

Cyngor Tref Llanandras a Norton
PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15TH DECEMBER 2021
HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

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

Apologies: Cllr. R. Bamford, C. Ruby.

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. Baynham: related to contractor, re. toilet cleaning contract for 2022-23.

Cllr. Bennett, close friend of applicant, re. Planning applications 21/1949/HH and 21/1950/CAC.

Cllr. Owens, family interest in property, re. Planning application 21/1992/TRE.

Cllr. N. Rogers, applicant re. Planning application 21/2068/FUL.

Cllr. K. Van Den Ende, allotment tenant, re. decisions on Allotment rent etc.

MIN 3979 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr. Van Den Ende duly completed the acceptance of office form on screen.

MIN 3980 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17th November, 2021 were approved without amendment. The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

The Minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 24th November, 2021 were approved without amendment. The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

The Minutes of the Sites and Buildings Committee meeting held on 30th November, 2021 were approved without amendment. The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

MIN 3981 UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS

(1) Website Advertisement in Broad Sheep: The Clerk confirmed that the wording of the advertisement had been amended and the £40 fee paid.

(2) Works at Radnorshire Arms Garage: Cllr. Baynham was able to confirm that the Planning Department was in discussions with the owners.

(3) Fold Farm Footpath: Cllr. Kirkby asked if there had been any progress. Cllr. Baynham had nothing to report but agreed to chase.

(4) Street Cleaning: Cllr. Kirkby reported that there were a lot of wet and slippery leaves at the Scallions that needed attention.

(5) Old Doctor's Surgery: Cllr. Baynham updated Members on the situation and the Clerk confirmed that she had not heard back from Building Control on possibly boarding up the building. Cllr. Baynham would chase up from the County Council side and the Clerk would contact PCSO Anna Bowen to see if any contact had been made with the owner.

(6) Changes to Election Rules: In summary the main changes were, a delay in introducing personal statements for candidates so not part of the 2022 elections, electronic submission of nomination forms will be an option that can be offered but it is not compulsory, a change to the formula for polling and counting agents, publication of home address no longer compulsory and a requirement to include details of political party membership on the nomination form. The County Elections team would be briefing Clerks on arrangements for the May elections in March.

- (7) Notices - Do Not Feed the Rats: These had been done and the Clerk had not had any comments.
- (8) Wales Training Seminar for Clerks: Members noted the Clerk's attendance at the Wales Training Seminar.
- (9) Grant Requests from National/Larger Organisations: A list of these would go out with the January papers or before for consideration at the January meeting as previously agreed.
- (10) Annual Report: Members were reminded that the first Annual Report as required in the recent Local Government Act will need to cover the 2021-22 financial year. Members were asked if they could provide an article on an area of Council activity for inclusion and to let the Clerk know if so.
- (11) External Audit: This had still not been received. The Clerk advised that this was the first year that the Wales Audit Office have taken the work back in house and that it has also had to cope with a large number of audits not completed by the contractors last year. This had contributed towards the delays. She was not aware of any Council that had had their audit papers returned.
- (12) New Welsh Government Toolkit (Draft): Members had all received an email about this and the need for input from Members if at all possible. The final toolkit was intended to be available to all Councils soon after the May elections.

MIN 3982 FINANCE

- (1) Donations: None this month.
- (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 | £378.49 |
| N. Close | £10.50 |
| N. Close | £98.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT |
| F. Preece (Mayor's Allowance second instalment) | £500.00 |
| Mrs T.A. Price (refund Amazon – computer mouse) | £9.99 |
| JHA Price & Sons (fencing allotments) | £382.32 MEADOW ACCOUNT |
| JRB Enterprises Ltd (dog bags) | £261.60 MEADOW ACCOUNT |
| Highground Maintenance Ltd (grass cutting) | £319.57 MEADOW ACCOUNT |
| Presteigne Building Supplies | £38.78 |
| Presteigne Building Supplies (new barn) | £82.92 MEADOW ACCOUNT |
| Roy Price (hedge cutting etc) | £426.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT |
| HSBC Bank Charges | £8.00 |
| HSBC Bank Charges | £8.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT |
- (3) New Projects for 2022-23: The following projects were submitted –
- Replacement Mayor's Chain, refurbishment of existing Chain, display board (estimated cost £4000).
 - Platinum Jubilee Celebrations
 - IT Equipment to support hybrid Meetings.
 - Annual Report Costs printing etc.
- (4) Circulation of Accounts from Organisations receiving £250 or more annually from the Council and applications for grants in 2022-23: Members noted that this was currently being circulated.
- (5) Annual Review of Direct Debits: Members noted the list of direct debit circulated for each account and confirmed that all were correct.
- (6) Refund of £33.00 from Meadow Account to M. Galliers. This had been paid by bank transfer in error and has been returned. Noted.
- (7) Letter from County Council re. estimated election costs in 2022: The Clerk outlined the estimated costs and added that she would include an item in the draft budget and that this would take into account the amount currently held in all allocated reserve.
- (8) Section 137 limit for 2022-23: Members noted that this will be £8.82 per elector.
- (9) Receipts: The following receipt was noted:
£130.00 - Website Advertising.
- (10) Offer of £250 from Presteigne Carnival Committee towards the cost of replacing the Sheep Music Stage: Members were pleased to accept the offer.
- (11) Request for Use of Climate Crisis Grant Fund: Members agreed that £150 from the fund could be used to plant yellow rattle plants. They asked for estimated costs on the planned tree talks and would consider the request further at the January meeting.

