a trust will it remain in the central location (this was not clear to me)? If I reach retirement age having access to books and working computers will be essential. Do we effectively utilise existing facilities that we contribute to the upkeep of? Or do some of those facilities not favour certain activity groups? Also as I'm less old fashioned about death a **cemetery** is not something that is important to me however if this asset can be obtained and maintained at no extra costs to the community then it should be considered. Ensuring we have graveyard space for the next 75 years may be overkill (if you will excuse the terminology). Do we have access to the numbers that propose to use these facilities? Most people I know get scattered to the wind. Perhaps we should be looking to more modern ways of remembering those that have passed by having remembrance facilities i.e. designated tree plantings and benches in the grounds that we must maintain and cherish for years to come e.g. Went's meadow. Are the **assets that generate income** at capacity? Could we do more to promote their usage? Are there any advantages that have not been communicated from shutting down some of the spaces? If the town council need any volunteers to assist in any way I'm happy to offer some of my spare time if it means keeping or upgrading the towns facilities.

55. Free use of big **car park for shop workers** to free up on street parking.

56. **Hereford street car park**: NOT a good idea. Read what happens when hospital parking is free. Patients have nowhere to park. Not a good idea.

57. Taking over the **Hereford Street car park**: I do not agree to this.

58. With ref to taking over the **Old School** and **Drill Hall**: 'No need, use **Memorial Hall**'.  
With ref to additional **Cemetery land**: ' Does **Stapleton council** contribute as well?'.  
With ref to **Burial Board**: 'No need'. With ref to **Hereford Street car park**: 'mayhem?'

59. The **cleaning of the High Street**.

60. There should be a **reduction in the number of locations** where services are provided. Could more use be made of the school buildings?

61. Please don't keep putting up the **Precept**!

62. Any **buildings** taken over by the local council should be put to full use. May be one/two of the buildings could accommodate more enabling other buildings to become redundant?

63. I really value the Town Council and the efforts made by so many people to maintain assets such as those outlined in this consultation for the community.

64. Whether some of the functions could be met by **fewer more multi-use venues**.

65. All the facilities listed in the questionnaire are needed to maintain the many different but equally valuable and essential aspects of the life of the local community.

66. As many of these facilities are currently run by PCC, and payed for out of taxes paid to them, should they not **refund to the town council**, the portion of the taxes that the town council will save them, by taking over the facilities. Otherwise, surely, we will be paying for them twice. PCC will still be getting monies for their upkeep through our taxes, whilst not having anything more to do with them? This would also reduce the amount of **Precept** increase required.

67. Why are some facilities not self-funding as users should pay to use the facility? Why does the **Town Council need new premises**, can it not be accommodated within existing sites, i.e. The Assembly Rooms perhaps?

68. Thank you for your efforts – well done, all of you!

69. Some of these projects are necessary for the youngsters and day Centre for the elderly and infirm.

70. I am very concerned about the threat of closure of the **Day Centre** – it may have had a reprieve for now, but how long before PCC try again to close it. This is a fantastic asset.

71. **Hereford Street Parking**: totally ridiculous suggesting running the car park as suggested. IT SHOULD BE FREE. This will attract people to stay longer and spend money in the shops etc. Presteigne needs to attract more people to stay. All **parking** should be free. You could advertise this and raise Presteigne's image.

72. **Memorial Hall**: used by community in many ways. Perhaps needs fresh management. Could Town Council step in?

73. **Hereford Street Car Park**: could cause chaos on entrance if traffic busy on the road.

74. Referring to the **Cemetery**: the **toilet** room very important for people to use.

75. **Fireworks**: Poor use of money, environmental concerns, noisy, frightening.

76. Why not **merge buildings** and save costs? E.g. **library** move to leisure centre or Day Centre: huge savings in 1 building.

77. Additional **cemetery land** is very important so that local people can visit their loved ones' graves easily.

78. Please do all you can to save the **Day Centre** and the takeover of the **old school and car park** is a very good idea.

79. Stop cars parking on pavements.

80. **Car parking in Hereford St** should not be allowed as there is a car park nearby. It is a nightmare to get through as people do not give way.

81. All activities are important. Maybe **better to consolidate** where they are held. e.g. Youth Club in Memorial hall. Remember **Norton!** Verges, planting bulbs. More could be extended to include Norton.

82. Just take over the **drill hall** and sell the **old school**. Move everything to the drill hall.

83. We propose that to **attract tourists** and **increase retail outlets** and **local employment** without competing with existing town shops, the **Kaye's site** should be developed as a "seconds retail outlet" on the model of Clarks Village in the town of

Street, Somerset – the original retail village in a community of similar size to Presteigne. This can be established of a size (and with parking) to suit our town.

84. It makes no sense that we are charged for parking in the **Hereford Street Car Park** when parking on the street is free. At least the first 30 minutes should be free.

85. Although not mentioned above, the question of the **Kaye's site** is crucial to **Presteigne's High Street and its future**. Therefore the Town Council should strenuously resist any attempts to turn it into a **supermarket** and instead campaign for its use for **low-cost housing, craft workshops, a care home** or something that benefits the whole community and its economy.

86. Rather than finding new uses for the **Drill Hall** i.e. Council Chambers, could a new home be found for **Community Support**? That would be one less building to renovate and maintain.

87. I feel the park **toilets** are of particular importance. **Cemetery land** – what is the consensus around burial – has a green burial site been considered?

88. The **Kaye's site** is not mentioned here, and is extremely important. We want **housing** not a **supermarket**.

89. **Reduce number of buildings** – Drill hall, library, assembly rooms, together with Memorial hall – all that is needed for size of town.

90. Please don't spend much needed funds on **new Town Council office and chamber!!**  
I'm sure you are fine where you are!!

91. More needs spending on the town to **improve the looks /tidiness**.

92. The **carnival** is a throwback – no point to it and some floats actively racist/culturally inappropriate. **Cemetery** – not sustainable. People need to be either cremated or the stones could be taken up to make a clean slate?

93. I do not feel this is a time for ambitious or expensive schemes. Rather in times when money is short we should recognise essential or educational needs.

94. Why not **amalgamate the services** on offer and re-locate all to **Assembly Rooms**? Warm, convenient, WCs, kitchen. This would enable the library to remain in situ.