

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

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2026 HELD AT NORTON COMMUNITY HUB, NORTON, PRESTEIGNE AND ALSO VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING**

Present: Cllrs. D. Edwards, (Mayor), C. Ross (Deputy Mayor), B. Baynham, T. Owens, A. Ramsay, F. Preece, C. Kirkby MBE, F.H. Fleming, L. Harling-Bowen, W.L. Poulson-Haynes, J. Ramsay, N. Rogers.

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:*

*Cllr. F. Preece, Trustee for Radnor and Presteigne Scouts, re. planned works to Scout Hut, Presteigne.*

### *Personal and Prejudicial:*

*Cllr. F. Preece, related to letter writer re. request for two-way traffic, Pound Lane.*

*Cllr. B. Baynham, employee of East Radnorshire Care, re. Pride in Places Grant Projects.*

Prior to the start of the meeting Members heard from representatives of the group formed to submit an application for Town of Culture in 2028. The Group explained the bidding process, the work done so far and the need to designate roles in the application. These were Lead Applicant, Accountable Body and Delivery Body. It was proposed that the Town Council take on the roles of Lead Applicant and Accountable Body. The initial application needed to be in by the end of March with a decision due in the Spring. Towns taken forward to the next stage would receive £60,000 to prepare their full bid and this could cover contracting a project manager to assist with the work needed. The Group had prepared and run a short survey which had been very successful with approximately 300 replies in a two week period. A large number of the responders had been in the younger age bracket and the group was pleased to have engaged with young persons locally. The survey had produced a wide range of suggestions for activities in the area and the group felt that the responses would be useful not just for the current bid but also for future funding applications. Cllr. Edwards thanked the group for attending and advised that a decision on the role the Town Council would be willing to take would be made at the appropriate point on the agenda.

### **MIN 4593 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2026 were approved as a true and accurate record and the Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

### **MIN 4594 UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS AND CLERKS REPORT**

- (1) Presteigne Cemetery: Cllr. Kirkby confirmed that the trees had now been planted and a photograph sent to the Officer at the County Council.
- (2) Pollarding of Trees, Station Road and Scallions, Presteigne: Cllr. Kirkby advised that this had still not begun. The Clerk had chased this with the County Council and the Officer had confirmed he would again speak to the contractor and, if need be, would appoint someone else to do the work.
- (3) Clerk's Report: All noted and would be discussed at the appropriate point on the agenda.

### **MIN 4595 FINANCE**

- (1) Donations: None this month.
- (2) Payments: The following payments were approved –

|                                                                              |                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| CleanMy                                                                      | £31.49                 |
| HM Land Registry (to obtain ownership confirmation re OVW Grants)            | £28.00 MEADOW ACC      |
| NEST (pension)                                                               | £155.40                |
| Mrs T.A. Price                                                               | £1668.44               |
| HM Revenue & Customs                                                         | £733.21                |
| Powys County Council (green waste bin)                                       | £60.00                 |
| A. Jervis (community orchard pruning event)                                  | £122.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT |
| British Gas Lite (Wilson Terrace Toilets)                                    | £8.49                  |
| Powys County Council (Brilliant Basics match funding – payment confirmation) | £3000.00               |
| T. Lloyd-John (cleaning Feb)                                                 | £438.49                |
| Highground Maintenance Ltd                                                   | £469.96 MEADOW ACCOUNT |
| Defib Shop (Imperative Training Ltd)                                         | £720.00                |
| N. Close                                                                     | £120.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT |
| N. Close                                                                     | £24.00                 |
| EDF Energy (Hereford Street)                                                 | £69.55                 |
| EDF Energy (Meadow Barns)                                                    | £15.33 MEADOW ACCOUNT  |
| Powys County Council (hire of car park)                                      | £604.08                |
| JHA Price & Sons (fence posts work)                                          | £798.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT |

(3) Asset Register: The Clerk answered questions on the Register as circulated with the meeting papers. Approved unchanged.

(4) Risk Assessment: Approved as circulated.

(5) Final report from the DBCC on the remuneration of Councillors: Members noted the final report and the following remuneration was confirmed for 2026-27 –

- Basic Allowance £156.00 (mandatory)
- Basic Expenses £52.00 (mandatory)
- Refund of Care Costs (mandatory)
- Travel Expenses (travel outside Council area) (optional)
- Mayor/Chairman's Allowance (set as part of budget setting each year) (optional)
- Mayor/Chairman's Expenses (set as part of budget setting each year) (optional)

(6) Budget/account for Defibrillator Spares: Members confirmed that expenses for the defibrillators were to come from the Treasurer Account and that a new budget line should be set up when considering the 2027-28 budget. It was also agreed that from 1<sup>st</sup> April the cost of the weekly inspections should come from the Treasurer account.

(7) Mayor's Request for Donations from the Balance of Expenses: Cllr. Edwards indicated that she wished to spend the balance of her allowance between Norton Community Hub Clock Appeal and a Youth group locally. Members confirmed this was acceptable. She would decide the allocation of monies for the Clerk to distribute and confirm the spending at the April meeting

(8) Receipts: The following receipt was noted:

|                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Allotment Rent | £450.00 MEADOW ACCOUNT |
|----------------|------------------------|

## MIN 4596 PLANNING

Cllr. Edwards left the room at this point due to her position on the County Council Planning Committee. Cllr. Ross took the Chair.

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

26/0229/FUL Grid Reference: E:331339 N: 263943 Proposal: Erection of two general purpose industrial units and associated infrastructure Site Address: Plot 5, Broadaxe Business Park, Presteigne, Powys LD8 2UH. Members agreed to support the application but to request dark sky compliant lighting. There was some discussion on phosphates and the status of the phosphate licence held by Welsh Water and the Clerk was asked to contact the company for the current position.

Cllr. Edwards returned to the room and re-took the Chair.

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

26/0005/HH Oxenbrook, Norton – Refused 13<sup>th</sup> February.

(3) TPO Submissions: No update. Cllr. Baynham had yet to meet with the Officer but would do so as soon as possible.

(4) Reply from Contaminated Land Officer re. digging on former Depot Site: Members noted that no evidence of digging had been found by the investigating officer. The video provided by the resident had been viewed also but did not show evidence of digging on the site.

## MIN 4597 HIGHWAYS, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

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

- Welsh Dark Skies Week, 13th-22nd February 2026 Welsh Dark Skies week went well. The talk titled “Saturn and some of its Moons had nearly 20 people attending. The Hereford Astronomical Society has asked for the same talk to be given to their members in May. Marches Poets produced around eighteen poems inspired by dark skies, which were displayed in Presteigne during Welsh Dark Skies week. The final event “Creatures of the Dark”, a talk given at the Assembly Rooms in Presteigne by the mammal recorder for Radnorshire, was also a success with over forty people attending. Although the weather during dark skies week was generally not conducive to astronomy, fine views of the crescent Moon were obtained through a local man’s telescope on Sunday the 22nd March. Many craters and mountains on the Moon were observed.
- Clun Town Council: A message had been received from a Clun Town Councillor. Clun Town Council was considering applying to become an International Dark Sky Community. Cllr. Harling-Bowen would give a short presentation to that Council on 14<sup>th</sup> April.
- Sawdays: Following an introduction by the Mayor, Cllr, Harling-Bowen was contacted by Canopy and Stars, a part of the Alastair Sawday’s tourism Group re. giving an interview for a magazine article. The article would not be used for promotional purposes. A draft of the interview will be supplied for consideration prior to publication. To take place on 25<sup>th</sup> March. It was noted that no specific holiday businesses should be mentioned during the interview but that the opportunity to stay at any of the many holiday businesses be promoted.
- Sustainable Landscape Sustainable Places Dark Sky Project Partnership: Cllr. Harling-Bowen had been invited to speak at the Sustainable Landscape Sustainable Places Dark Sky Project partnership, which is partnership made up of all 8 designated landscapes of Wales (Eryri, Bannau Brycheiniog and Pembrokeshire Coast National Parks and Clwydian Range, Llyn, Anglesey, Gower and Wye Valley National Landscapes on the 13th of May. It was possible a second Town Councillor could attend and anyone interested should let the Clerk know.
- Town Council Dark Skies Brochure: Members had all received details of the brochure previously produced and considered the need for an updated and revised version. It was agreed that the Working Group would look at producing an updated design.

(2) Climate and Environment Matters: Cllr. J. Ramsay reported that the biodiversity action plan was still to be drafted.

(3) Fold Farm DMMO Application Update: The following reply from PEDW was noted - *‘I note your frustration with the delay in this Right of Way Order matter. Unfortunately however, PEDW does not have any jurisdiction over Rights of Way orders at this stage of the process and the matter solely rests with the Order Making Authority (OMA). Although OMAs are responsible for collating the relevant evidence and submitting all documentation to PEDW where objections are received, there are no set timescales for this process and there can sometimes be delays caused by various issues including staffing shortages. Once Rights of Way Orders are submitted to PEDW they undergo a process of validation and the necessary procedure is confirmed with all parties. With regard to decision times, we have internal targets of 34 weeks for written cases, 32 weeks for hearings and 48 weeks for public inquiries.’* Cllr. Kirkby believed the correct process was not as stated and was awaiting the opinion of the Rambler’s Association.

