

Cyngor Tref Llanandras a Norton PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22ND JANUARY 2025 HELD AT THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BROAD STREET, PRESTEIGNE AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

Present: Cllrs. T. Owens, (Mayor), A. Van Huls (Deputy Mayor), D. Edwards, A. Ramsay, M. Price, L. Harling-Bowen, B. Baynham (via video link) and J. Ramsay.

Apologies: Cllrs. C. Kirkby MBE, J. Wilding, C. Ross, F. Preece.
Absent: Cllr. N. Rogers.

In Attendance: Mrs T. Price, Town Clerk.

Declarations of Interest: Members were requested to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests they may have in matters to be considered at the meeting in accordance with the terms of the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct Order) (Wales) Order 2008.

Personal: None.

Personal and Prejudicial: None.

MIN 4428 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18th December, 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record and the Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th January, 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record and the Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

MIN 4429 UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS

- (1) Traffic Direction, Pound Lane: The Clerk had received a reply that day reiterating the problems with visibility if the direction of traffic was reversed, adding that if traffic had increased then this would only add to the reason why reversing the traffic direction was inadvisable. However the Officer had offered to carry out a traffic survey if the Town Council wished. Members considered this but felt that due to the nature of the road it was very unlikely that there would be any problems with speeding and that this option not be taken up for the time being. The Clerk was asked to contact the Officer to ask that she look at the road when next in the area and consider whether there were any measures that could be put in place to improve road safety.
- (2) Bike Track Works: Cllr. Owens reported that he had still heard nothing from the parent involved with the potential works but that given the time of year this was understandable.
- (3) Leisure Centre Working Group: The Clerk confirmed that the Green Room had been booked for 7pm on 5th February.
- (4) Clerk's Report: All items this month were on the agenda.

MIN 4430 FINANCE

- (1) Donations: No donations this month.
- (2) The following payments were agreed –

Audit Wales	£200.00
EDF Energy (Hereford Street)	£95.29
T. Lloyd-John	£421.49
N. Close	£28.00
N. Close	£168.00 MEADOW ACC
Roy Price (hedge cutting/harrowing)	£376.80 MEADOW ACC
Welsh Water (Wilson Terrace)	£24.07
Welsh Water	£13.97 MEADOW ACC

Crown Decorating Centre £57.00

(3) Christmas Trees/CONNECT -Reply re. transfer of funds to PACDG: Members noted that the amount transferred to PACDG was £1357.58 and that the Group was looking at what to do with the money. Cllr. Baynham proposed that the Group be asked to refund the Town Council £156.00 it had paid to supply the Christmas Trees (previously supplied and paid for by CONNECT) and that they also be asked to consider providing the remaining funds as a contribution towards the renewal of the Christmas Lights in the town.

(4) Receipts: The following receipts were noted –

Website Advertising	£26.00
Allotment Rent	£56.00 MEADOW ACC

MIN 4431 PLANNING

(1) Planning applications: No applications.

(2) Planning Decisions: The following decisions were noted: -
24/1682/TRE St. Andrews Church, Presteigne: Approval

MIN 4432 HIGHWAYS, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

(1) Dark Skies Project Update: The following items were discussed -

- Christmas Lights: The Company initially contacted had supplied quotes for two options, both were over £6000, considerably more than Cllr. Harling-Bowen had expected. The Clerk had supplied contact details for a further company and Cllr. Harling-Bowen was arranging a meeting with its local representative to discuss options and to try to get a further quote. He would update Members further in due course.
- Dark Skies Talk: Cllr. Harling-Bowen would be giving a talk to Talgarth Town Council on dark skies matters.
- Community Group: As previously discussed Cllr. Harling-Bowen would be placing an entry in the Community Newsletter asking for volunteers to assist with monitoring etc.
- Wildlife and Dark Skies Corridor: He reported that he was currently working with Radnorshire Wildlife Trust to co-ordinate a project to create a wildlife corridor between East Radnor and the Elan Valley. An issue identified was the lighting on the trunk road at Rhayader but he had met with Jane Dodds MS who was going to speak to the Trunk Road Agency. In her capacity on the all-party committee for Climate, Health and Well-Being she had also asked for a visit to be arranged to look at the lights and also to meet Members of the Town Council. The 1st May was being considered provisionally. Cllr. Harling-Bowen would advise once a firm date was known.

