

Cyngor Tref Llanandras a Norton
PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17TH FEBRUARY 2021
HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING UNDER THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (CORONAVIRUS)
(WALES) REGULATIONS 2020

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

Apologies: Cllr. L. Veary.
Absent: Cllr. N. Rogers.

In Attendance: Mrs T. Price, Town Clerk. Members of the Public and Press.

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

Cllr. T. Owens, friend of applicant, re. planning application 21/0122/FUL

Cllr. T. Owens, friend of applicant, re. planning application 21/0083/FUL

Cllr. D. Davies, related to applicant, re. planning application 21/0122/FUL

MIN 3855 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20th January 2021 were approved without amendment. The Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

MIN 3856 UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS AND CLERK'S REPORT

- (1) Missing Bin, St. David's Street: Still not replaced. Clerk would follow up.
- (2) Garage, Radnorshire Arms: The Clerk had received a reply indicating that the bollards were being checked to see they remained in the correct position and that they needed to remain across the full width of the pavement due to the risk of falling slates. Cllr. Kirkby asked if the Officer had given details of where the weathervane was stored and the Clerk stated that they hadn't and so this was not yet established.
- (3) Mayor's Chain: Cllr. Owens had looked into the potential addition of extra discs and it seemed that this would be problematic as the sash would need to be extended too and this might make it too long to be practical. Members discussed possibilities including removing older discs and replacing with new blank discs and doubling up the actual chain to allow more to be added. It was agreed that Cllrs. Owens, Baynham and Kirkby would consider the options and report back to the March meeting.
- (4) Fold Farm Footpath: No update to provide.
- (5) Weir: Again, a meeting would be arranged in the Spring.
- (6) Presteigne Cemetery: The pile of soil etc had been reported and Highways would be removing the waste from the area around the new graves. On the planned works the tenders had been returned and evaluated w/c 26th October. However the contractor that submitted the lowest tender advised that they could not commence the work until the new year and it was now looking that the work will commence in February but no date had yet been confirmed. Cllr. Kirkby voiced concerns that the work to remove the hedge needed to happen before the start of March and time was running short. The Clerk would chase again for a start date.
- (7) Flower Bed, Shoppers Car Park: The boulders had now been put in place and thanks were noted to Cllrs. Wilding and Bennett for arranging this.
- (8) Census 2021: Cllr. Kirkby asked if there was any more that could be done to assist. The Clerk confirmed that the information was on facebook and the website and that notices had been placed on Council notice boards. Cllr. Kirkby was concerned that those that were not online or otherwise

unable to complete the form would not receive help. Given the situation it was not considered sensible to send volunteers into properties and so it was agreed that the Clerk would contact the Census Officer and ask what arrangements were being put in place and if the Town Council could help further.

(9) Radnorshire Wildlife Trust: Members noted the appointment of a new Chief Executive, James Hitchcock. The Trust will start a new project called Green Connections in April which includes engaging with communities about actions to address climate change and the biodiversity crisis and will keep the Town Council informed so as much as possible can be done in Presteigne and Norton.

(10) Presteigne Carnival and Norton Show: Members noted with regret that these events would not be taking place in 2021.

MIN 3857 FINANCE

(1) Donations: Members considered the donation request from URDD Eisteddfod and agreed not to contribute at this time.

The letters of thanks from Judges Lodgings Trust, Mid Border Arts, Presteigne Festival, Powys Citizens Advice Bureau, Radnorshire Wildlife Trust, Norton Community Project, PACDG, East Radnorshire Day Centre and Presteigne Memorial Hall for the grant allocations in 2021-22 were noted.

(2) Payments: The following payments were approved –

NEST (direct debit)	£130.06
Mrs T.A. Price (salary)	£1383.56
Mr. H.T. Owens (Mayor's Allowance part)	£1498.92
HM Revenue & Customs	£930.11
Mr. N. Close	£91.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Mr. N. Close	£21.00
T. Lloyd-John (toilet cleaning)	£390.49
Playdale Playgrounds Ltd (extra work)	£2730.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Playdale Playgrounds (original work 2 nd payment)	£5707.20 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Welsh Water (Wilson Terrace Toilets)	£36.63
SLCC Enterprises Ltd (Practitioner's Conference)	£45.00
Caring for God's Acre (roundabouts)	£430.00
JRB Enterprises Ltd (dog bags)	£119.46 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Highground Maintenance (grass cutting)	£319.57 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Healthmatic (gel dispenser)	£92.64
EDF Energy (Hereford Street Toilets)	£140.98 (Direct Debit)

(3) Receipts: The following receipts were noted –

E. George (donation for use of new barn)	£70.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT
Powys County Council (twds zip wire works)	£1275.00

Cllr. Kirkby reported that he had been given an anonymous donation of £1000 towards the extra work on the zip wire. This would mean there had been no extra cost to the Town Council in commissioning the extra work. The Clerk would arrange for the money to be deposited in the Meadow bank account as soon as possible. Members asked that a letter of thanks be written to Mr. Steve Gealy at Powys County Council for all his help and work on the project.