(4) Car Parking ‘Free Days’: The Clerk confirmed that this had been arranged and would commence in the High Street (Shopper’s) Car park only, on 4<sup>th</sup> April and each following first Saturday in the month for a twelve month period. The free parking would be publicised as much as possible and it was agreed that to produce posters for distribution to local businesses and notice boards plus AO sized posters for a display board to be placed in the car park.

(5) Update re. Presteigne and Norton Roads: Members noted the reply from the Portfolio Holder but expressed extreme concern at the condition of roads locally. It was noted that a pedestrian had actually fallen due to a pothole in the town and that this had then been fixed with two hours. Cllr. Poulson-Haynes felt that even when repaired the standard was appalling and he felt a site meeting was needed so that officers could be shown the terrible condition of all the entrance roads to the town. The Clerk was asked to arrange a site meeting.

(6) Opportunity for Biodiversity Grants from OVW - Update: The Clerk had applied for all the items on the list and a number of items had already been received including a selection of plants, purple loosestrife seeds, three trees (plus stakes) and a pond dipping kit.

(7) High Street Grant Update: The Clerk and Cllr. Edwards reported on the current position regarding an application for further grants to improve shop frontages. Seven businesses had indicated an interest. However the Regeneration Team had now advised that the current budget was almost spent and that no applications were being sent on from the local panel stage at present. There was a possibility that if some premises currently awarded funding came in underspent or dropped out of the scheme then funding could become available. If not then the County Council hoped to apply for more funding next year. The Clerk had that day written to the seven businesses advising them of the situation and outlining what they needed to do if they still wished to be part of an application.

(8) Highways Complaints –

Meeting House Lane: A complaint had been received about the overall condition of this road and the Clerk had reported it to the County Council, as had Cllr. Edwards. It was noted that drains were also blocked along the lane as where the ones on Hare's Green.

*Cllr. Preece left the room at this point having declared a prejudicial interest in the following item.*

Request to make Pound Lane two-way traffic: Members considered the letter received from a resident asking that, given the refusal to alter the direction of traffic, the road be made two way. Cllr. Ross stated that he didn't feel this would be sensible and it was noted that as Highways would not permit the direction of traffic to be reversed then two-way traffic would also not be possible as it would mean using the exit deemed not suitable. Members did however note the concerns generally about safety at the bottom of the Lane and it was agreed to write to Highways to ask for the officer to visit and to see if anything could be done to improve the safety of both pedestrians and vehicles in that area.

*Cllr. Preece returned to the room.*

(9) Road at Combes Moor: Members noted the reply from Cllr. Gandy, however it was pointed out that all residents in Herefordshire paid their Council Tax and were entitled to have their roads maintained. It was noted that some potholes had been repaired but nowhere near all of them. The Clerk would respond to Cllr. Gandy.

Both the Clerk and Cllr. Baynham had received a complaint about the bridge on the Combe to Kinsham road which was the responsibility of Powys County Council. Cllr. Baynham had reported it.

## **MIN 4598 NORTON**

(1) Speeding: This continued to be an issue. The local PCSO had been in Norton with the speed gun twice in recent weeks.

(2) Multiple Potholes: Cllr. Edwards continued to report these.

## **MIN 4599 SITES AND BUILDINGS**

(1) Public Conveniences: The Clerk reported the following –

Wilson Terrace Toilets to re-open on 28<sup>th</sup> March.

Alarm in Hereford Street Toilets: Still awaiting replacement by electrician.

(2) Allotments: The following matters were discussed –

- PNAA AGM 25<sup>th</sup> March.
- Several vacant plots.
- Rental income coming in well.

(3) Meadows: The following matters were discussed –

- Update – Brilliant Basics Grant (paths): Final invoice now received. Rail in place and hedge plants in. Clerk to chase County Council Officer re. the rail at the Mill end of the footpath.
- Report on Orchard Pruning and proposal for Summer pruning day: Summer pruning day agreed. Successful pruning carried out in February.
- Meadow Use Request – Presteigne Carnival 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> July: Agreed.
- Presteigne Scouts – Proposed Works: Members noted the works planned by the Scouts including a fixed disabled access ramp to the Hut and installing a new door in place of an existing window. Members were pleased to support the works.
- Digging etc on Bike Track: Cllr. Edwards had met with some of the young people on site together with Mr. Graham. They had been told to stop digging however it was reported that digging had now possibly started on Eddie's Meadow. Cllr. Edwards proposed a further meeting with the young people to discuss options and to explain that the Meadow had to be safe for all so the leaving of tools, digging of large holes was not acceptable.