(2) Climate and Environment Update: The following matters were discussed –

- Preserving Trees and Woodlands Consultation: Cllr. J. Ramsay reported on this consultation which reviewed the tree/TPO system. The proposals included extending the reasons for tree protection orders for not just amenity reasons. He did not feel it was necessary for the Council to comment but encouraged Members to do so as individuals. Members agreed not to submit formal comments.
- Updating for Climate Report from November 2023: He had not as yet had chance to do this but intended to call a meeting of the Working Group to discuss. He would bring a report to a future meeting of the Council and would notify the Clerk when to place an item on the agenda.

(3) High Street Grant – Update: The Clerk confirmed that all works were now complete and that the final two premises were almost ready to submit their payment claims. She advised that it was possible that there would be Transforming Towns grant monies available in 2025-26 and 2026-27 but as yet there were no guidelines so it wasn't possible to say what areas/works would be covered.

(4) Fold Farm DMMO Application: The Clerk advised that the Officer had that day informed her that she was sorry that the report was not available for the January meeting but she had committed to providing it for the Council's February meeting.

(5) Car Parking: Members had all received details of the most recent email from the Portfolio Holder. The Clerk had requested income details for the Shoppers Car Park but had no details as yet. She had also spoken to Brecon Town Council. The Clerk there had been very helpful and explained the arrangement in place through which the Council had paid for a number of days to have free parking in the main car park in the town. Currently they were being charged £175 a day and although the principle for the charge was to prevent any loss of income to PCC she understood the charge was based on the number of parking spaces. A short one page agreement was in place and the Town Council choose those days it wished to be free and which it advertised and placed on a large banner at the entrance to the car park. She had dealt with their Local Enforcement Officer. Members considered asking PCC for the cost per day to have the same arrangement at the Shopper's Car Park but it was agreed to hold back on this for now while the car

park review was completed and given that Cllr. Baynham had spoken to the Leader and Deputy and raised the possibility of the first hour being free in all charged car parks. Members were concerned to learn that the longer term options included introducing charges for any car parks currently free as this would affect the bypass car park. The need for that car park to be resurfaced was raised and Cllr. Baynham reminded Members that some years ago the by pass car park had been scheduled for resurfacing and when chasing this she had been advised that if this was done then charges would have to be introduced. The matter had therefore been left although it was noted that some of the potholes had recently been repaired. Cllr. Price reported that the screen on the ticket machine in the Hereford Street Car Park was very faded and difficult to see. The Clerk would report.

(6) Powys County Council Bus Survey: Cllr. J. Ramsay stated that the stated intention was to improve bus services. Cllr. Edwards felt that there was a need for better connections to Leominster and also brought to Members attention the new service from Bulth Wells to Craven Arms. Cllr. Baynham felt that the most pressing improvements needed were direct services to Llandrindod Wells and Leominster and that these services needed to be scheduled to allow for use by residents travelling to work. It was agreed to submit these comments in response to the consultation.

MIN 4433 NORTON

(1) General Works: The milestone was still with the stone mason but due for completion in February. Mr. Close was about to start work on refurbishing the first bench seat.

(2) Other Matters: Cllr. Edwards reported the following –

- Empty Salt Bin reported in Mynd Road.
- Tarmac washed away Killhorse Lane and also Meeting House Lane.
- Reported the Give Way Sign knocked sideways at Home Farm Lane.
- Complaint received from a resident of Offa's Green at the lack of road sweeping/pavement clearing.

MIN 4434 SITES AND BUILDINGS

(1) Public Conveniences: The following matters were noted -

Painting Contractor confirmed for Hereford Street and work to commence in the Spring.

New Toilet Rolls now being used in Hereford Street. Clerk would review with the cleaner in due course.

Toilet Cleaning Contract issued for 2025-26 and 2026-27.

(2) Allotments: The Clerk reported that one untidy plot should now be cleared/covered; one had provided an explanation (having taken on the plot in a very poor state) and one had yet to reply.

(3) Meadows: The following matters were discussed –

Storage Building: The grant application to the National Lottery had been successful. Cllr. Kirkby and Mr. O. Rimington would now look to draw up a list of materials so that quotes/tenders could be requested. £5000 would still need to be raised via crowd funding/local events etc. As noted under Finance Sheep Music had refunded the planning application fee.

Grass Cutting Contract: The contract has been issued and sent out for signing by the contractor.

Tree Survey: The Clerk had confirmed the appointment of Mr. J. Cromar to carry out the formal survey in the Autumn of 2025.

Moles: The Clerk had again chased the contractor who will be back on site in due course.

The tunnels were presently flooded.

Annual Tree Pruning Day: Cllr. Kirkby was arranging this. Much of the work would be carried out by volunteers with guidance from a paid expert. Agreed that the cuttings to be taken to the area below the wildflower area. The Clerk would advise the organisers.

Use by Play Radnor, 24th February: Agreed.

Use by Presteigne Carnival; 10th-13th July: Agreed.

(4) Nature Reserve Matters: Cllr. J. Ramsay reported that the volunteers were meeting before the end of January to discuss a Spring work plan and this would include the planting of the plants being supplied via the small grant. There had been a report that children were playing on the ponds in the recent icy weather and it was agreed that a notice be put up advising that playing on the ice was unsafe. Cllr. J. Ramsay would arrange for this to be done and placed on the site notice board once this was in place.

MIN 4435 CORRESPONDENCE/GENERAL ITEMS

(1) Leisure Centre Update: Members had been reminded about the Working Group meeting. As discussed a letter had been sent to neighbouring Councils asking if they would consider allocating some monies to

support the centre. The Chairman of Titley Parish Council had been in touch with the Clerk and would raise this at their next meeting. New Radnor Community Council had not made any definite commitment but might re-consider in the future.

(2) Presteigne Memorial Hall Update: The transfer to the Committee was now complete and the Hall was due to re-open on 1st February with the return of the Farmer's Market. Thanks to the Committee for their hard work was noted.

(3) Update on Project Gigabit: Members noted the information from the Clerk's Report. Cllr. Van Huls was pleased to be able to report that work on the full fibre build for Presteigne was due to start in the second quarter of the year.

(4) Christmas Lights Quote for Installation Costs: Agreed to accept the quote from Highline Electrical Ltd for the next three years.

MIN 4436 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cllr. Baynham reported the following –

- Meeting scheduled at County Council to discuss the Leisure Centres Review on 4th February. She would report to the Working Group meeting.
- Issue with the Assembly Rooms Roof had been reported and was in the hands of one of the County Council Officers.
- Budget – Cabinet proposing an 8.9% increase in Council Tax and the Independent Group was looking at ways in which this could be reduced.
- Lugg View and Flooding – She stressed the need for the fence to be cleared of debris in order to allow water to drain away in times of flood. This had not yet been done since the previous flood but she would keep reminding the Officers of the need to do so.
- Bin Collections – there was a possibility of this being reduced to four weekly.

Cllr. Edwards reported the following –

- Attendance at site meeting in Penybont at which she had been informed that there were no capital projects in the Presteigne and Norton area for the remainder of this financial year. It seemed that there was no record of all the current salt bin locations and this was being worked on.
- Sustainable Resource Strategy Consultation – Members encouraged to look at this and complete.

MIN 4437 URGENT BUSINESS INFORMATION

(1) Presteigne Agricultural Society Trophies: Cllr. Owens reported that these were apparently stored in a vault in Scotland and that a letter had been written to Lloyds Bank asking for their return. The Judge's Lodgings might be willing to store these once returned.

(2) Litter Picking, Norton to Presteigne Road: Members noted their thanks to the resident that regularly litter picked this stretch of road.

(3) PACDG Meeting Report: Cllr. Harling-Bowen had attended the recent meeting and gave a short report. Cllr. Corinna Kenyon-Wade had attended and given a talk on the Eco4 scheme. PACDG would like to put on a talk for residents and had asked if the Town Council would consider funding venue costs. It was agreed that this would be put on the February agenda.

The meeting closed at 8.26 pm