Welshpool Town Council, The Vicarage Gardens, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7DD
Tel: 01938 553142 Email: office@welshpooltowncouncil.gov.uk

DRAFT

Minutes of the Operations & Development Committee held on 10/06/2026 6:30pm in Council Chamber, Welshpool Town Hall.

PRESENT:

Councillor Chris Davies
Councillor David France
Councillor Estelle Bleivas
Councillor Kelly Meredith
Councillor Nick Howells
Councillor Phil Pritchard (Chair)
Councillor Revd William Rowell

Apologies for absence:

Absent:

Councillor Phil Owen

Also in attendance:

Richard Williams - Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
Paul McGrath - Operations Manager

OD100626/1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

The Chair, Cllr Phil Pritchard asked for nominations for Chair of the Operations and Development Committee for the 2026-2027 municipal year. It was proposed by Cllr William Rowell and seconded by Cllr Estelle Bleivas that Phil Pritchard be elected as Chair.

No other nominations were received.

RESOLVED
To elect Cllr Phil Pritchard as Chair of the Operations and Development Committee for the municipal year 2026/2027.

WTCM719 - Proposed by Cllr Revd William Rowell, seconded by Cllr Estelle Bleivas

OD100626/2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

One nomination was proposed by Cllr Chris Davies and Cllr William Rowell for Nick Howells to be elected as Vice Chair. No other nominations were received.

RESOLVED
To elect Cllr Nick Howells as Vice Chair of the Operations and Development Committee for the municipal year 2026/2027.

WTCM720 - Proposed by Cllr Chris Davies, seconded by Cllr Revd William Rowell

OD100626/3. WELCOME, CODE OF CONDUCT AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting and reminded all attendees to show respect for all throughout the meeting.

OD100626/4. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

None.

OD100626/5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

OD100626/6. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

OD100626/6.1 Previous Minutes

RESOLVED
To approve the minutes from the meeting of the Operations & Development Committee on 13/05/2026.

WTCM721 - Proposed by Cllr Chris Davies, seconded by Cllr Phil Pritchard

OD100626/6.2 Matters Arising

Cllr Kelly Meredith joined the meeting.

None.

OD100626/7. LAND AND BUILDINGS

OD100626/7.1 General Update

The Operations Manager updated councillors on general activities, including:
- Town Hall - usual bookings including a Wedding, Mayor and Community Awards, Annual Rugby Dinner, We Buy Vintage and a 50th Birthday Party this weekend so busy as always.
- Health and Safety - annual visit held and report to be considered by Health & Safety Committee in July.
- Hanging Baskets have been installed.
- A leak to the toilet system led to the closure of the indoor market for three days but the team cleared the blockage and investigated the pipework - the the pipework will be redirected in a few months to prevent the issue from happening again.
- Broken glass in the Town Hall being replaced on Thursday.
- Day Centre asbestos report has been completed.
- Outdoor Spaces - grass cutting season now taking up a considerable portion of the work with the weather hampering the ability to keep to the two weekly rota.
- Goalposts - a quote had been obtained for goal post inspections - Town Clerk to investigate and make further enquiries before proceeding.
- WIC - sliding door control panel has been fitted.
- Town Centre flags went up.

RESOLVED
To defer consideration of goal post testing until further research can be done by the Town Clerk.

WTCM722 - Proposed by Cllr Phil Pritchard, seconded by Cllr Estelle Bleivas

OD100626/7.2 Playgrounds and Bike Shelters

Cllr Kelly Meredith raised various queries about playgrounds including benches, bench pads and other features. It was suggested that Cllr Meredith takes a tour with the Operations Team of all assets and brings back a list of proposed changes to the next meeting.

OD100626/7.3 End of Season Works

The Town Clerk explained that last year end of season works cost £21k due to the work required following the STRI report - this year however no where near as much work is required meaning that two quotations had been obtained for the works required. A third quotation could not be obtained despite reasonable efforts. Company A was £6530 ex VAT and Company B was £7000 ex VAT and asked members to select which one to proceed with.

RECOMMENDED
To accept the quotation for end of season works from Argae Hall (Company A) at a cost of £6,530 excluding VAT.

WTCM723 - Proposed by Cllr Revd William Rowell, seconded by Cllr Kelly Meredith

OD100626/7.4 End of Season Works - Recommended Equipment

The Town Clerk explained that following the recommendation above there was now significant monies left in the End of Season works budget and that the most recent STRI report recommended that the organic matter growing at the first two centimetres of the ground needs removing. A quotation had been obtained from Charlies AG for a second hand Verti-Cut 1300 which is a tractor mounted scarifier which would remove the organic matter and fulfil the recommendations of the STRI report.

RECOMMENDED
To accept the quotation for purchase of a second hand Verti-Cut 1300 at a cost of £4400 from Charlies AG at a cost of £4,400 excluding VAT.