MIN 3983 PLANNING

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

Cllr. Owens was placed in the waiting room for the duration of the following item.

21/1992/TRE Grid Ref: E: 331313 N: 264509 Proposal: Application to works to a tree in a conservation area namely to fell tree Location: Postings House, 32 High Street, Presteigne Powys LD8 2BE. Resolved no objections be raised.

Cllr. Owens returned to the meeting.

21/2098/REM Grid Reference: E:331696 N: 264492 Proposal: Section 73 application to vary condition no. 2 attached to planning approval P/2018/0156 to allow an extension of time in which to submit a reserved matters application Site Address: Land At, Fold Farm, Broad Street, Llanandras. Resolved no objections be raised.

21/2120/TRE Grid Ref: E: 331444 N: 264340 Proposal: Felling of 3 trees, an ash, cypress and sycamore, within the conservation area Location: Harford House, Hereford Street, Presteigne Powys LD8 2AT. Resolved no objections be raised.

Cllr. Bennett was placed in the waiting room for the duration of the following two items.

21/1950/CAC Grid Reference: E:331301 N: 264590 Proposal: Removal of existing rear pitched roof dormer window and construction of larger flat roof dormer as replacement to existing dwelling. Site Address: 2 Pound Lane, Presteigne, Powys, LD8 2DB. Resolved no objections be raised.

21/1949/HH Grid Reference: E:331301 N: 264590 Proposal: Removal of existing rear pitched roof dormer window and construction of larger flat roof dormer as replacement to existing dwelling Site Address: 2 Pound Lane, Presteigne, Powys, LD8 2DB. Resolved no objections be raised.

Cllr. Bennett returned to the meeting.

Cllr. Rogers was placed in the waiting room for the duration of the following item.

21/2068/FUL Grid Reference: E:333946 N: 263259 Proposal: Erection of an agricultural building to cover an existing silage pit. Site Address: Broadheath Farm, Presteigne, LD8 2HG. Resolved no objections be raised.

Cllr. Rogers returned to the meeting.

21/2046/FUL Grid Reference: E:330453 N: 267162 Proposal: Conversion of barn to form 3 dwellings, to include alterations to access and all associated works Site Address: The Old Granary, Norton, Presteigne, Powys LD8 2EY. Resolved no objections be raised subject to the Built Heritage Officer having no concerns. Cllr. Kirkby commented on a statement made in the Welsh Water consultation response concerning there being no phosphate permit for the Norton Treatment Works and the Clerk was asked to seek clarification on this.

21/2047/LBC Grid Reference: E:330453 N: 267162 Proposal: Conversion of barn to form 3 dwellings and all associated works Site Address: The Old Granary, Norton, Presteigne, Powys LD8 2EY. Resolved no objections be raised subject to the Built Heritage Officer having no concerns.

21/2075/HH Grid Reference: E:331170 N: 264361 Proposal: Proposed creation of new access including a dropped kerb and three off-street parking spaces Site Address: 20 Castle Road, Presteigne, LD8 2EB. Resolved no objections be raised.

21/2123/HH Grid Reference: E:330766 N: 264695 Proposal: Garage conversion/ rear extension to form new bedroom & utility room. Addition windows to existing dwelling Site Address: 58 Warden Close, Presteigne, Powys, LD8 2DH. Resolved no objections be raised.

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

- 21/1385/HH 1 The Barn, Presteigne: Consent 15th November.
- 21/1839/TRE Radnorshire Arms Hotel: Approval 18th November.
- 21/0805/LBC Hall Cottage, 3 Oak Villas, Broad Street, Presteigne: Approval 18th November.
- 21/1592/HH 33 Castle Road, Presteigne: Consent 30th November.

