



Welshpool Town Council, The Vicarage Gardens, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7DD
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Minutes of the Operations & Development Committee held on 13/05/2026 6:30pm in Council Chamber, Welshpool Town Hall.

PRESENT:

Cllr David France
Cllr Nick Howells
Cllr Phil Owen
Cllr Phil Pritchard (Chair)

Apologies for absence:

Cllr Dr Ben Gwalchmai
Cllr Estelle Bleivas
Sally Fitzgerald

Absent:

Also in attendance:

Cllr Chris Davies
Cllr Revd William Rowell
Richard Williams - Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
Paul McGrath - Operations Manager

OD130526/1. WELCOME, CODE OF CONDUCT AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Sally Fitzgerald, Cllr Estelle Bleivas and Cllr Ben Gwalchmai.

OD130526/2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

None.

OD130526/3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

OD130526/4. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

OD130526/4.1 Previous Minutes

RESOLVED

To approve the minutes from the meeting of the Operations & Development Committee on 08/04/2026.

WTCM663 - Proposed by Cllr Phil Owen, seconded by Cllr Nick Howells

OD130526/4.2 Matters Arising

The Town Clerk updated that all items had been completed.

OD130526/5. LAND AND BUILDINGS

OD130526/5.1 STRI Report

The Town Clerk and the Operations Manager summarised the report and explained that the pitches had "remarkable grass cover in very challenging conditions" and a big thanks was given to the Operations Team for their hard work in maintaining the pitches. There are some recommendations relating to aeration but these will be picked up in the End of Season works.

OD130526/5.2 General Update

The Operations Manager updated councillors on general activities, including:

- Town Hall - usual bookings plus party bingo, talk by Adele, elections and a wedding but all went really well. Market door sensor works completed and WiFi was installed. Quote for glazing being obtained to fix broken panes in Market.
- Health and Safety - annual visit taking place in early June along with quotes for electrical remedial works being obtained.
- Motte and Bailey - vandalism has taken place but now secure as we can make the building, CCTV is due to be installed ASAP and police contacted and investigating latest incident.
- Rats - due to reports of rats at Dol y Felin, pest control visited 8 times with traps and bait and traps now removed due to activity ceasing. Pest control advised to cut the undergrowth which will be completed shortly.
- Outdoor Spaces - grass cutting was in full swing but hampered by the weather. No Mow May has begun but limited impact for playgrounds and pitches, mainly focussed on Vicarage Gardens.
- Maes y Dre - Football and Rugby seasons now coming to an end and Cricket season commenced. New defib case was fitted and an Outdoor Gospel event is taking place this weekend.
- Day Centre - Asbestos report has been commissioned.
- Van - MoW van has been repaired.
- Allotments - standpipe repaired and paths have been sprayed.
- WIC - sliding door control panel has now arrived in stock and being fitted next week.
- Bus Stop - a quote to replace the panel at the stop on Borfa Green is being obtained.

OD130526/5.3 Biodiversity Action Plan

The Town Clerk summarised the draft Action Plan and explained that it had been worked on by the Biodiversity Working Group as established in March by Council.

RECOMMENDED

To approve and adopt the Biodiversity Action Plan for 2026-2028.

WTCM664 - Proposed by Cllr Nick Howells, seconded by Cllr Phil Owen

OD130526/5.4 Trees

The Town Clerk explained that the Council doesn't currently have a tree management safety plan or tree survey for the land it manages and this is an important element of risk assessing any dangerous trees and recommended obtaining a tree survey for all Council land. The Town Clerk also explained that Vicarage Gardens has issues with dark tall trees which block out sunlight and cause issues with the adjoining Information Centre building and recommended works be carried out.

RECOMMENDED

To ask officers to obtain quotations for a tree survey for all Council land and specific works at Vicarage Gardens

WTCM665 - Proposed by Cllr Phil Owen, seconded by Cllr Phil Pritchard

OD130526/6. SERVICES

OD130526/6.1 Bookings Q4

The Town Clerk summarised the report and explained that bookings were up 65% on the previous quarter and asked Council about the request from Dyfed Powys Police to allow the Corn Exchange to be used for a community safety information day in June.

OD130526/6.2 Markets

The Town Clerk gave an update on behalf of the Events and Market Manager and explained that one trader is leaving in June so a reshuffling around of the stalls will be taking place and the Coffee Corner had just received a 5 Food Hygiene rating.

OD130526/6.3 The Hub - April 2026

The Town Clerk summarised the report from the Community Services Manager and answered any queries. The Hub had 460 visits across April and new equipment had just been purchased locally to enhance the Thursday food provision.

