

**Cyngor Tref Llanandras a Norton
PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16TH OCTOBER 2024
HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING**

Present: Cllrs. T. Owens, (Mayor), A. Van Huls (Deputy Mayor), B. Baynham, D. Edwards, C. Kirkby MBE, F. Preece, J. Wilding, C. Ross, A. Ramsay, N. Rogers, L. Harling-Bowen and J. Ramsay.

Apologies: Cllr. M. Price.

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:

Cllr. A. Ramsay, re planning application 24/1456/LBC, owner of property.

Cllr. J. Ramsay, re. planning application 24/1456/LBC, related to owner of property.

Cllr. C. Kirkby, re planning applications 24/1456/LBC and 24/1471/FUL, friend of applicants.

Cllr. Owens welcomed Cllrs. Rogers and Harling-Bowen to the Council.

Unfortunately due to technical issues the police were unable to attend.

MIN 4392 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

MIN 4393 UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS

- (1) Annual Rospa Inspection: Cllr. Kirkby asked if this had been arranged. The Clerk advised that she had been chasing for a date but had not had anything as yet. Cllr. Kirkby asked to be advised of the date when known as he would like to attend if possible.
- (2) Natural Resources Wales and Works at Lugg Bridge: There had been no reply as yet. The Clerk would chase.
- (3) Portrait of King Charles: The Clerk advised that the request for the portrait would to be hung in the Assembly Rooms was to be put to a meeting of the Mid Border Arts Committee. If this was not possible the Clerk would approach the Judge's Lodgings.
- (4) Bike Track: Cllr. Owens had made contact with the parent of one of the young people and was arranging to meet the group on site with the Deputy Mayor. It was noted that some of the digging extended beyond the actual bike track and some of the holes were deep and a possible hazard. These matters would be discussed on site as part of the meeting.
- (5) Old Memorial Bench: The Community Garden felt the bench was beyond repair. Cllr. Wilding had kindly agreed to dispose of the bench so the new bench could be put in position.
- (6) British Cycling: Cllr. Owens had not as yet been able to make contact but would hopefully do so over the coming weeks.
- (7) Clerk's Qualification: Members noted that the Clerk had recently passed her Principles of Internal Auditing Course (Wales).

MIN 4394 FINANCE

- (1) Donations: The following donations were agreed -
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| Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal | £75.00 |
| Sheep Music (annual firework event) | £500.00 |
| Presteigne and Norton Community Trust (annual firework event) | |

	£400.00
(2) The following payments were agreed –	
Highground Maintenance Ltd	£449.69 MEADOW ACC
Mrs T. A. Price	£1588.64
HM Revenue & Customs	£601.58
NEST (Direct debit)	£146.30
T. Lloyd-John	£641.23
N. Close	£4.00
N. Close	£120.00 MEADOW ACC
HSBC (bank charges)	£8.00
HSBC (bank charges)	£8.00 MEADOW ACC
High Street Grant (1)	£2492.00
High Street Grant (2)	£926.80
Post Office (stamps - via debit card)	£117.60
British Gas Lite (Wilson Terrace Toilets)	14.99
Powys County Council (bunting licence)	£125.00
Presteigne Building Supplies	£202.40 MEADOW ACC
EDF Energy (Hereford Street Toilets)	£44.53

(3) Approval for Training Modules One Voice Wales: It was agreed that Members should book onto any of the One Voice Wales modules of interest via the Clerk. An allocated reserve was held to cover costs and the Clerk was asked to advise the Council if the balance dropped below £100.

(4) Interim Audit: Deferred to November as accounts not yet returned.

(5) Inspection of Invoices (annual by Mayor): Deferred to November.

(6) Draft Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel: Members noted the contents of the draft report and the closing down of the Panel from April 2025 with its remit being transferred to the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru. No comments to be made on the draft report.

(7) External Audit 2024-25 Update: The Clerk reported that she had still not received the papers back from Audit Wales.

(8) EDF Energy Direct Debits Corrections: Following a change in their accounting system the invoices and direct debits from EDF did not match for a short period. The correct amounts were agreed and confirmed below –

 July 2024 – Minuted £45.24, Actual (2 invoices) £51.72

 August 2024 – No amount minuted. Actual £33.83

Invoices were now held for these amounts.

(9) Receipts: The following receipt was noted –

 C. Watson – website advertising £6.00

MIN 4395 PLANNING

Cllr. Edwards left the room for the duration of the following item due to her position on the County Council Planning Committee.

(1) Planning applications: The following planning application was discussed –

24/1382/HH Grid Reference: E:331451 N: 267674 Proposal: Erection of a 4 bay garage and store Site Address: Fairview, Stonewall Hill, Presteigne, LD8 2HB. The Town Council was pleased to see that solar panels and bat boxes will be installed as part of the proposal. Members were concerned at the proximity of the holly hedge to the building. Otherwise no objections subject to a clause being included preventing the building being converted into living accommodation in the future.

24/1417/FUL Grid Reference: E:331285 N: 263921 Proposal: Extension to existing office Site Address: Western Way, Broadaxe Business Park, Presteigne, LD8 2UH. Resolved no objections be raised.

24/1482/TRE Grid Ref: E: 331282 N: 264547 Proposal: Crowning of tree within a conservation area Location: Radnorshire Arms Hotel, High Street, Llanandras, Powys LD8 2BE. Resolved no objections to the application providing care is taken not to over/severely prune and so threaten the ongoing viability of the tree.

Cllr. Kirkby left the meeting for the duration of the next two items.

24/1471/TRE Grid Ref: E: 331426 N: 264435 Proposal: Trimming and shaping tree within a conservation area Location: Craftsman's Mews, Broad Street, Presteigne LD8 2AA. Resolved no

objections to this application providing care is taken not to over/severely prune and so threaten the ongoing viability of the tree.

Cllrs. A. Ramsey and J. Ramsay left the meeting for the duration of the following item.

24/1456/LBC Grid Reference: E:331476 N: 264421 Proposal: Demolition of existing lean-to utility and construction of single storey kitchen/dining room. Site Address: Hafod, Broad Street, Presteigne, LD8 2AD. Resolved no objections to this application providing the Built Heritage Officer gives their approval.

Cllrs. Edwards, Kirkby, A. Ramsay and J. Ramsay returned to the room.

(2) Planning Decisions:

42 Castle Road, Presteigne – Approval.

(3) Local Development Plan Update: Members noted the response from the County Council as follows:- The reply re the settlement hierarchy was *'Within the document you can see that employment opportunities were assessed in Table 23 based on: the presence of employment opportunities within a settlement under the categories outlined in Table 13, And the presence /or distance to - the nearest industrial estate / business park,*

Table 24 includes statistical data from The Annual Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) - Office for National Statistics (2021) and Nomis employee data (2021) on the number of employers in the area. However, this data has not been used in the scoring as the Middle Super Output areas cover geographies much larger than settlement boundaries this is detailed in paragraph 5.11. Therefore the scoring would not have been affected by whether Radnor Hills included employees based/working in Presteigne. With regards to broadband data the analysis was undertaken using data from the Open Market Review data (2021) so the situation may have changed.

(4) Nant Nithil Wind Energy Development: The following reply was noted – *'At the moment, we aren't accepting any new viewpoint requests as we're at the stage of finalising the site boundary. Any viewpoints sent now may not reflect what would be submitted to planning. There are no planned events or additional consultations between now and planning submission, but we appreciate your location suggestions which we will keep in mind for any potential future engagement.'*

(5) Trees/TPOs Presteigne and Norton - Update/review: Cllr. Baynham reported that the new mapping system which had been supposed to show the locations for trees under preservation orders did not appear to be showing them. She had however obtained a list and had been surprised at how few trees were actually protected. She would be willing to put more trees forward if Members provided her with details. Cllr. A. Ramsay had taken photographs of a number of important trees locally and agreed to supply Cllr. Baynham with details.

MIN 4396 HIGHWAYS, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

(1) Dark Skies Project Update: Issues discussed were -

- Signage: Cllr. Harling-Bowen had made enquiries with the Elan Valley Trust on the signage used there and was awaiting a reply. The Clerk had obtained prices for basic A3 signs. It was agreed that the Clerk put a notice on the Council noticeboard in Norton.
- Grant Funding: Agreed that the Council would not proceed to make a grant application but the film maker could apply for funding direct.
- Secondary School: Very positive feedback received from John Beddoes Campus.
- Working Group Meeting: Agreed that a meeting be arranged as soon as possible.
- Ongoing Work: Cllr. J. Ramsay asked about contact with private businesses etc and changes needed in this area. It was agreed that next steps should be discussed at the Working Group meeting.

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

- Powys Climate Event: Cllr. J. Ramsay had attended and advised that the Public Services Board now had a working group to cover climate matters. The event had been primarily to share ideas and there would be a follow up event in December.
- Climate and Environment Committee: Reminder of meeting on 28th October. Cllr. Baynham stood down from the Committee and Cllr. Harling-Bowen was appointed as her replacement.

(3) High Street Grant – Update: The Clerk reported that several premises had now had the work completed and all others had now been started.

(4) Fold Farm DMMO Application: The Clerk reported that she had been advised that the witness statements were being written up and sent out for checking. There was no date in place for the committee

meeting as yet and the officer was currently busy working on budget matters. Cllr. Kirkby asked that the Clerk check if a sufficient number of witnesses had now been submitted and how many had actually been interviewed. This was agreed.

(5) Future of Presteigne Car Parks - Update on County Council review: Cllr. Kirkby had noted a number of recommendations in the consultant's report and in particular that the reintroduction of a one hour paid parking option for all car parks was one of the options under consideration (currently this was not an option in long stay car parks). Given that car parks were an under-utilised resource he suggested it would be sensible to make the first hour of parking free in order to encourage trade in the High Streets. Cllr. Baynham reported on concerns over the report which had led to it being thrown out of Cabinet and returned to the Working Group. She had asked for revised timescales but had received nothing as yet. It was agreed that the Clerk write to the County Council requesting a free first hour of parking for the town car parks. Concern was noted at the cost of the consultants used.

(6) Plans for Presteigne Roundabouts in 2025: Radnor Hills had confirmed a willingness to continue sponsorship of the Leominster roundabout and it was agreed that the Council accept this offer. The sponsor of the Kington Roundabout was not able to continue and Cllr. Baynham was seeking a possible new sponsor. She would update Members further at the November meeting. Cllr. Wilding added that it was disappointing that a former Councillor had visited the sponsor and told them they should not cut the roundabout despite no longer being a part of the Council and it being the Council's decision to agree the sponsorship allowing it to be cut and planted. Prior to the November meeting the Clerk was asked to get a price from Caring for God's Acre for this roundabout so this could also be considered. Cllr. J. Ramsay reminded Members that roundabouts were also on the Climate and Environment Committee agenda and he would advise the Council of any suggestions at the November meeting.

MIN 4397 NORTON

(1) General Works: The milestone had now been removed by Cllr. Wilding and would be collected by the stone mason at the end of the week. No progress on removing the best kept village sign for renovation.

(2) Update on purchase of Daffodil bulbs: Two bags had been ordered, one each for Cllrs. A. Ramsay and D. Edwards.

(3) Update on Traffic Monitoring/Possible Traffic Calming measures: Cllr. Edwards provided an update on this following the installation of the monitoring strips by the Gables and Wills View. It was agreed that Cllr. Edwards pass on the information to the police and also proceed further with the new community speed watch volunteers. The Traffic Engineer had suggested the flashing speed monitoring signs but these were several thousand pounds and it was felt speed watch was a logical first step.

MIN 4398 SITES AND BUILDINGS

(1) Public Conveniences - Update re painting of Hereford Street Block: The Clerk now had two quotes and was in the process of obtaining a third.

(2) Allotments: The following matters were discussed –

Update on untended plots: Several were still very overgrown despite the Clerk chasing the tenants several times. It was agreed that the matter be discussed at the Sites and Buildings Committee meeting with a view to tenants being given a final warning to tidy the plots.

Purchase of new Plot Markers: Agreed that Cllrs. Preece and Price proceed to purchase markers in liaison with the Clerk.

Cllr. Baynham left the meeting at this point due to a number of urgent issues regarding flooding locally.