WTCM724 - Proposed by Cllr Revd William Rowell, seconded by Cllr Estelle Bleivas

OD100626/7.5 Cutting Equipment

The Town Clerk summarised the report and explained that there are approximately 4.3 acres of scrub land owned by the Town Council which needs cutting to maintain visual appearance but also enhance biodiversity and that the Town Council did not have the equipment to do so at present. A demonstration had been given to the Council on a proposed solution which would be a new ATV Grillo Climber 10.27 which allows cutting on steep banks and marshy areas, of which we have several.

A wide-ranging discussion took place by members with questions answered by the Town Clerk and the Operations Manager. It was also explained that this year is significant in that due to the recommendations above, the End of Season works budget has a windfall which would not be available in other years and that investing in equipment makes the Council much more efficient and agile to respond to the changing nature of the land under our management. It was also suggested that the machinery could be hired out to neighbouring Councils to assist them with similar work.

Three quotations for the Grillo Climber 10.27 had been obtained in line with Financial Regulations and ranged from £10,900 to £13,000 and that outright purchase in this financial year would make better economic sense than a finance package into future years as the funds were available in this year.

RECOMMENDED
To accept the quotation for the purchase of a Grillo Climber 10 AWD 27 at a cost of £10,900

from Charlies AG.

WTCM725 - Proposed by Cllr David France, seconded by Cllr Revd William Rowell

OD100626/8. SERVICES

OD100626/8.1 Markets

The Town Clerk gave an update on behalf of the Events and Market Manager and explained that one trader is leaving at the end of the month so a reshuffling around of the stalls will be taking place.

OD100626/8.2 The Hub - May 2026

The Town Clerk summarised the report from the Community Services Manager and answered any queries. The Hub had 309 visits across May and reverted back to the one day a week operation during the Summer months. A comment was made by Cllr Nick Howells regarding the figures but the Town Clerk explained they are factual based on the monies received.

OD100626/8.3 Allotments

The Town Clerk gave an update and reported on some new enquiries for tenancies.

OD100626/8.4 Community Fridge

The Town Clerk summarised progress and explained that supply was starting to dry up as less food waste becomes available and new distribution avenues need pursuing. There is still work to be done on increasing supply of volunteers to enable the fridge to take on more venues.

OD100626/9. BUSINESS PLANNING & FINANCIAL MATTERS

OD100626/9.1 Interim Strategic Plan Action Plan

The Town Clerk explained that regarding Action PT1 that the Council had been successful in an Expression of Interest for new LoRaWAN equipment.

OD100626/9.2 Budget and Committee Finance (Month 2)

The Town Clerk presented the report and answered any queries.

OD100626/10. PROJECTS & NEW DEVELOPMENTS

OD100626/10.1 Town Hall Transformation

The Town Clerk gave an update and explained that the bid had now been submitted and was around £5m for the entire project. A decision from the lottery would now be expected in September and if successful, the development phase of the project would begin in January 2027 and end in December 2027 with the delivery phase starting in April 2028 ending in May 2031. The Town Clerk thanked all those involved including partners and members of the Project Board for all their hard work.

OD100626/10.2 Welshpool Town Centre Improvement

The Town Clerk summarised the report and explained that the Project Board would be meeting next Monday to discuss the project further.

RECOMMENDED
To note the successful award of £83,000 under the Pride in Place Impact Fund for the Welshpool Town Centre Improvement Project;
To authorise the Town Clerk to obtain further quotations for landscape architecture, design and project development services in accordance with the Council's procurement requirements; and
To approve a period of public engagement and consultation on emerging proposals.

WTCM726 - Proposed by Cllr Phil Pritchard, seconded by Cllr Estelle Bleivas

OD100626/10.3 Changing Places

The Town Clerk reported positive news that a new sink is being installed next Monday and after this is fitted, a deep clean and opening can be held. Members thanked Cllr Nick Howells for all his hard work on getting the project started in the first place.

OD100626/10.4 Maes y Dre Alternative Premises

The Town Clerk presented the quotation for planning consultancy for the Maes y Dre Alternative Premises project and answered any questions from Members.

RECOMMENDED
To accept the quotation for planning consultancy on the Maes y Dre Alternative Premises project at a cost of £850 from Hughes Architects.

WTCM727 - Proposed by Cllr Revd William Rowell, seconded by Cllr David France

OD100626/10.5 Oldford Estate - Play Provision

Cllr David France left the meeting.

A wide ranging discussion took place regarding play provision on the Oldford Estate and the Town Clerk explained that ClwydAlyn would be presenting some partnership plans next month on how we can work with them to install new play provision at Oldford.

OD100626/10.6 Soft Play Trial

The Town Clerk summarised the paper and answered questions around risk and insurance.

RECOMMENDED
To approve the soft play trial project within the vacant Market Business Unit and to allocate a budget of up to £3000 for the purchase of equipment, signage and setup costs;
To delegate authority to the Town Clerk to implement the trial and undertake all necessary risk assessments and operational arrangements;
To approve the proposal to operate entry fee of £1 per child with payments accepted via contactless payment facilities, QR code payments and cash collection, and with a proportionate and pragmatic approach taken to enforcement during the trial period; and
To request a trial evaluation report be presented to the Committee upon completion of the trial.