- Replacement of Posts, Scout Hut Car Park: The Clerk reported that seven of these had rotted badly and were in need of replacing. She had obtained a price for the new posts and also for a contractor to put these in place. Members agreed that the work should go ahead as quoted and were happy with either 6inch or 7 inch square posts.
- Date for Meadow Work Day/Cleaning of TC Tables etc.: Cllr. Preece would liaise with Mr. Graham to agree a date. Cllr. Edwards added that the tables and gazebos were in need of cleaning and should be done on a suitable day or on the work day itself.

(4) Nature Reserve Matters: Cllr. J. Ramsay reported that the materials so far received from One Voice Wales were now planted together with the new trees to fill the gap at the allotment car park. The top pond was holding water although the bottom pond was not but still functioned well as a wetland area. A Spring tasks list was being drawn up and it was hoped to include some events. A School student was interested in taking photographs to produce a photographic record of the site.

The Clerk advised that she had put the tree works on hold due to the very wet ground and asked for a decision on when the work should now take place. Cllr. Baynham pointed out that the work was needed on safety grounds and it was agreed that if possible the Clerk would arrange for the work to be carried out in the next two weeks.

#### **MIN 4600 CORRESPONDENCE/GENERAL ITEMS**

- (1) Leisure Services Review: Cllr. Baynham was still waiting to meet the Portfolio Holder,
- (2) Adoption of Telephone Kiosk – Update: Still waiting for the telephone service to be removed before BT would release the kiosk to the Town Council.
- (3) Update re UK Town of Culture Competition: Members agreed support for the application and then considered the request that the Town Council be allocated the roles of Lead Applicant and Accountable Body. It was agreed to act as Lead Applicant but it was felt better that the County Council take on the role of Accountable Body. It was agreed that Cllr. Baynham would approach the County Council to again ask if it would be willing to do this. If this was refused then it was agreed that the Town Council would also take on the role of Accountable Body.
- (4) Powys County Council Statutory Notice regarding proposals affecting Ysgol Calon Cymru and Builth Wells C.P. School: Cllr. Baynham explained the proposal involved a Welsh Medium through School in Builth Wells with students wishing to received education at an English Medium School having to attend Llandrindod Wells High School. This decision had been called into Committee for scrutiny. Members queried the need for a separate school and the pupil numbers expected. The Clerk was asked to write to ask for the details of the assessments carried out and data produced to illustrate a need.
- (5) Report on latest Sustainable Powys Meeting: Cllr. Edwards had attended and would report later in the meeting.

#### **MIN 4601 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

Cllr. Baynham reported the following:

- Potholes and Road Surfaces still a real problem locally.
- Council Tax to increase by 4.9%.
- Pre-Election Period soon to start prior to the Senedd elections in May.

Cllr. Edwards had nothing further to add.

#### **MIN 4602 URGENT BUSINESS INFORMATION**

(1) Sustainable Powys Meeting and Pride in Place Grants: Details of this grant had been received the previous Wednesday and £83,000 was available per town for up to two projects. Projects were to come from the Town Investment Plan and initial applications had to be in for 10<sup>th</sup> April.

*As East Radnorshire Care was on the list of possible projects Cllr. Baynham declared a prejudicial interest and left the meeting for the discussion and decision on projects to put forward.*

Members went through the list of projects in the plan and following a discussion on the possibilities it was agreed to put forward the Old School (Presteigne Youth Project) and East Radnorshire Care for £41,500 each towards refurbishment of each building.

(2) Sustainable Powys Teams Meeting: Town and Community Council representatives were being sought for an online Teams meeting. No one put their name forward.

(3) Moving of Street Light, Broad Street/Church Close: Cllr. Kirkby reported that this was yet to be done.

- (4) Meadow Work Day: Now confirmed as 25<sup>th</sup> April.
- (5) White Lining, King's Court/By Pass: Still not done.
- (6) Gritting Schedules: Cllr. Owens reported that on more than one occasion he had seen the gritter out when the temperature was well above freezing. Cllr. Baynham would investigate.
- (7) Joules Outlet Fund Raising Sale: To be held at John Beddoes School on 18<sup>th</sup> April in aid of East Radnorshire Care. Tickets £6.

The meeting closed at 9.54 p.m.