(3) Meadows: The following matters were discussed –

- Purchase of dog bags – agreed to allow an overspend in order to make a further bulk purchase.
- Brilliant Basics Funding – invitation for expressions of interest: Agreed that the Clerk complete this for the proposed disabled access path.
- Use Request – Sheep Music, 2nd November: Agreed.

(4) Nature Reserve Matters: The following matters were noted -

- Ponds currently full.
- National Forest sign still to be erected.
- Cllr. Ross to look at carbon accounting.
- Tree Group looking into possibility of a Tree Preservation Order for the trees along Warden Road.
- Volunteers looking at budget needs for 25-26. This would initially go before the Sites and Buildings Committee.

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MIN 4399 CORRESPONDENCE/GENERAL ITEMS

(1) Leisure Centre Update: Nothing to report.

(2) Presteigne Memorial Hall Update: Cllr. Edwards had attended a recent Committee meeting and matters were progressing.

(3) Prospective Closure of Lloyds Bank: The reply from the bank was noted. LINK had conducted an assessment on the need for access to cash and a banking hub and while the need for a cash machine was agreed it had not been felt that a banking hub was necessary. The Clerk had stressed the need for 24 access to cash in the town.

(4) Review of Meeting Starting Time: Cllr. Wilding proposed that future meetings start at 7pm rather than 7.30pm with or without a speaker. This was agreed.

(5) Email from British Cycling: See under Minute 4393(6) above.

(6) Approval of Annual Report 2023-24: Agreed as drafted.

(7) Report on Sustainable Powys – Cllrs Baynham, Edwards and Wilding had attended. Cllr. Edwards and Wilding reported that other than the hosts, Builth Wells Town Council, there had been no other Councils represented. Concerns had been raised about the future of services (leisure, schools, libraries) in the smaller towns given the 'Sustainable Powys' plans.

(8) Reply from Midlands Air Ambulance: The following response was noted – 'Many thanks for your enquiry. I want to reassure you that the principle focus of the entire Air Ambulance community across the UK, including our close colleagues at Wales Air Ambulance, is to deliver outstanding patient care. We work in close collaboration, providing borderless tasking and mutual aid on the rare occasions it is required. There are no barriers in the sky. Whilst we are very grateful to the members of Presteigne and Norton Town Council for considering donating to Midlands Air Ambulance Charity, we would encourage you to continue supporting Wales Air Ambulance because they provide a vital service to your area.'

(9) Town Wifi - Stickers for Distribution: The Clerk would distribute to High Street businesses.

(10) War Memorial Works – request for contributions update: The Royal British Legion did not have sufficient funds to contribute. The Clerk had yet to hear from the John Beddoes Charity. Work was due to be carried out on 18th October.

(11) Bus Timetables/Cases - Request from County Council to take over display of timetables: Agreed that until details on where these were it was not possible to make a decision. Deferred until the information could be supplied.

(12) Senedd Inquiry into the role, governance and accountability of the Community and Town Council sector: Cllr. Kirkby stated that the review seemed to be talking about amalgamating small Councils and reducing Town and Community Councillors from 8000 to 3000. It was agreed that the Clerk respond stating that amalgamation of Councils and a subsequent reduction in Councillors would reduce local accountability. The Clerk advised that she had requested access to join the consultation event online but had been refused as the event was full. It was agreed that she also point out that such events needed to be made available to all those interested in attending.

MIN 4400 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cllr. Edwards reported on the following –

- Cardboard Recycling Banks: Shortly to be removed from the bypass car park.
- Flooding Issues in Norton Village: Being dealt with.
- Bent Give Way Signs at Home Farm Lane: to be reported.
- Vote on change to single transferrable vote system: Cllr. Edwards was concerned at the changes this would mean with Wards becoming larger but multi Councillors in each new ward.

MIN 4401 URGENT BUSINESS INFORMATION

(1) One Hundredth Birthday: Congratulations to Mr. Jim Rogers on reaching his 100th birthday. Cllr. Owens had delivered a card on behalf of the Council.

(2) Setting Up of Meeting Room: Cllr. Owens agreed to help in November as Cllr. Preece would only be able to join online.

The meeting closed at 9.03 pm