WTCM728 - Proposed by Cllr Phil Pritchard, seconded by Cllr Revd William Rowell

OD100626/11. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA & DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Operations & Development Committee will be held on 8th July 2026

OD100626/12. CONFIDENTIAL SESSION - EXCLUSION

RESOLVED
That members of the public and press be requested to leave the meeting by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

WTCM729 - Proposed by Cllr Phil Pritchard, seconded by Cllr Revd William Rowell

OD100626/13. EXTENSION OF LEASE [CONFIDENTIAL]

The Town Clerk summarised the report and a discussion took place. A proposal was made to adopt the recommendations and a vote taken however the proposal was defeated by 2 votes for, 3 against and 1 abstention.

Following this and during the discussion it was clear that there was a discrepancy in the core details and the Town Clerk was asked to go away and explore this further.

RESOLVED
To defer consideration of the item until next month when further research and investigation can be done by the Town Clerk.

WTCM730 - Proposed by Cllr Phil Pritchard, seconded by Cllr Revd William Rowell

OD100626/14. LAND ADJ TO PURE BEAUTY [CONFIDENTIAL]

The Town Clerk summarised the report and a discussion took place regarding the liabilities involved in the area.

RECOMMENDED
Subject to the tree liability issues being resolved, to approve a Plant and Maintain licence with Powys County Council for the land at the corner of Union Street adjacent to Pure Beauty; and To authorise the Town Clerk to progress the necessary paperwork.

WTCM731 - Proposed by Cllr Kelly Meredith, seconded by Cllr Revd William Rowell

The meeting finished at 21:00.

Signed: Dated:

Councillor Phil Pritchard (Chair)

Decision/Action Log

ID		Assigned
WTCM719	**RESOLUTION** **OD100626/1 Election of Chair** To elect Cllr Phil Pritchard as Chair of the Operations and Development Committee for the municipal year 2026/2027.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
WTCM720	**RESOLUTION** **OD100626/2 Election of Vice Chair** To elect Cllr Nick Howells as Vice Chair of the Operations and Development Committee for the municipal year 2026/2027.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer

ID		Assigned
WTCM721	**RESOLUTION** **OD100626/6.1 Previous Minutes** To approve the minutes from the meeting of the Operations & Development Committee on 13/05/2026.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
WTCM722	**RESOLUTION** **OD100626/7.1 General Update** To defer consideration of goal post testing until further research can be done by the Town Clerk.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
WTCM723	**RECOMMENDATION** **OD100626/7.3 End of Season Works** To accept the quotation for end of season works from Argae Hall (Company A) at a cost of £6,530 excluding VAT.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
WTCM724	**RECOMMENDATION** **OD100626/7.4 End of Season Works - Recommended Equipment** To accept the quotation for purchase of a second hand Verti-Cut 1300 at a cost of £4400 from Charlies AG at a cost of £4,400 excluding VAT.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
WTCM725	**RECOMMENDATION** **OD100626/7.5 Cutting Equipment** To accept the quotation for the purchase of a Grillo Climber 10 AWD 27 at a cost of £10,900 from Charlies AG.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
WTCM726	**RECOMMENDATION** **OD100626/10.2 Welshpool Town Centre Improvement** To note the successful award of £83,000 under the Pride in Place Impact Fund for the Welshpool Town Centre Improvement Project; To authorise the Town Clerk to obtain further quotations for landscape architecture, design and project development services in accordance with the Council's procurement requirements; and To approve a period of public engagement and consultation on emerging proposals.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
WTCM727	**RECOMMENDATION** **OD100626/10.4 Maes y Dre Alternative Premises** To accept the quotation for planning consultancy on the Maes y Dre Alternative Premises project at a cost of £850 from Hughes Architects.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
WTCM728	**RECOMMENDATION** **OD100626/10.6 Soft Play Trial** To approve the soft play trial project within the vacant Market Business Unit and to allocate a budget of up to £3000 for the purchase of equipment, signage and setup costs; To delegate authority to the Town Clerk to implement the trial and undertake all necessary risk assessments and operational arrangements; To approve the proposal to operate entry fee of £1 per child with payments accepted via contactless payment facilities, QR code payments and cash collection, and with a proportionate and pragmatic approach taken to enforcement during the trial period; and To request a trial evaluation report be presented to the Committee upon completion of the trial.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer

ID		Assigned
WTCM729	**RESOLUTION** **OD100626/12 Confidential Session - Exclusion** That members of the public and press be requested to leave the meeting by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
WTCM730	**RESOLUTION** **OD100626/13 Extension of Lease** To defer consideration of the item until next month when further research and investigation can be done by the Town Clerk.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
WTCM731	**RECOMMENDATION** **OD100626/14 Land Adj to Pure Beauty** Subject to the tree liability issues being resolved, to approve a Plant and Maintain licence with Powys County Council for the land at the corner of Union Street adjacent to Pure Beauty; and To authorise the Town Clerk to progress the necessary paperwork.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer