Cyngor Tref Llanandras a Norton
PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21st SEPTEMBER 2026 HELD AT NORTON COMMUNITY HUB, NORTON, PRESTEIGNE AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

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

Apologies: Cllrs. B. Baynham, A. Ramsay, L. Poulson-Haynes.
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:
Cllr. T. Owens, neighbour of one of the applicants' properties in Norton, re. planning application P/26/0540/LBC.

MIN 4657 APPROVAL OF MINUTES
The Minutes of the meeting held on 17th August, 2026 were approved as a true and accurate record and the Chairman duly signed the Minutes.

MIN 4658 UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS
(1) Removal of No Ball Games Sign, Lugg View: Clerk had chased but there was no further update.
(2) River Water Quality and Hay on Wye Incident: Cllr. J. Ramsay reported that he had looked into this and the Friends of the River Wye had tested the water with the reported first readings being very poor. The Group continued to monitor the water on a weekly basis.
(3) Use of Glyphosate by County Council: The Clerk had made enquiries and received the following reply – '*As far as Powys' treatments on our own assets are concerned, we limit herbicide treatment to the bare minimum. This is to a large degree due to the reduced available budget, but also in consideration of the balance between the environmental impact and our duty to maintain the highways. The core areas of town and villages and amenity areas receive one routine treatment in April/May, with any other area only receiving treatment on a reactive needs basis. Herbicide application is the 'Nomix Total Droplet' system (link below). We do not apply a glyphosate based product via a conventional knapsack sprayer in any amenity area. We use the Nomix Total Droplet System, which we feel is safer than the conventional knapsack sprayer. The products have amenity approval and are safe for operators, bystanders, animals, the environment, water courses and any desired vegetation in the surrounding area.*
In Powys we are determined to deliver on the Climate and Nature Emergency commitments we have made as a council. We have committed ourselves to reducing the amount of herbicides we use for many reasons as you will see below.
There are more alternative methods to herbicide application becoming available each year and hopefully the costs of these will reduce as competition increases, and we are actively exploring suitable alternatives. We have looked at options, such as electricity and weed burners but these bring other health and safety issues when used in amenity areas. I have attached an interesting guide to 'Alternatives to herbicides for the Amenity Sector'.
We arranged a demonstration of the Foamstream system and it was by far the best alternative we have seen to date. The set up costs for one unit was just over £20,000 and we purchased one unit last summer. As with all the alternatives we have seen, there is still the issue of requiring more staff resource. It is more time consuming than the herbicide treatment methods. We then have the added

pressure of requiring more budget for weed control/street cleansing when the existing budgets are being reduced.
One of the main reasons for the need to spray is to reduce the amount of strimming that our staff need to carry out, as this reduces their exposure to HAV (hand arm vibration). A few years ago the HSE issued an improvement notice to the Authority on how we manage HAV's, so we need to ensure exposure is reduced to a minimum. Another reason is the likelihood of causing damage to people, property or vehicles as a result of objects been thrown by strimmers'. This information had been sent to all Councillors.
(4) Sign for Maes Corton: The Clerk had chased this as it was still not in place.
(5) Land Registry and Broadheath Common: The Clerk had received a further letter explaining that for existing rights to be maintained the Council's comments would need to be treated as an objection to the registration and also asking for more information on the rights of way across the land. Members discussed the options and heard details of new information found by Cllr. Ross. It was agreed to respond as follows:-
Pointing out the listing on the 1844 tithe map which listed the common but without any owner; Reiterating the need for existing rights to be protected, these being the public rights of way, the use as a village green and the commons grazing rights.
(6) Letter to Resident re. loose dog on nature reserve: Cllrs. Kirkby and Ross had seen the resident who had received the formal letter and had apologised, stressing he was making every effort to prevent his dog from escaping.
(7) Refreshments after August Meeting: Thanks were noted to Cllr. Ross and partner for the refreshments provided after the August meeting.
(8) Open Space Provision via Section 106: The Clerk confirmed that the Planning Department had been informed that the Council wished all the monies available to be set towards the proposed pump track.
(9) Bunting Licence for Christmas Lights: This had been applied for and approved.

MIN 4659 FINANCE
(1) Donations: None this month.
(2) Payments: The following payments were approved –

Highground Maintenance Ltd	£495.78 MEADOW ACC
Mrs T. Price	£1967.96
HM Revenue & Customs	£926.53
NEST	£186.48
T. Lloyd-John	£765.23
N. Close	£108.00
N. Close	£104.00 MEADOW ACC
EDF Energy	£37.74
EDF Energy	£17.10 MEADOW ACC
C. Kirkby (refund postages)	£5.30 MEADOW ACCOUNT
C. Ross (refund expenses)	£87.55
William Protheroe Ltd (Norton Memorial)	£1200.00
Powys County Council (bunting licence for Christmas Lights)	£135.00
Beaumont Electrical Services (new disabled alarm)	£420.00
British Gas Lite	£18.32
Lyreco Uk (office supplies)	£14.07
Presteigne Building Supplies	£6.77
Presteigne Building Supplies (Nature Reserve)	£122.34
T and O Building Services	£300.00
Wallgate Ltd (toilets)	£327.60
Wales Audit Office (fee 2024-25 Audit)	£850.00
Cartridge People (ink toner)	£414.96
PHS Group	£216.94

(3) Annual Pay award for 2026-27 (3.3%): Noted. Budget has allowed for 3% with any additional sum needed to be met from general reserves.
(4) Receipts: The following receipts were noted:-

Powys County Council (precept 2)	£27,793.00
Dark Skies Fund (held by PACDG)	£300.00

(5) Review of Council Investment Policy: Deferred again.
(6) Review of Council Banking Arrangements: Deferred again.
(7) Valuation costs for the former Presteigne Show Cups: Agreed to meet the cost of £159.12 to value the cups so the Judge's Lodgings Trust could insure them correctly.
(8) Attendance at One Voice Wales/SLCC Joint Conference for Cllr. Ross: Agreed at a cost of £75. The bursary was not available for use for conference attendance.

MIN 4660 PLANNING

Cllr. Edwards left the room at this point due to her position on the County Council Planning Committee.
(1) Planning applications: The following applications were considered –
P/26/0532/REM - **Proposal**: Section 73 application to vary condition 2 of planning approval 21/0702/FUL in relation to changes to approved plans. **Location**: PLOT 4, BROADAXE BUSINESS PARK, PRESTEIGNE, LD8 2UH. Deferred from August meeting as papers from the previous application were not available. Resolved no objections be raised. Noted that the previous application already included reference to dark sky compliant lighting but this would be mentioned again in the response.
Cllr. Owens left the room at this point, having declared a prejudicial interest in the following application.
P/26/0540/LBC - **Proposal**: Form new internal door opening. **Location**: SUTTON BARN, HIGH STREET, PRESTEIGNE, LD8 2BA. Resolved no objections be raised.
Cllrs. Edwards and Owens returned to the room.
(2) Planning Decisions: None this month. Cllr. Edwards was asked to find out why decision lists where no longer being sent to Town and Community Councils.
(3) TPO Submissions: No update due to the absence of Cllr. Baynham.

MIN 4661 HIGHWAYS, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

(1) Dark Skies Project Update: Cllr. Harking-Bowen had provided a written report as follows –

- Retail and Industrial Lighting Assessment: Andrew Bissell of Ridge Lighting Consultancy had been appointed to undertaken a retail and industrial lighting assessment of the town on behalf of the Town Council. It was anticipated that the assessment would take place at some time during the first two weeks of October. The exact date will depend on the lighting and weather conditions.
- Potential Town Twinning with Naseby in New Zealand: Naseby is a very small community situated in the Central Otago region of South Island, a fine wine producing region of New Zealand. It is the first International Dark Sky Community in New Zealand. The next step towards an informal twinning would be a Zoom meeting between a Dark Sky International representative, Cllr Harling-Bowen, Cllr Ross, the Town Clerk and a representative(s) from Naseby Vision. Other Town Councillors could attend should they wish to. Cllr. Harling-Bowen was waiting to hear back from the representatives from Naseby with possible dates/times.
- Presteigne and Norton Dark Sky Support Group: A meeting of the Presteigne and Norton Dark Sky Support Group took place on the 14th September 2026, which was well attended both by residents and Town Councillors. It was agreed that further light pollution readings should be taken in Presteigne and Norton in the autumn, probably in October or November.

(2) Climate and Environment Update: Cllr. J. Ramsay reported as follows –

- Potential Voice of the Woodlands Event in mid-October. Cllr. Harling-Bowen offered to give a talk if required.
- People's Emergency Briefing Film: Two showings on 6th and 7th October. Cllr. Ross circulated the details.

(3) Fold Farm DMMO Application: Despite repeated chasing copies of the new evidence had still not been received. Nor had the application progressed to PEDW. Cllr. Kirkby to discuss with Cllr. Baynham the possible options to press for action.
(4) High Street Grant Update: The expression of interest application had been accepted and the Clerk had been invited to submit a full application. However there was no remaining money in the current financial year and the application would be processed in April providing Welsh Government continued funding. The Clerk would notify the businesses involved.
(5) Update re. Street Cleaning: Further work had been carried out in Norton and along Broad Street. The cobbled areas of Broad Street had not been done as ownership was not clear and responsibility seemed to be accepted by the property owners. Next works to be clearing of leaves in Station Road and by the Scallions and more weed clearing work in Norton. Cllr. Edwards would provide the Clerk with areas to be done in Norton. Again a maximum cost of £250. This would leave a final £250 in the budget for 2026/27.

Noted that buddleia was growing up in the pavement by the by pass car park. Clerk would report.
(6) Reply re. overgrown hedge, Clatterbrune: The resident had confirmed they would trim the hedge in the Autumn.
(7) Information from Welsh Water on upcoming works, Norton: Noted.
(8) Bulbs from Biodiversity Grant: Members agreed to consider possible locations and to agree locations at the October meeting.

MIN 4662 NORTON

(1) Changes to the speed limit in Norton: Cllr. Edwards reported that new signs had been installed but that these had been incorrect, changing the speed for the whole limit to 30mph which was not as per the traffic regulation order. This had created problems for young drivers with a 'black box' in their vehicles who followed the signage speed and subsequently insurance problems. Cllr. Edwards had spoken to the highways department to get corrected. Members were very concerned to hear of these issues and agreed that the County Council should be held accountable for any problems caused by the errors.
(2) Moving of Bench: Cllr. Edwards asked if the bench by the layby/noticeboard could be moved slightly. This was agreed and Cllr. Edwards would arrange for it to be done.
(3) Sewage Smell, Mynd Lane: Cllr. Edwards would report.
(4) Tour of Britain Bike Race: Cllr. Edwards reported that a large number of people had watched the event pass through Norton.
(5) Norton Bonfire and Fireworks: 1st November.

MIN 4663 SITES AND BUILDINGS

(1) Public Conveniences: Recent changes to use of single sex facilities noted. Sites and Buildings Committee to review provision at its Autumn meeting.
(2) Allotments: The following matters were discussed –

- Untidy Plots: One had now been cleared. Plot five was under offer. Plot 18 had still not been tended and Members agreed to serve notice on the tenant as many attempts had been made to get the tenant to tidy the plot.
- Strimming of paths and communal areas: Deferred to Sites and Buildings Committee.

(3) Meadows: The following matters were discussed –

- Pump Track Project: Cllr. Kirkby reported that the People and Places Fund had refused the grant application and he had now submitted a smaller application to the Awards for All fund. Even if successful this would leave a shortfall in the amount of funding needed and Cllr. Baynham was assisting with efforts to get help from the County Council. With regard to the planning application this had been submitted but a number of queries had been raised. The application would be cancelled and the monies refunded if no further information was submitted. The County Council now seemed to feel that a lawful development certificate was appropriate after all and could be granted although nothing had been received as yet.
- Cutting of Lower Went's Meadow: Agreed to continue annually.
- Strimming around car park entrance and Outdoor Gym: Deferred to Sites and Buildings Committee.
- Use for Forest School – 26th October: Agreed.
- Use for Apple Pressing Event – 18th October: Agreed.
- Hedge Management Review: Members discussed the options in detail and following a proposal by Cllr. Kirkby, seconded by Cllr Edwards it was agreed that future hedge cutting be carried out on a two yearly basis, half each year, with the exception of the roadside hedge which would continue to be cut annually. Cllr. Price was aware of the hedges cut in 2025 and would arrange the work for 2026. As in the previous policy the Town Council could vary the policy as needed.
- Re-ordering of dog bags: Agreed that the Clerk order a further pallet of the bags.

(4) Nature Reserve: Cllr. J. Ramsay reported as follows –

- Storage Container arrived and already very well received.
- Wildflower areas (on reserve and on Went's Meadow), mown and raked.
- No more reports of loose dogs on the site.
- Bentonite clay moved to new container and being used slowly.
- Level of upper pond to be raised slightly.
- Dumping of cuttings onto reserve from neighbouring property: Noted. Cllr. J. Ramsay would monitor.
- Tree Works: Expected to happen before the end of the month.

- Future management of grass given the number of wildfires in 2026 to be considered.

(5) Resignation of Cllr. Price from Sites and Buildings Committee: Noted with regret. Cllr. Ross appointed as a replacement.

(6) Information Signs, Former Reservoir: Cllr. Kirkby reported that new signs were expected to be approximately £50 each and five were required. A budget of up to £300 was agreed, to come from the Meadow account.

MIN 4664 CORRESPONDENCE/GENERAL ITEMS

(1) Leisure Centres: Nothing further to report. Item no longer needed on the agenda.
(2) Little Art Gallery Kiosk Project: No progress as yet. Clerk had chased the electrician for the new electrical certificate.
(3) Pride in Place Grant Application: The Clerk had attended the mandatory grant monitoring meeting earlier that day. Projects progressing without any problem.
(4) Chamber of Trade - Update: The Clerk reported that only one person had been willing to take matters forward and it was agreed that this was not workable. No further action.
(5) Email from Builth Wells Town Council re dog attacks and possible public spaces protection order/enforcement officer: Members considered this and agreed not to take up the offer of a joint project.
(6) Powys County Council Consultation – Visitor Levy: Members considered this and the implications for accommodation businesses situated on the border with England where there was no visitor levy. It was agreed that the Clerk respond opposing the introduction of a levy given the proximity of Presteigne and Norton businesses to the border and when businesses were already struggling.
(7) Community Boundary Reviews – Email from One Voice Wales: Noted.
(8) Letter from Machynlleth Town Council on Health Services in Mid Wales: Members shared the concerns raised and the Clerk was asked to write to the Health Board expressing concern at the proposals and also to write to Machynlleth Town Council to ask to be kept informed of their campaign.
(9) Consultation on possible closure of Gladestry School: Public meeting arranged for 24th September at Gladestry Village Hall. Members would consider a formal response to the consultation at the October meeting.
(10) 2030 Review of Senedd Constituencies - Advance Notice: Noted.
(11) Complaint from resident re. delay in provision of full fibre broadband to the area: Members noted that the complainant had now had their provision sorted. The Clerk had made enquiries with Openreach and been told that 73% of the area was now able to sign up for full fibre broadband with a target of 75%. She had also been in touch with the regeneration department at the County Council to ask what was being done to increase provision in the area.

MIN 4665 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cllr. Edwards reported the following –

- Some resurfacing works completed.
- Multiple non-compliant road signs due to be replaced with two new officers in post to do this.

Cllr. Baynham had reported the following via email –

- Tarmacking all done and complete. The piles of old tarmac had been removed and the grass verge has been re-seeded in places.
- Consultations – there are a number of live consultations being run at the moment, the Leader Members encouraged to complete consultations both as individuals and also as a Town Council.
- School Catchment Review – following the catchment review for the area the recommendation was to close Gladestry Primary School.
- At the next full council meeting, together with Cllr Edward Jones a motion has been submitted that requests school closures be voted upon at full council.
- Pump Track – She had spoken to the Cabinet Member who would see what help the County Council could offer with grants.

MIN 4665 URGENT BUSINESS INFORMATION

(1) Fire Service Event: Cllr. Kirkby to speak to the Service about arrangements.
(2) Replacement Printer: Agreed up to a maximum cost of £400 (excl VAT).

(3) Reminder: People's Emergency Briefing Film: Two showings on 6th and 7th October.
(4) Scottleton Street Signage: New sign on left hand side. Right hand side sign still not replaced.
(5) Tree blocking Clatterbrook: Still not removed. Clerk would chase.
(6) New Street Light, Broad Street: Work finally underway. Once complete the light in Church Close would be turned off for a trial period.
(7) Parking in Talgarth: Clerk to find out why the main car park there was free of charge.
(8) Welcome to Knighton/ Talgarth Signs: Cllr. Kirkby asked for details on the provision of these signs. The Clerk would make enquiries.
(9) Vintage Car Weekend in Presteigne the second weekend in October.
(10) Fire Service Representatives in Atlanta: Noted that two officers from the Presteigne Station had been part of the 25th anniversary event for 9/11.

The meeting closed at 9.45 p.m.