OD130526/6.4 Allotments

The Town Clerk summarised the report from the Community Services Manager and explained that the allotment uptake rate is 45.2% and that more publicity was planned to take place in promoting the allotments. The Town Clerk also recommended that the Council become members of the National Allotment Association for £70 per annum which would give the Council templates, legal advice and training for allotments.

RECOMMENDED

To note the report;

**To approve joining the National Allotments Association as members at £70 per annum; and
To approve additional promotional and improvement measures to improve occupancy.**

WTCM666 - Proposed by Cllr Phil Owen, seconded by Cllr Nick Howells

OD130526/6.5 Community Fridge

The Town Clerk summarised the report and explained that due to repeated instances of individuals removing large quantities of food shortly after stock is placed into the fridge, the opening hours had to be altered and that support is available for those individuals in other locations and urged members to refer anyone to the office who needed support.

The Town Clerk also explained that the change in days is a trial and we will be amending shortly to explore the effectiveness of altering the days. There is some work to be done on increasing supply of volunteers to enable the fridge to take on more venues.

OD130526/7. BUSINESS PLANNING & FINANCIAL MATTERS

OD130526/7.1 Interim Strategic Plan Action Plan

The Town Clerk explained that he had met with a company regarding Action PT1 and hoped to report positive news soon. The Mayor asked about the place plan and consultation work and the Town Clerk explained that he would add it to the Events and Planning agenda for further discussion.

OD130526/7.2 Budget and Committee Finance (Month 1)

The Town Clerk reported that one overspend had occurred already due to the change in rateable value on the old bike shop at Motte and Bailey but this was being challenged with the Valuation Office.

OD130526/8. PROJECTS & NEW DEVELOPMENTS

OD130526/8.1 Town Hall Transformation

The Town Clerk gave an update and explained that the application form for the Heritage Lottery was being worked upon by the Council's consultants and due to submission by the end of the month, aside from that the Project Board has been busy preparing the other projects which go alongside it and engaging with local businesses to obtain letters of support. Further information will be available once the bid is submitted.

OD130526/8.2 Welshpool Town Centre Improvement

The Town Clerk explained that we are still awaiting Powys County Council to issue the award letters. A discussion took place regarding the closure on Brook Street and the increased traffic, including lorries, down Red Bank.

OD130526/8.3 Changing Places

The Town Clerk explained that we are finding it difficult to find an installer who will install the surplus sink but that the Operations Manager was exploring alternatives.

OD130526/8.4 Maes y Dre Alternative Premises

The Town Clerk explained that advice around planning permission was still being sought.

OD130526/8.5 Oldford Estate - Play Provision

The Town Clerk reported that a meeting is taking place shortly between the Council and Clwyd Alyn to discuss further however an impasse has been reached in terms of responsibility for play provision. A query was raised regarding the play covenants and the Town Clerk advised that Powys County Council would be the ultimate enforcer of any such covenant.

OD130526/9. OTHER MATTERS

OD130526/9.1 Asset Register

The Town Clerk summarised the Council's asset register and stated that a full copy was available for members on request.

OD130526/10. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA & DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Cllr William Rowell would like to see a discussion on the impact regarding the road closure at Brook Street.

OD130526/11. 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.

WTCM667 - Proposed by Cllr Phil Owen, seconded by Cllr Nick Howells

OD130526/12. BERRIEW ST TOILETS [CONFIDENTIAL]

Cllr Nick Howells left the meeting.

The Town Clerk summarised their report and a debate took place. This item will also be discussed at Full Council at the end of the month.

The meeting finished at 20:33.

Signed:

Dated:

Councillor Phil Pritchard (Chair)

Decision/Action Log

ID		Assigned
WTCM663	RESOLUTION OD130526/4.1 Previous Minutes To approve the minutes from the meeting of the Operations & Development Committee on 08/04/2026.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
WTCM664	RECOMMENDATION OD130526/5.3 Biodiversity Action Plan To approve and adopt the Biodiversity Action Plan for 2026-2028.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
WTCM665	RECOMMENDATION OD130526/5.4 Trees To ask officers to obtain quotations for a tree survey for all Council land and specific works at Vicarage Gardens	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
WTCM666	RECOMMENDATION OD130526/6.4 Allotments To note the report; To approve joining the National Allotments Association as members at £70 per annum; and To approve additional promotional and improvement measures to improve occupancy.	Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
WTCM667	RESOLUTION OD130526/11 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