- 21/1370/RES Land at Fold Farm, Presteigne: Refused 26th November.
- 21/1334/FUL McColville Ltd: Consent 1st December.
- 21/1864/REM Old Vicarage, Norton: Approval 3rd December.

(3) Consultation on planning legislation and policy for second homes and short-term holiday lets: Clerk to re-send to all Members. Deferred until January.

(4) Comments on planning application 21/1801/FUL, Pen Offa: Resolved not to respond in connection with this application as it was sited outside the Town Council area.

(5) Senedd Petition calling for moratorium on IPUs: Agreed that Members consider whether to sign the petition as individuals.

MIN 3984 HIGHWAYS, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

(1) Dark Skies/Lighting: Members noted that Helen Gooderham has now been into the Primary School to talk about Dark Skies and this had been very well received.

Members noted the possibility of holding an event as part of a Dark Skies Festival and the Clerk was asked to discuss with Mr. Harling-Bowen on the type of event that might be possible and report back to the January meeting.

(2) Climate Crisis: Members noted that the grant application was in progress but that the expected decision time once submitted was eight weeks.

(3) Welsh Water Sewage System Upgrade: Members noted the reply on the permanent lighting at each site with no lights on as standard in Norton and PIR sensors on the lighting in Presteigne. Welsh Water had stressed the need for the lighting to comply with Health and Safety Standards. Cllr. Kirkby asked that the Clerk respond asking for more detail on the light fittings and asking that the minimum possible level of brightness be installed and that the light fittings be dark skies compliant.

(4) Powys County Council Car Park Charging Order Notification: Noted. No changes to the costs for Presteigne Car Parks. Cllr. Baynham agreed to check to see where the by pass car park was on the list for re-surfacing.

(5) Lugg Bridge Update and report on Site Meeting: Cllrs. Kirkby and Baynham had attended the meeting with an Officer from the County Council and the Officer had agreed that works to the upstream side of the bridge were needed imminently and these would be programmed for between April and October 2022 (works were not permitted outside this period). In addition Cllr. Kirkby had noted surveyors again looking at Lugg Bridge for Balfour Beatty but it had since been confirmed that this was an error and they should have been looking at Ford Bridge checking its structural integrity and strength.

(6) Presteigne Roundabouts – Update from Caring for God’s Acre: Noted.

(7) Presteigne Cemetery: The County Council had agreed to provide the funding for the fencing needed but had asked if the Town Council would arrange and pay for the work and the County Council would then refund it. Cllr. Wilding had obtained one formal quote for the work but had been unable to obtain any further quotes due to the need to carry out the fencing imminently and of sufficient quality. It was agreed to therefore proceed with the quote obtained and the Clerk was asked to confirm with the County Council Officer that this was in order.

MIN 3985 NORTON

(1) Community Hub/Church Update: Cllr. Wilding reported that the plans were now recommended for approval but awaited the agreement of CADW. The delays in obtaining the planning permission meant that the grant application had missed being determined in the current round but would be considered in March. The lease had not yet been signed as it was felt this was not prudent until the planning permission had been obtained.

MIN 3986 SITES AND BUILDINGS

(1) Public Conveniences: See under Committee recommendations below.

(2) Allotments: See under Committee recommendations below.

(3) Meadows: the following matters were discussed –

- Use Request Presteigne Carnival Committee – 7-10th July, 2022: Agreed.
- Work completed by Cllr. Bennett: Members noted the works carried out by Cllr Bennett including the installation of a replacement oak post at the Scout Hut Car park and cutting the hedge at Eddie’s Meadow that could not be accessed by tractor. Thanks were noted to Cllr. Wilding for supplying the post.

- CCTV Update: Members noted the comments included in the Clerk's report and it was agreed not to purchase equipment for the present. The Clerk to purchase cctv warning signs for each of the Council's buildings (four) and these would be put up to see if they acted as a deterrent.

(4) Adopt a Bench Update: The Clerk would start organising a scheme as soon as possible. Cllr. Owens agreed to assist.

(5) Town Fingerposts Update: The Clerk reported that ten posts had now been identified and this obviously meant the costs would be much more than originally thought. Cllr. Baynham suggested that the fingerposts be included as a new project and a fixed budget allocated. Work to stop when this had been used. This was agreed.

(6) Worthy Beds Boardwalk Update: Members had all seen pictures of the intended surface which would be laid onto the existing boardwalk. The Clerk confirmed that any weak or rotten sections/support posts of the original boardwalk would also be repaired. She added that the grant money awarded would cover all these costs but that the officer had been unable to find a quote to replace the complete boardwalk within the amount allocated. The Radnorshire Wildlife Trust had been consulted and works would need to be complete by the end of the financial year.