(4) Bank transfer: Members approved the transfer of £1275.00 towards the zip wire work to the Meadow Account from the Treasurer Account.

MIN 3858 PLANNING

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

21/0047/FUL Grid Reference: E:330478 N: 267125 Proposal: Erection of dwelling house Site

Address: Taylors Farmhouse, Norton, Presteigne. Resolved that the following comments be made -

- Pleased to see that the visibility splay at School Lane was being improved but need clarification on whether the stone wall will be replaced or if it was just a replacement hedge?
- Noted that only two parking spaces were being provided for a three-bedroom property and felt that three would have been the standard.
- Access to the property is via steps and thus it is not accessible to those with disabilities.
- The parking spaces are positioned to be difficult to access and it states that they would have to be reversed into - are Highways in agreement with this?
- Built Heritage Officer to be consulted.
- Archaeological investigations to take place.

21/0083/FUL Grid Reference: E:328743 N: 265752 Proposal: Change of use from Barn to a two-storey dwelling Site Address: Barn at Ackhill Farm, Presteigne. This application had been withdrawn so no comment was made.

Cllrs. Owens and Davies were placed in the waiting room for the duration of the following item.

21/0122/FUL Grid Reference: E:330992 N: 264115 Proposal: Erection of two houses and associated works (part retrospective) Site Address: Plots 2 And 3 Silia Meadows, Slough Road, Presteigne, LD8 2NY. Resolved to make no objections however Members asked that consideration be given to the street signs by the planned entrance and these being re-located as necessary. No other comments providing the Highways Department is in agreement with the proposed layout.

Cllrs. Owens and Davies returned to the meeting.

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

20/1848/DIS Plot 1, West of Sunnydale, Knighton Road, Presteigne: Approval 7th January.

20/1867/HH 10 Hereford Street, Presteigne: Consent 8th January.

20/1711/DIS Well Cottage, Cannon Street, Presteigne: Approval 14th January.

20/1927/TEL Land at Home Farm, Norton: Permitted Development 19th January.

20/1943/DIS Faraway, Stonewall Hill: Discharge of Condition Approval 20th January

20/0559/LBC 1 London House, Broad Street, Presteigne: Consent 27th January.

20/0558/FUL 1 London House, Broad Street, Presteigne: Consent 27th January

MIN 3859 HIGHWAYS, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

(1) Active Travel Routes Update: The shared use signs were now in place along Hereford Street but Cllr. Kirkby reported that there was no sign at the car park end of the pavement to indicate the start of the route. He had reported this and the Clerk would follow it up.

(2) Dark Skies/Lighting: Members had examined the survey report and maps supplied by the County Council. Cllr. Davies stated that following the January meeting she had spoken to several residents along the Slough Road and they did not have a problem with the lights being removed. Cllr. Bamford reported having received comments from a resident at the amount of lighting around the secondary school. Members considered the proposals and it was agreed to support them.

Cllr. Owens reported that the Clerk had received a concern about the lights on the Hereford Street toilets (facing the car park) being too bright. The manufacturer had provided options including installing some form of diffuser to dim the lights or removing some of the bulbs (which were wired in). It was not possible to reduce the wattage. Members considered the options and asked the Clerk to investigate whether it was possible to put in motion sensors or turn the lights on that side off completely.

Cllr. Kirkby asked for an update on the lighting trial but the Clerk had heard nothing further and would contact Dark Source for an update.

(3) Grass Cutting/Wildflower Verges: Cllr. Baynham had met with the relevant officer, reviewed the 2020 plans and discussed possibilities for future years. In general she felt that the year had been successful and things had worked well. Copies of the proposed maps for 2021 had been circulated and were shared on screen for review. There were only minor changes to 2020 in Presteigne. Cllr. Baynham reminded Members of the valuable contribution from volunteers in raking clear the grass after the final cut in the Autumn. The name signs for some of the wildflowers growing in verges had also been a useful and well received addition. She also reminded everyone that the first cut in the Spring would avoid areas where daffodils etc were growing. Cllr Bamford pointed out that one area had been missed in 2020 and Cllr. Baynham confirmed that she was aware of it and it was being dealt with.

Members then considered the maps and the Presteigne maps were agreed unchanged. The Norton map was new as there had been no major changes to the cutting regime in 2020. It was agreed to continue cutting the strip along the edge of Wills View as development would be commencing in the near future. Cllr. Ruby voiced a concern that visibility would be reduced at junctions/exits onto the main road and Cllr. Baynham confirmed that where there were safety issues the grass would continue to be cut or a strip would be cut at the front of the verge to allow full visibility. The plan was otherwise agreed unchanged.

(4) Climate Crisis: Cllr. Bamford reported the following –

- Meeting with Julian Jones, Andy Dobson, Cllr. Kirkby and Cllr. Bamford to discuss possible tree/woodland projects including a 'Tiny Forest' that could be sited in the bottom corner of the Meadow field below the bike track. The Group was also investigating land to buy for woodland and which could be purchased with grant funding and the possible creation of wildlife corridors. Members agreed that Cllr. Bamford place an item in the community newsletter and the local press seeking land and also explore the other possibilities raised.

- Cllr. Bamford reported that she had also made progress with the wildlife garden and was taking the plants etc to the school the next day.

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

(5) Covid-19 Measures and High Street Grant Update: Members noted the following updates –

- Pavement Licences - During November and December four applications were made, with three being from businesses on the High Street and one on Broad Street. The application from the business on Broad Street was approved. One of the applications on High Street was cancelled as it was determined to be on private land and therefore did not require a pavement licence. Unfortunately the other two applications were rejected as the minimum social distancing requirements could not be achieved.
- High Street Grant: The Clerk reported that unfortunately two of the businesses had pulled out of the project although one remained and planning permission had been applied for. Time was getting short however and it would be difficult to spend the monies by the end of February.

Cllr. Bennett was returned to the meeting.

(6) Welsh Water Sewage System Upgrade: Cllr. Wilding reported on the site meeting held between himself, Cllr. Owens, the Clerk and the Welsh Water contractors. A path would be opened through the play area would be opened up shortly while the disturbed areas would remain fenced off and would be re-turfed in due course. The strip of ground across the football field would remain secured with heras fencing and would be re-seeded in due course. The fencing would be left in place until the grass had taken and this was expected to be around six to eight weeks. One section on the Meadow remained to be mole ploughed and the line of the pipe had been altered slightly. The pipe had been laid across the allotment car park and the surface had been tidily restored. In general all was progressing well.

Cllr. Baynham informed Members that Welsh Water had applied for emergency permission for a 20mph limit on the road due to the speed of vehicles passing workers.

(7) Road Condition Stocken/Stonewall Hill: The Clerk reported that as instructed she had again contacted both Herefordshire Council and Fay Jones MP and also twice emailed CONNECT to ask if they would support the requests for the road to be properly repaired. She had that day received an email from one of the residents outlining the current position and she would forward this to all Members. Cllr. Owens had taken photographs of the road and would supply them to the Clerk as evidence of the road condition. He pointed out that site meetings would not be possible due to Councils being in business-critical mode due to covid. Members agreed that the Clerk again contact Cllr. Gandy to offer support for her efforts to get the road attended to and indeed for other roads in poor condition adjacent to the border in Herefordshire. Members also reported problems with ice on Newton's Lane and Killhorse Lane during the recent bad weather.

(8) Forest Management – Soil Association Consultation: Resolved no comment be made.

(9) Felled Tree, Warden: Cllr. Baynham reported that the matter was ongoing and that the Officer was continuing to discuss this with Welsh Water. Cllr. Kirkby was still concerned that the explanation had been given was insufficient and it was agreed that he meet with Welsh Water on site to discuss the reasons for removal.

(10) Local Walk Leaflets: Members were pleased that the walks were now on the website and asked their thanks to the member of the Ramblers that had worked so hard on compiling them. It was suggested that a picture of the route would be helpful and the Clerk confirmed that these were being produced and would be added in due course. Members would look at the web page again and provide the Clerk with any further comments.

MIN 3860 NORTON

(1) Norton Community Trust Update: Cllr Wilding reported that the Trust intended to re-submit the planning application in the next few weeks.

MIN 3861 SITES AND BUILDINGS MATTERS

(1) Public Conveniences: The Clerk reported that the final SMART meter at Hereford Street had now been fitted. Nothing else to report.

(2) Allotments: Members noted the reply on extended green waste collections as follows – *Thank you for contacting us regarding the garden waste service on behalf of the allotment association. Unfortunately, the garden collection service won't be extended beyond the final fortnight for this year (22/11/2021 – 03/12/2021). The service had been extended to 20 collections in 2020 by the addition of an extra collection but there are no plans to increase this for 2021.*

(3) Meadows:

- Zip Wire Update: This was now complete and ready for use with the slide length increased from 14m to 21m. Cllr. Kirkby reported that he had suggested a site photograph but that at the moment the County Council Officer was not able to attend as the Council was in business-critical mode. He suggested that the Town Council proceed to have a photograph and write a press release. The Clerk would check to see that the County Council Officer was happy for this to happen.
- Increasing Biodiversity/Wildflower/Strip: Cllr. Bamford felt that it would be useful to see what could be done on Went's Meadow. She suggested leaving circles of grass to grow between the orchard trees to encourage diversity. She would liaise with the Clerk and draw up a plan for consideration by Members and for providing to the grass cutting contractor.
- Renewal of Skateboard Perimeter Fence: Cllr. Wilding reported that he had examined the fence with the Clerk and Cllr. Owens and it was felt that it was not necessary to replace the whole fence but just the few posts that were rotting. There were also several posts around the allotment fence that also needed replacing. Members agreed that this should be done and that the work be arranged.
- Mole Problem: The Clerk would arrange the usual harrowing of the site in the Spring.

(4) Permission for Grant Application to be made: Lugg View Playground: Members noted the Clerk's report on this issue and agreed that the Clerk work with the County Council and submit a grant application to support refurbishment of the Lugg View Playground.

(5) Email re. need for more toddler friendly items in Wilson Terrace Playground: The Clerk reported that she had been speaking to the County Council on this matter and had suggested a cradle swing for toddlers as a possibility but was seeking Members' views on their preferences. Members agreed that a toddler swing would be the priority but that it would also be useful to have additional items for older children to complement the zip wire. The Clerk would pass the comments on to the Officer for consideration.

MIN 3862 CORRESPONDENCE/GENERAL ITEMS

(1) Reply from Better Broadband Project: The Presteigne and Norton area had not been selected from the areas applying.

(2) No Parking sign by Lloyds Cashpoint: Cllr. Kirkby reported that he had now received permission to place a sign by the cashpoint and asked that a proper Perspex sign be purchased. Members agreed that one sign be purchased at an approximate cost of £30-40 plus VAT.

(3) Reply from Fay Jones MP re NHS pay: Members noted the reply from Fay Jones MP stating that NHS pay in Wales was the responsibility of Welsh Government and it was agreed that the Clerk write to Kirsty Williams AM and the Welsh Health Minister, Vaughan Gething re-iterating the need for fair and proper pay for NHS staff.

(4) Public Services Ombudsman Consultation – New draft Guidance Code of Conduct: Members noted the consultation and also the model local resolution policy circulated by the Clerk. Members felt it was not appropriate for even minor issues relating to the code to be dealt with internally and it was agreed to make no comment on the consultation and not to adopt the local resolution policy.

(5) Christmas Lights: In order to assess the anchorage testing reports and installation process for the Christmas lights it was agreed that a Working Group be formed and consist of the following Members – Cllrs. Owens, Bennett, Smith and Ruby. The Clerk was in the process of seeking quotes for the anchorage testing which was due in 2021.

MIN 3863 TOWN COUNCIL SURGERY

No surgeries currently held.

MIN 3864 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr. Baynham reported the following matters –
County Council still in business-critical mode.

All those currently shielding were receiving regular welfare calls.

Success of track and trace process and County Council Officers also assisting other Welsh Authorities.

Budget Setting Meeting Thursday 25th February.

Several Councillors have left the ruling Group of the Council.

Parking Issues in Scottleton Street. It was suggested that the County Council install bollards and Cllr. Baynham would investigate this.

MIN 3865 URGENT BUSINESS INFORMATION

(1) Council as an Employer Training: Cllr. Davies had attended this training. She enquired if the council has a grievance procedure. Clerk to check.

(2) Congratulations were noted to Cllr. Owens for completing thirty years in broadcasting.

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm.