



MONTGOMERY TOWN COUNCIL

CYNGOR TREF TREFALDWYN

Minutes of the meeting of Montgomery Town Council held on **Thursday 25th January 2024**

This meeting was recorded

Present in person:

Cllr Taylor, Cllr Stephenson, Cllr Beaven, Cllr Humphreys, Cllr Lock, Cllr Weston

Present online:

None

In attendance:

Helen Royall (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllr Jones, Cllr Andrew

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. Break for the Public to Speak

A presentation was made by Mid Wales Tourism of a scheme funded by the UK Shared Prosperity fund. Most of the work that the work the group does is marketing of the local area and a selection of the materials the group provide were shared. The funding is for a loyalty programme using technology like systems such as club card, however this will be open to smaller local businesses to enable them to have loyalty schemes. It is designed to increase footfall into towns in Powys by local people supporting local businesses and reducing reliance on tourism. The first year will be free for businesses due to the funding, however there may be a small charge in the future. Montgomery is a potential pilot location which would require meetings with the business owners and then promotion which is looking to be completed at the end of April.

Council stated they were supportive of the project and felt that delivery of the project could create exciting opportunities and there is the potential for the council to support the promotion of the scheme.

4. Chairman's Announcements

Council was welcomed back after the Christmas Break.

Cllr Stephenson has expressed that at the end of the term he will be resigning his council role as due to his increasing workload outside of council he feels he cannot longer give the role the time and attention he feels is needed. The chair thanked Cllr Stephenson for his service to the council and the town especially around technological innovations and his sterling work in the assets committee.

Negotiations over the use of the upper hall are ongoing.

The Chair thanked members of the council who supported the efforts to deliver the Christmas event and to Monty Folk who helped setting up and taking down as well as providing entertainment.

5. Minutes of the last meetings

- 12. Dogs at the Castle: Small changes to the language in the overall statement
- 13. May Fair: Small correction for accuracy around the providing of vouchers – these had previously been provided by the proprietor and they could be approached to provide vouchers again, however this has not been broached with the fair provider at this point

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Ordinary Business Meeting 23rd November 2023 are approved and signed as a correct record.

6. Information from the minutes

None

7. Report from County Councillor

The CCllr is continuing to seek solutions to the bus turning at Maldwyn Way, the transport officer, John Forsey, is currently making enquiries with the Welsh Government to explore the possibility of securing funds for constructing the necessary turning circle. However, he has also mentioned that in his discussions with Tanat Valley, their stance may not be as definitive as previously assumed, indicating that reversing might be an option. He plans to further discuss this with Tanat Valley if his request for funds proves unsuccessful.

With regards to bus stops on the route to Forden, progress has stalled due to uncertainty about finding a safe location, especially concerning the stop at the end of Gaol Road in Montgomery. The discussion is ongoing, with efforts focused on

finding a suitable location at the bottom of town where passengers can safely alight on both sides of the road.

Regarding the place plan, the public consultation phase has concluded, and Powys County Council is currently reviewing it internally. Concerns have been raised about the lack of early consultation with the town council during the overall remit setting process. The focus of the consultation was primarily on cosmetic changes to the town center, with limited attention given to other important issues such as bus provision, visitor accommodation, and sheltered housing.

Speed monitoring activities have been conducted in Station Road, with a report from go-safe pending. Additionally, speed monitoring is scheduled to take place in Hendomen Lane before and after the Hafren Dyfrdwy works restart, in response to a recent "near miss" incident during the lane closure.

Regarding Hafren Dyfrdwy works, updates on when they might resume are not yet available.

Concerning the provisional budget for the next year, the council is preparing to set the council tax. Despite inflation being around 10% last year and approximately 5% now, the grant from the Welsh Government is only 2.8% higher than last year, putting significant strain on council budgets. A council tax rise of around 7.5% is being considered but will be confirmed after a vote by the council in late February or March.

Welsh Government is also consulting all local authorities about proposed council tax reforms, which are expected to make the tax more progressive by reducing payments for lower bands and increasing payments for higher bands. There are concerns within the council that Powys may be disproportionately affected due to its rural nature, with many large houses whose occupants may not necessarily have high incomes. Powys intends to convey these concerns to the Welsh Government.

8. Highways

No Highways issues reported. New speed signs have been installed on the road to the new development and these have been welcomed.

9. Finance

a. Current financial position and transactions

December

	Salary	£	594.40
	Salary	£	714.42
HMRC	HMRC		
Gwynedd Forklifts	Christmas Lights	£	536.52
Benchmark	Playground Equipment	£	792.00

Charter Granted 1227 • Cyflwynwyd y Siarter ym 1227

Mayor/Maer: Mrs Wendy Beaven

Town Clerk/Clerc y Dref: Miss Helen Royall

07846269021 • townclerk@montgomery-wales.uk

Sovereign Play	Playground Equipment	£ 627.38
Gaskells	Waste	£ 7.48
Gaskells	Waste	£ 44.77
Powis Estates	Playground Repairs/Rent	£ 26.00
Andrew Evans	Grass Cutting	£ 398.86
Sovereign Play	Playground Equipment	£ 35,331.54
Sovereign Play	Playground Equipment	£ 15,353.18
Service Charge	Bank Service Charge	£ 18.00
EDF	Public toilet electricity	£ 23.39
Loan Payment	Town Hall Bank Loan	£ 6,277.82

January

	Salary	£ 594.40
	Salary	£ 531.82
HMRC	HMRC	£ 148.20
Bunners	Christmas Lights	£ 64.95
Gaskells	Waste	£ 3.72
Helen Royall (Expenses)	Zoom Licence	£ 119.90
Hafren Dyfrdwy	Public toilet water	£ 34.08
Hafren Dyfrdwy	Public toilet water	£ 694.67
EDF	Public toilet electricity	£ 38.38
BT	Contingency	£ 278.32

b. Precept

Final budget figures were presented and an increase of 1.07% on last years precept was proposed.

Proposed: Council requests £80791 for the precept an increase of 1.07% on 2023/2024 financial year.

Proposed: Cllr Lewis

Seconded: Cllr Taylor

All in favour

Motion passed

10. Planning

No new planning applications currently

11. Assets

No meeting has been held since the last council meeting. This is needed urgently as a new chair and committee member is needed. Cllr Taylor volunteered to join the

Assets committee and Cllr Humphreys volunteered to join Cllr Lewis on the Play Park Committee

12. Tourism Committee

Notes were circulated from the committee meeting. Cllr Humphreys and Cllr Lock have been elected as co-chair but the committee needs an additional member. It was suggested that a quarterly meeting of the committee should take place and that these meetings could be clerked.

Terms of Reference were revisited as a document was not completed after approval in July. There were some minor amendments.

Proposed: Council accepts the terms of reference for the Tourism Committee

Proposed: Cllr Harper

Seconded: Cllr Lewis

All in favour

Motion passed

13. May Fair

Arrangements are proceeding as agreed at the November meeting. Old Bell Museum will host an exhibition about May Fair memories during April and May – memories will be collated during February. Graham Evans is continuing to promote the event and provide support.

Proposed: Council in principle supports a potential financial contribution towards discounting May Fair rides for local children with contribution suggested by finance committee following a review of the financial position

Proposed: Cllr Harper

Seconded: Cllr Lock

All in favour

Motion passed

14. Elderly Persons Lunch

Work in progress currently as it is proving challenging to find a date that suits all the parties involved.

15. Mayor Making

Council agreed to a baseline offer for Mayor Making reflective of the new budget amount allocated to the event. It was felt a finger buffet with a sparkling wine and

none alcoholic option would be acceptable and this could be booked in with a local provider.

16. Pound Memorial Garden

Following on from the retirement of volunteers the council is making alternative arrangements for the care of the memorial including adding in the hedge cutting to the existing grounds maintenance contract.

17. Remembrance Events

Paul Hodgson has informed the council that there will be someone taking on his current role who will be available to liaise with the council over remembrance events.

18. Communications from the meeting

May Fair

19. Items for the next agenda

Placemaking

Highways – Parking Issues

Website

Allocation of Sheltered Housing