

PRESCOT TOWN COUNCIL

A meeting of the **COUNCIL** for the **TOWN OF PRESCOT** was held on **THURSDAY, 15TH FEBRUARY 2024** in **PRESCOT TOWN HALL**, commencing at **6.00 P.M.**

ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillors M. Burke, P. Cook, J. Edgar, T. Murray, I. Smith, T. Smith
M. Sommerfield, D. Wilson and F. Wynn.

TOWN COUNCIL OFFICERS PRESENT

A. Spencer (Town Clerk)
L. Sephton (Deputy Town Clerk)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Sarah Craven

112. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs J. Burke and G. Wickens.

113. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

There were no requests from the public to address Council.

114. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest were received from the following: -

- Cllr M. Burke for Items 11, 12, 18 and 19
- Cllr P. Cook for Items 13 and 19
- Cllr J. Edgar for Item 19
- Cllr T. Murray for Items 13, 18 and 19
- Cllr I. Smith for Items 11, 12 and 19
- Cllr T. Smith for Items 13 and 19
- Cllr M. Sommerfield for Item 19
- Cllr D. Wilson for Item 19
- Cllr F. Wynn for Item 19

115. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous Council meeting held on 25th January 2024 be **APPROVED AND SIGNED** as a true and accurate record of the business transacted.

116. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to **NOTE** minutes of:

1. (Draft) Finance, Policy and Human Resources Committee, 18th January 2024
2. (Draft) Events Committee, 1st February 2024

Members **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders to change the order of the agenda and bring forward items 18 and 19.

117. LEASE AGREEMENTS RELATING TO BROWN'S FIELD AND EATON STREET PARK, AND CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED HEADS OF TERMS OFFERED BY KNOWSLEY COUNCIL FOR EACH SITE

The Town Clerk presented the report to Members outlining Council's current responsibilities for each site and their financial impact, and presenting proposed Heads of Terms offered by Knowsley Council and the financial repercussions for Council if these terms were accepted.

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that:-

1. The proposed heads of terms offered by Knowsley Council relating to Brown's Field and Eaton Street Park be rejected, and that leases already in effect continue.
2. That the Town Clerk notifies Knowsley Council of Council's resolution at the earliest opportunity.

118. ANNUAL BUDGET AND PRECEPT DEMAND 2024/25

The Town Clerk presented the proposed 2024/25 budget to Members and outlined the required precept demand if the proposed budget was resolved.

It was **RESOLVED** that:-

1. Council's gross expenditure for 2024/25 be set at £381,427.36.
2. The 2024/25 precept demand be set at £334,336.86, equating to £88.66 per Band D equivalent property, and that the Town Clerk notifies Knowsley Council accordingly.
3. To implement salary and pension increases for 2024/25 in line with recommendations of the National Joint Council for England (NJC) and Merseyside Pension Fund.
4. The proposed charging schedule for 2024/25 as stated at appendix two to the report.

5. In the event of the “Elections” budget line becoming depleted owing to the calling of a/multiple bi-elections during 2024/25, Members resolve cost centre virement and/or the use of Council’s General Reserve to supplement the “Elections” budget line.
6. The Town Clerk obtains quotations for Grounds Maintenance Works for Eaton Street Park and Browns Field (based on previous grounds maintenance specification) and that these quotations are presented at the next meeting of Council for Members to enter into agreement for 2024/25 grounds maintenance works.
7. Works identified at paragraph 6.9 of the report are actioned and resolve to utilise 2023/24 underspends to fund their completion, with remaining underspends being committed to Council’s General Reserve.

119. REPORT ON COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS DURING 2023/24

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to **NOTE** progress against resolutions as presented in Appendix One to the report.

120. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE LEADER

There were no announcements from the Leader.

121. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE TOWN CLERK

The Town Clerk provided the following announcements: -

Prescot Christmas Lights Switch On 2024

Members will recall that at the last meeting of Full Council, the Town Clerk informed Members that a meeting had been convened with Dale Milburn – Executive Director Regeneration and Economic Development (Knowsley Council) and representatives of the Prescot Business Club to discuss the potential for a Christmas Lights Switch-on event in 2024 in addition to other events during the year.

The meeting had been convened following the Christmas Lights Switch on non-event in 2023, where Prescot businesses and the community expressed disappointment that no event went ahead.

The Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk met on Friday 2nd February 2024, and the following were discussed:-

- Knowsley Council is likely to have a significant 2024/25 budget gap (in region of £5.6 million) and KMBC Members are currently being consulted on budget proposals to set a balanced budget in 2024/25.

