

Cyngor Tref Llanandras a Norton PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15TH SEPTEMBER 2025 HELD AT NORTON COMMUNITY HUB, NORTON, PRESTEIGNE AND ALSO VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

Present: Cllrs. D. Edwards, (Mayor), T. Owens, L. Harling-Bowen, A. Ramsay, C. Kirkby MBE, F. Preece, M. Price, J. Ramsay and F.H. Fleming.

Apologies: Cllrs. C. Ross (Deputy Mayor), B. Baynham, 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 4524 RESIGNATION OF ANDRE VAN HULS

Cllr. Edwards reported that Cllr. Va Huls had resigned from the Council. It was agreed that the Clerk write a letter of thanks to Cllr. Van Huls and start the process to fill the vacancy.

MIN 4525 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18th August, 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record and the Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

MIN 4526 UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS AND CLERKS REPORT

(1) Missing Bin, High Street: The Clerk reported that Cllr. Ross had followed this up and the relevant officer was now aware. It would be replaced as soon as possible.

(2) Recent Burglaries, Presteigne: Cllr. Kirkby asked if Cllr. Van Huls had been able to obtain more detailed information from those affected so a response could be sent to the letter from the police. The Clerk reported that Cllr. Van Huls had been unable to get any more information. It was agreed to defer any further action until the next meeting so Cllr. Baynham could be consulted as it was felt she may have relevant information due to her position as the local County Councillor.

(3) Renovation of Bench, Station Road: Agreed that a letter of thanks be written to the resident who had paid for the renovation.

(4) Pollution of River Lugg: Cllr. Kirkby had received a reply from the River's Trust with some data however there was currently no testing in the Presteigne area and it was agreed that the Clerk write to NRW requesting monitoring for biocides in the Presteigne area of the Lugg.

(5) Trees, Scallions: The Clerk confirmed these would be added to the PCC Inspection/Works Programme. Cllr. Kirkby asked that the Clerk ask if the precise date had now been scheduled and if she could stress that the trees at the Scallions and in Station Road should be included.

(6) Lost Rights of Way: The following reply was noted - *'Quite a number of your selections have been popular with others too. I do not have everyone's submissions yet, but it looks like it will be time to apply for all of the routes you prioritised, although this is likely to take a year or more to complete the task. All the routes were selected by me because they had at least one piece of strong evidence, but sometimes, when I look at all the evidence for a route, there is not enough to make an application. This has only happened in two cases so far. You can follow the progress of the route on the British Horse Society map.'*

(7) Tennis Court Net: In mid August the Clerk had received a complaint about the net on the tennis court. On inspection it appeared to have been tied up randomly and after a bit of fiddling these knots were undone and the net tensioned properly. The resident is now happy with the net.

(8) Use of Barn by Fitness Instructor: This had now stopped. There were no classes currently using the new barn.

(9) Norton Kiosk: Door repair done and door repainted. Some paint was available on request for the volunteers to paint the remainder.

MIN 4527 FINANCE

(1) Donations: The following donations were approved –

Sheep Music (annual bonfire/fireworks) £500.00 (precepted)

Presteigne and Norton Community Trust (annual Norton bonfire/fireworks) £400 (precepted)

(2) Payments: The following payments were approved –

Mrs T.A. Price (pay)	£1668.44
HM Revenue & Customs	£733.21
NEST	£155.40
Highground Maintenance Ltd	£469.96 MEADOW ACC
T. Lloyd-John	£765.23
N. Close	£12.00
N. Close	£216.00 MEADOW ACC
D.E. Edwards (refund expenses)	£136.80
R. Bennet (storage building)	£3000.00 MEADOW ACC
British Gas Lite	£19.08
Kington Building Supplies (storage building)	£309.52 MEADOW ACC
Presteigne Building Supplies	£1404.11 MEADOW ACC
EDF Energy (Meadow)	£35.22 MEADOW ACC
Alan Preece (digging of allotment)	£150.00 MEADOW ACC
PHS Group (toilets)	£22.05
EDF Energy (Hereford Street Toilets)	40.52

(3) Transfer of the Mayor's Allowance Budget to Mayor's expenses for 2025-26: Agreed that this should be vired across to expenses.

(4) Review of Internal Auditor and Internal Audit Arrangements for 2025-26: Members approved the re-appointment of Mr. Stephens as internal auditor and confirmed the audit documents as supplied.

(5) Receipts: The following receipts were noted –

Allotment Plot Deposit	£28.00 MEADOW ACC
Powys County Council (precept)	£25,351.00

MIN 4528 PLANNING

(1) Applications: No applications this month.

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

25/0911/HH 1 Albert Square, Presteigne: Refused.

25//0477/CAC The Old Laundry, Broad Street, Presteigne: Approved.

(3) Trees and TPOs: The Clerk provided a brief update as Cllr. Baynham was not present. Letters had now gone out to most of the landowners with just a couple of queries remaining for which the Clerk was waiting for more information. She advised that two of the proposed trees were sited on the Council Nature Reserve and asked for confirmation that these were to be included in the list for submission to the County Council. This was agreed.

(4) Local Development Plan – Meeting Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs: Resolved no comment be made.

(5) Email of Concern re proposed gym facility/planning permissions on Old Depot Site: The Clerk reported that she had received an email expressing concern that a new facility was opening on the site and that 24 hour opening was being advertised. She added that Cllr. Baynham had been in touch with the planning department to ask that the situation be investigated.

MIN 4529 HIGHWAYS, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

(1) Dark Skies Project: Cllr. Harling-Bowen provided the following updates –

- Bat Walk held as part of Presteigne Festival on 21st August.
- Visit by representatives of Dark Skies International on 4th September. Help had been offered towards the production of the first report due at the end of the year. It had also been suggested that Presteigne consider twinning with a dark sky community in New Zealand. Members agreed to consider this but asked that Cllr. Harling-Bowen get more details before a decision was made.

- On September 11th Cllr. Harling-Bowen had met a community group at Hundred House that was interested in setting up a dark sky area.
- First meeting of Presteigne and Norton Dark Sky Support Group to be held on 26th September. All Members welcome to attend.

(2) Climate and Environment Matters: Cllr. J. Ramsay had nothing to report at present but stated that he felt it was important that the Town Council was active on climate and environment matters. He would email Members to ask for ideas that the Council could consider.

(3) Fold Farm DMMO Application: The amended representation had been sent to the County Council on 27th August. What will happen next is included here as received from the County Council - *Any objections or representations received will be placed on file for now. Once the deadline for receipt (being 12th September 2025) has passed, then we will review them and prepare a submission to Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW) who act on behalf of the Welsh Ministers in determining these cases. For Definitive Map Modification Order cases, the Council does not have the discretion to decide whether an opposed Order will come into effect or not; that must be decided by an Inspector appointed by PEDW.*

The PEDW decision-making process is focussed on assessing the witness and historic documentary evidence in relation to the case against the statute law and case law relevant to this type of casework. Whilst we recognise their importance to members of the community, other matters such as impacts of the Order on the interests of the public are outside the scope of the legal tests for Definitive Map Modification Orders, so cannot be considered.

The Closing date for objections or representations had now closed and an update had been requested from the County Council but no reply received as yet.

(4) Car Parking: The email reply from the Portfolio Holder was discussed. Members expressed concern that the changes to the charges had not been sufficiently publicised and the Clerk was asked to write and suggest that holders of the blue disabled badges be written to, to advise them that parking would now be charged for. She was also asked to request the most recent monthly figures for the two Presteigne car parks stating that in order to consider submitting a business case for the Town Council requesting a transfer of the car park. It was noted that previously the County Council had stated it was unable to supply expenditure figures for individual car parks but it was felt that these should be available even if on a pro rata basis and that they should be requested again.

MIN 4530 NORTON

(1) Weeds in Pavements: Cllr. Edwards had received a complaint about these. It would be reported to the County Council.

(2) Report of a lack of white lining at the bend at Home Farm Lane to the twelve trees. No action for the present.

MIN 4531 SITES AND BUILDINGS

(1) Public Conveniences: The Clerk was still struggling to get a definite date for the painting of the Hereford Street site.

(2) Allotments: The Clerk provided an update on the following matters –

- Untidy plots – all but one had now been addressed. Cllrs. Edwards and Preece to meet with the remaining tenant to discuss.
- Waiting List - currently there was no one on the list.
- Bases of Allotment Pumps – to be replaced as soon as time permitted.
- Allotment Association: Cllrs. Edwards and Preece to meet with representatives of the Association to discuss the site and recent concerns.
- Plot 36 – The Little People's Playgroup had accepted the offer of plot 36 (free of charge). Members confirmed that the Clerk should issue a formal tenancy to the Group.

(3) Meadows: The following matters were discussed -

- Update - Café bar/storage: Cllr. Kirkby reported that works were now mostly finished and it was hoped the project would be completed by the end of November.
- Update – Brilliant Basics Grant (paths): Cllr. Preece gave a short update on progress. The Clerk was asked to chase the County Council re. the work needed at the Old Mill end of the path.
- Hedge Management Review: Cllr. J. Ramsay reported that a number of minor changes were proposed and Cllr. Price reminded him that they were due to meet on site to discuss the review but that this had not yet happened. It was agreed that this would happen over the coming few days. The

Clerk confirmed that any proposals for the 2025 cut should be agreed by Full Council. Members were happy that some minor changes be made but that the details should be provided to all as soon as possible so the Clerk could advise the contractor. Cllr. J. Ramsay reminded Members that the three year programme would finish this year and so a fuller review would be due in 2026.

- Cutting of Lower Went's Meadow: Agreed that Lower Went's Meadow should be cut with the flail at the same time as the hedge trimming.
- Use for Community Apple Juicing/Activities/Music – 28th September 2pm-5pm: Agreed.

(4) Nature Reserve Matters: Cllr. J. Ramsay reported the following –

- Volunteer turnout still good.
- Some small grants were available to the volunteers.
- One pond now dried out and more bentonite clay to spread on this soon.
- Improved numbers of butterflies.
- No major changes to range of species on the site as yet.
- Accessible paths on the site in need of renovation. Clerk to ask Community Payback team if they could weed in order to prepare the paths for improvement.

Cllr. Harling-Bowen added that a rare species of bat had been found in Silia Wood. Hazel dormice had also been found. He now had equipment that could be used on the Nature Reserve to identify bats and any other species that emitted ultrasonic sound.

(5) Offer of 'gala tent': Cllr. Edwards reported that the tent had been damaged in the winds after Norton Show and was no longer useable so would not need to be stored.

MIN 4532 CORRESPONDENCE/GENERAL ITEMS

(1) Leisure Services Review: No update.

(2) Active Travel Network Map Consultation: It was agreed to support the routes listed for Presteigne and Norton but to stress that the Town Council's priority was the Presteigne to Norton route. Members also raised concerns about increasing numbers using the road from Presteigne to Rockbridge, particularly in the Summer and the Clerk would also report these. It was suggested that the management at Rockbridge could make site users more aware of the permissive footpath route and the Clerk would get in touch with them to suggest this.

(3) BT Phone Kiosk, Station Road: Members considered possible adoption and it was agreed that unless there was a use for the kiosk it would be better for it to be left in the ownership of BT. The Clerk was asked to put a post on social media to ask for suggestions for use that could be considered at a future meeting.

(4) Cross Border Funding for Health Services - Request from Llandrindod Wells TC to write to the First Minister: Members shared the concerns of Llandrindod Wells Town Council and it was agreed that the Clerk would write to the First Minister as suggested.

(5) Police Letter re. Recent crimes: See Minute 4526(2).

(6) Annual Report for 2024/25: Approved as circulated.

(7) Future Town Carnivals: The AGM was planned for the 23rd September. It was agreed to discuss the matter again after the AGM when it was hoped that sufficient people would have come forward to run the event in 2026.

(8) Welsh Government Consultation on extending the duty on (principal) local authorities to broadcast meetings: Resolved no comment be made. Noted that this would not alter the position with Town and Community Councils.

(9) Review of Meeting Start Times: Resolved to keep the same meeting start time at 7pm. Review in six months.

(10) Small Christmas Trees for Shops: Agreed to provide trees in 2025. Cllr. Preece suggested that the fire service might put the trees up if asked. The lights for each tree were currently in the Town Council store – Cllr. Preece would check them to see they were working and if batteries were needed.

(11) Reply from John Beddoes Campus re. pupil numbers: Noted. Members were pleased to note the appointment of an Engagement Co-Ordinator. The Clerk was now getting notifications on Facebook so posts from the School could be shared on the Council Facebook page. Cllr. Edwards advised that all Members were invited to the Founder's Day Service on 26th September at 9.30am at St. Andrews Church.

(12) Fire Station - Nomination for Award: Cllr. Kirkby reported that the local Station had been nominated for the Top Fundraiser award and one of the fire-fighters had been nominated for the award for Community Champion. The Clerk would write letters of congratulations.

(13) Report from Presteigne and Norton Community Trust: Cllr. Kirkby reported on the recent meeting of the Trust and on the options for its future. He explained that the Trust currently ran three projects in Norton

– the Show, the annual bonfire/fireworks and the Community Hub. He recommended that the Trust be handed over to the Norton Hub Committee as it fitted with the Trust's present activities. The Town Council would retain the right to appoint four Charity Trustees. It was agreed that the Hub Committee be handed the Trust and to be able to make any necessary changes to the name/constitution as needed for it to cover Norton only.

MIN 4533 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cllr. Edwards reported the following –

- County Council had confirmed that flags could be flown on private property but that none were to be placed on Powys property such as street lights and buildings.
- New public transport routes including a route to Leominster. Members highlighted that the timetable allowed for only a very short time in Leominster and Cllr. Edwards agreed to investigate.
- Congratulations to John Beddoes Campus on its recent exam results.
- Estyn Report on the Primary School released recently.

MIN 4534 URGENT BUSINESS INFORMATION

(1) Damage to Lugg Bridge: Cllr. Kirkby reported damage to part of the bridge. The Clerk would report. Cllr. Kirkby again raised the issue of a width restriction for the bridge and the Clerk agreed to review the previous correspondence on the matter and report back to the October meeting.

(2) Presteigne Cricket Club: Agreed to write a letter of congratulations on winning the League.

(3) John Beddoes Campus: The Clerk was asked to report repairs needed to the pavement and the speed humps outside the school building.

The meeting closed at 9.12 p.m.