(7) Defibrillator Checks: Cllr. Baynham informed Members that there had been a problem with the battery life on the first unit used as part of the emergency recently and added that she thought the issue of battery life should be investigated to try to prevent this being an issue in the future. Members were aware that the units were all checked weekly by Mr. Close and the Clerk was able to confirm that the green tick showing all was ok had been present on the check carried out prior to the incident. The Clerk had spoken to the Ambulance Service and had been told it was most unusual for the batteries to fail if the green tick was showing but that a number of factors would affect the battery life and could reduce it from the normal five years. These were cold weather spells and of course use in an emergency. Installing heated cabinets was an option and the Ambulance Service could source these at cost if the Council was willing to pay for them. These cabinets would also need to be connected to the electricity. The Clerk confirmed that she was currently able to obtain replacement pads and batteries free of charge through the Ambulance Service. After discussion it was agreed that the best option was to replace the batteries on a three yearly basis to pre-empt their possible failure during their last period of life. Members decided not to purchase heated cabinets at this stage.

(8) Sites and Buildings Committee Recommendations: Members considered the recommendations of the Committee and agreed the following –

Cllr. Van Den Ende was placed in the Waiting Room for the duration of the Allotments Items.

Allotments:

Use of plot 36 by the PNAA (at no charge). To be reviewed after one year.

Maintenance items as listed in the Minutes to be completed.

Rent to remain unchanged at £28 per plot.

Cllr. Van Den Ende returned to the meeting.

Meadows:

Grass cutting contract to be awarded to High Ground Maintenance Ltd for a period of three years from April 2022.

Minor maintenance items to be carried out as listed in the Committee Minutes.

Cut of the car park field to be arranged prior to the 2022 Carnival. Clerk to ask the Council's current grass cutting contractor for a price to cut and mulch the grass.

Quotes to be obtained for work to paths: Noted now obtained at £771.

Quote/Estimate to be obtained for changes to main Knighton Road entrance for consideration as new project in 2022-23.

Quote to be obtained for re-rendering of wall, old Barn area.

Siting of additional non-poisonous tree by Barn to provide ground cover.

Approval given for replacement of Sheep Music stage at cost of £1400 for materials and a possible £150 for labour if volunteers could not be found. Noted that the Carnival Committee were donating £250 towards this.

Quote to be obtained from replacing of timber steps Skateboard Area. Noted and approved at £190 for materials. No labour cost (volunteers to do).

Draft Budget recommendations noted.

Cllr. Wilding pointed out that changes to regulations on the use of red diesel may affect the availability and price of contractors.

Toilets

Cllr. Baynham was placed in the Waiting Room for the duration of the following items.

Cleaning contract for 2022/23 to be awarded to T. Lloyd-John.

Draft budget recommendation of £10,500 for 2022/23, £9500 to be raised from the precept and £1000 to come from allocated reserve for the toilets.

Cllr Baynham returned to the meeting.

MIN 3987 CORRESPONDENCE/GENERAL ITEMS

(1) Town Wifi Update: The Clerk confirmed that the tenders were expected to go out shortly and that several firms were interested in carrying out the work. The Officer was due to leave the County Council at the end of December and given this the Clerk was asked to chase this up so the tender documents could be sent out before he left.

(2) Community Broadband Scheme Update: Mr. Ellis from Broadway Partners had now left the firm and Mr. Reece Simmons had been appointed in his place. As he did not start until January a date for the Working Group to meet had not yet been arranged. The Clerk would do this early in 2022.

(3) Well-Being in Powys – Consultation: Cllr. Baynham encouraged Members to complete this as individuals.

(4) Review of Bus Routes: Cllr. Baynham suggested that it might be sensible to have fewer trips on the Kington-Presteigne-Knighton route and include others to allow residents to visit Leominster or Llandrindod. The Clerk was asked to write to the Officer at the County Council to suggest a review of the current routes.

(5) Cabinet Written Statement: Review of the Ethical Standards Framework for Wales: The Clerk highlighted two main points – the possibility of code of conduct training becoming mandatory and the regularisation of the involvement of County Standards Committees.

(6) Update on Assembly Rooms Lift Installation: Members were pleased to note that agreement had now been reached over the installation of a new lift however Cllr. Kirkby reported that the MBA still awaited a copy of the draft lease. The Clerk was asked to contact the Officer to thank him for resolving the lift issues but asking if the draft lease could be sent urgently to the MBA.

(7) Updated Tourist Information Map: Members noted the updated map and had no further changes and agreed that the map looked excellent. The Clerk confirmed that the Wifi location points would be added once known.

(8) WAST - Ambulance Service not calling the First Responders in cardiac arrest situation: Cllr. Baynham reported that during the recent emergency the first responders had not been called despite it being a life or death situation. The First Responders themselves had confirmed that they needed to be called by the Ambulance Service but that this had not happened during the recent incident despite the ambulance taking some time to arrive. Cllr. Davies was aware of another similar incident a week earlier. The Clerk was asked to write to the Ambulance Service to ask what the procedure or protocol was for calling the First Responders and why they were not called to the recent incident on High Street. Members thought it might possibly relate to the anticipated arrival time for an ambulance or if there were budget implications. James Evans MS and Fay Jones MP to be copied into the letter.

MIN 3988 TOWN COUNCIL SURGERY

Cllrs. Wilding and Ruby had attended and two matters had been raised –

Failure of Ambulance Service to contact the First Responders during a recent emergency: See 3987 (8) above).

Fast Traffic using Broadaxe Lane: This was reported to be an issue with satnavs directing traffic along the Lane. It was thought that a sign indicating the road was not suitable for HGVs might help re-direct lorry traffic and Cllr. Baynham agreed to raise this with the Highways Department. She would also ask the Officer if it was possible to alter the national database so that satnavs did not direct traffic this way.

No surgery in January.

MIN 3989 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr. Baynham reported the following –

- Welsh Government funding settlement due on 20th December and the ongoing effect on the budget setting process.
- Proposal for Mobile Library Service to be withdrawn following the intended introduction of home delivery.
- Suggestion for defibrillator training in early 2022: Clerk to arrange subject to the coronavirus situation.

- Community Broadband Officer leaving the Council.
- Built Heritage Officer had left and had been replaced.

MIN 3990 EMAILS OF COMPLAINT RE. PLANNING COMMENTS

Members had all received copies of the emails received and replies and the Clerk was asked to reply confirming the situation regarding the Minutes, the situation around planning comments etc.

MIN 3991 URGENT BUSINESS INFORMATION

Cllr. Preece reported the sad news of the death of former Town Councillor, Pam Linnett. She would attend the funeral.

MIN 3992 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

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 item.

The Clerk also left the meeting at this point.

MIN 3993 RECOMMENDATIONS OF STAFFING COMMITTEE

Members considered the recommendations of the Committee meeting held on 24th November and agreed the following –

Draft Budget: Annual salary budget for 2022/23 to be set at £25,760.20 (including employer's pension and national insurance contributions) and assuming national pay scale increases of 1.75% for both the 2021-22 year and 2022-23 year.

Training budget of £280 agreed.

Noted there is not yet any confirmed increase in the national pay scales for 2021-22 and 2022-23 and will be no increase in employer's pension contributions.

Change of the date of Annual Appraisal: Cllr Wilding proposed two Councillors carry out the annual appraisal: the Mayor and Chair of the Staffing Committee in November. Cllr. Baynham seconded the proposal, all present agreed.

Locum Appointment to Cover Sickness: It was agreed for Cllrs. Davies and Baynham to research providing a locum to cover for the Clerk in the event of any long-term sickness. However, it was noted there is currently no budget provision for this.

Work/Life Balance and Holidays: It was unanimously agreed not to employ a locum to cover short term absences such as holidays or short-term sickness. Following a full discussion Cllr. Kirkby proposed the original recommendations be amended to - the Town Clerk to review the number of additional meetings she attends to help with work/life balance and allow holidays to take place. The Staffing Committee to review this at the next meeting, seconded by Cllr Wilding, and unanimously agreed. It was agreed as on-going good practice to request the Clerk continuously questions the need to attend extra meetings and for her to make the decision on what is necessary.

It was agreed that the Staffing Committee meet again in three months to review the allotment hours/payment and any additional work the Clerk identifies.

Weekend Contact: Whilst Councillors had no problem with the Clerk working flexible hours throughout the seven day week at her own discretion, it was felt that, unless it was urgent, Members to be discouraged from making contact at the weekends.

Work Mobile: It was agreed to ask the Clerk to consider the offer of a work mobile telephone to enable out of hours voice messages to be left.

Allotments: It was confirmed Cllr Bennett was the current Allotment Liaison Member, therefore, looking to appoint someone else was not necessary. It was agreed to request the Chair of the Allotment Association be asked to contact Cllr. Bennett in the first instance with any future concerns.

A full confidential note of the discussions to be included on the staffing file.

The meeting closed 10.40pm.