- The contract for Christmas lights in Prescot and Huyton expires in 2024.
- At the time of meeting, in consideration of budget pressures faced by Knowsley Council, Christmas lights will be installed and switched on, however there will not be a formal switch on event.
- Kirkby will continue to have Christmas lights and a supporting switch on event given that these costs are met by business services charge which is factored into unit rental agreements. Kirkby has a Christmas budget of circa £15,000.00, in addition to a further £55,000 for events throughout the year – all of which is generated through the business service charge.
- Prescot businesses do not have a service charge applied. Therefore, if a budget were to be created for a Christmas Lights Switch-on event, this would be through business donations/sponsorship.
- The combined budget for Christmas Lights and a Switch on event would be in the region of £45,000.00 – Lights £30,000.00 and Event £15,000.00 (NB, this will be the final year under Christmas lights contract)
- Knowsley Council would write to Prescot Town Council and Ward Councillors to ask whether Prescot Town Council may wish to support a Christmas event and/or other community events during 2024/25.
- In terms of other events during the course of 2024/25, again, because of Knowsley Council's budget position, events have been removed or scaled back. Therefore, in 2024/25 planned events in Prescot included:-
 - Serious Nonsense Festival – scaled back to one day
 - Prescot Elizabeth Fayre
 - 50th Anniversary of Knowsley Council – ad hoc events during the year.
- Prescot Business Club representative suggested that businesses may continue to support events in town centre around themes or times of the year e.g. Easter trail.
- A further meeting would be convened once Dale Milburn had written to ward councillors, Prescot Town Council and the Prescot Business Club.

Proposed Pavilion Build at Brown's Field

Members will be aware of Knowsley Council's / the Football Association proposal for the construction of a pavilion at Brown's Field.

The Town Clerk has continued to meet with Knowsley Council, the Football Association, Berkley FC and the Friends of Brown's Field with the latest meeting taking place in December 2023.

Arising from this meeting are plans attached to this announcement, which Knowsley Council intend to submit for planning application before the end of February 2024.

Steve Wells Associates – the consultants appointed by Knowsley Council to undertake planning design and community consultation have completed topographical surveys of the site and will undertake community consultation as part of the planning application submission.

All costs associated with the proposed construction will be met through a combination of S.106 and funding from the FA. However, the FA have indicated that resolution of the lease relating to Brown's Field must be confirmed before any

funding can be made available given inclusion of the unilateral three-month break off clause provides uncertainty of tenure.

In terms of proposed use of the Pavilion, at the time of writing Berkley FC and the Friends of Eaton Street Park will be the natural primary users of the building. However, the community consultation undertaken by Steve Wells Associates may identify other potential users who may want to hire facilities within the building – thereby generating an income to support running costs. Potential additional users include Merseyside Youth Association and Merseyside Police – although these have yet to formally commit to using the building.

122. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS FROM REPRESENTATIVES AT CONFERENCES OF OUTSIDE BODIES

The Town Clerk provided an update following his attendance of the Prescott Business Club on 31st January 2024.

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the report.

123. MAYORAL ENGAGEMENTS

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the Mayoral Engagements listed.

Cllrs I. Smith and M. Burke left the room.

124. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Application Ref	Location	Comments
23/02716/FUL	Whitakers Garden Centre Manchester Road Prescott	No objections
23/02765/LBC	The Clock Face 54 Derby Street Prescot	No objections
23/02773/LBC	The Clock Face 54 Derby Street Prescot	No objections
23/02795/ADV	Clock Face Public House 54 Derby Street Prescott	No objections
23/02796/LBC	Clock Face Public House 54 Derby Street Prescott	No objections
19/00297/NMA3	Land at Greenwoods Close Cross Street And at former Watch Factory Site, off Bookbinders Lane Prescott	No objections

125. PLANNING DECISIONS

No planning decisions were received.

Cllrs I. Smith and M. Burke returned to the room.

126. COMMUNITY FUNDING APPLICATIONS

Members considered community funding applications from three organisations:

1. Knowsley Council who was seeking £250.00 to support the Knowsley Flower Show – specifically to fund a shuttle bus for Prescot residents to attend the Flower Show.

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the sum of £250.00 for the funding application from the Knowsley Council.

2. Green Fingers Community Allotment Plot who was seeking £500.00 of Community Funding to purchase a plastic shed to be used on site.

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the sum of £500.00 for the funding application from Green Fingers Community Allotment Plot.

3. Friends of Eaton Street Park who was seeking £500.00 of Community Funding for renovation works to a storage space within Eaton Street Park which is used to support community activities run by the group.

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the sum of £500.00 for the funding application from the Friends of Eaton Street Park.

127. ARMISTICE DAY 2023 FEEDBACK REPORT

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendations of the report.

128. CHRISTMAS CRACKER 2023 FEEDBACK REPORT

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendations of the report.

129. SENIOR CITIZEN CHRISTMAS DROP IN 2023 FEEDBACK REPORT

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendations of the report.

130. EVENTS CALENDAR 2024-25

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendations of the report.

The meeting closed at 7:26 p.m

Dated: 28th March 2024

**Signed:.....
Cllr Tracey Murray (Mayor of Prescot)**