

1. Community Information

Business Rates: Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief scheme

The rate relief scheme for the financial year 2025/26, for businesses in the tourism, leisure and retail sectors, is open for applications. The scheme is administered by the county council, using funding from Welsh Government, and offers a rate relief cap of 40%, up to a maximum of £110,000, to eligible businesses.

The business must be in the retail, leisure, hospitality or tourism sectors and up to 980 Powys businesses are believed to be eligible. The relief will not be awarded automatically and requires the business to apply.

Further information on the scheme, including the application form and how to apply, is available [here](#)

The pathway to the page from the [homepage](#) of the county council's website is:

Homepage > Services > Council Tax and Business Rates > Business Rates > Find out if you can get a Business Rates discount.

Anti-Poverty Locality Fund

The county council is to create a fund for tackling poverty on a locality basis, to be administered by ward councillors.

The aim of the fund is to support projects whose activities would tackle poverty, either directly, or indirectly by increasing community resilience and sustainability, or increasing the longer-term capacity of the third sector and communities to undertake such action. Activities might include promotion of local economic growth, improvement of skills, support for families and children, community engagement, and the building of capacity for communities to take action more sustainably, through increased volunteer numbers or other kinds of additional support.

£5,000 will be allocated from the fund to each county councillor in Powys to be used for:

- Funding one project in their ward with the full allocation or;
- Two projects in their ward with a share each of the allocation, or;
- Collaborating with a neighbouring ward/s to joint-fund a larger project to benefit those wards collectively

Councillors will be expected to consult with town and community councils on the operation of the fund in their localities.

The administration and monitoring process to be followed by councillors will be finalised in the coming months.

The project is grant-funded from the Shared Prosperity Fund.

For further information, please follow the link in the Cabinet meetings section of this report, below, or visit the page for the Cabinet meeting on 25th March on the county council's corporate calendar, available under the My Council section of the county council's website.

Twenty's Plenty webinar

The campaign organisation Twenty's Plenty For Us held a public webinar on 26th February entitled 'Delivering 20: Reviewing the latest data from Wales and beyond'.

The recording of the event is available [here](#).

The webinar explored the impact of the national 20mph default speed limit in Wales, and included data showing a 28% reduction in casualties on 20/30mph roads since the implementation of the 20mph limit, equating to 678 fewer injuries and 10 fewer deaths; and information from the insurance industry showing that lower speeds leading to reduced collision risks is translating into lower insurance premiums for drivers, estimated currently at £45 per driver per year.

The session covered key concerns such as enforcement, compliance, and public acceptance, and presented evidence from Wales that even with limited enforcement, public acceptance of the 20mph limit is increasing.

For further information, including about upcoming webinars, or to dive deeper into the topic:

- Visit the 20's Plenty website: <https://www.20splenty.org/>
- Email: info@20splenty.org

A conference hosted by the [Vision Zero network](#) and 20's Plenty will be held on 15th May at the Titanic Centre in Liverpool.

New Local Development Plan update

Work is ongoing to prepare the Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP), which will set out the county council's proposals and policies for the future development of land in all areas in Powys except for Bannau Brycheiniog National Park. It will cover the 15-year period up to 2037 and once adopted will guide decisions on planning applications.

The county council has been assessing responses from residents, businesses, developers and other stakeholders following its recent consultation on the initial component of the Plan, the Preferred Strategy, which establishes the overall strategic framework; and where appropriate revising the strategy.

The council continues to assess the Candidate Sites submitted by site proposers for consideration as housing and employment site allocations. The sites are being assessed and filtered against the published Candidate Site Assessment Methodology and the next stage will be to carry out a sustainability appraisal on those sites which have passed the filter process.

The next stage of the process is to develop the Preferred Strategy into the comprehensive Deposit Plan, which will contain the detailed policies to inform how development will be managed across the Powys LDP area. The Deposit Plan will also include the sites identified as being most suitable and deliverable to meet the housing and business needs of the LDP area up to 2037.

Work on the Deposit Plan will be ongoing during Spring and Summer 2025, with the intention to hold a public consultation in late autumn.

Further information, including the assessment methodology mentioned above, can be viewed on the LDP portal on the county council's website, at: <https://ldp.powys.gov.uk>

(The assessment methodology is on the [List of Supporting Documents](#), available on the portal.)

To be kept informed of ongoing developments in the Replacement LDP preparation process, register your interest at: <https://ldp.powys.gov.uk/register>

Broadband support for Mid Wales

New data on broadband coverage released by the UK Government will help to guide the rollout of faster internet access across the Mid Wales region. The updated technical data will support broadband suppliers and policymakers to plan future improvements, and represents

a step closer to enabling access to gigabit-capable broadband for more homes and businesses in Powys in the future.

To help bring faster broadband to their communities, residents and businesses can take the following actions:

- Use Openreach's [Fibre Checker](#) to check their broadband status and learn whether gigabit broadband is available to them.
- Find out whether they are in a Voucher Priority Area. For those in an eligible area, signing up has the potential to influence broadband expansion plans and secure funding for better connectivity. Eligibility can be checked and interest registered at: <https://www.openreach.com/connect-my-community>

The Growing Mid Wales partnership works with businesses, local councils, and the UK Government to bring investment and better broadband to communities across the region.

The rollout of the GMW scheme Project Gigabit is ongoing, and more areas may qualify for support in the future. The latest updates can be obtained via the Growing Mid Wales newsletter, which can be signed up for here: <https://www.growingmidwales.co.uk/>

Powys residents can contact the county council for support to maximise their broadband connectivity, [here](#).

The pathway from the county council [homepage](#) is:

Homepage > Services > Council Information > Digital Powys.

New Customer Experience Framework

A framework to improve customer experience has been developed for the first time by Powys County Council. The framework aims to achieve helpful and constructive interactions with the county council for every person, in every interaction. It includes a Customer Services Charter, which outlines the standards and behaviours customers can expect from the county council and the council's expectations of its customers; a set of seven customer experience principles, to guide how the council designs and delivers its services around a positive and cohesive experience for customers; and an action plan.

The council is asking residents to complete a short survey to provide feedback and to help refine the framework.

The framework is available at: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/customerexperience>

The pathway to the page is as follows:

Homepage > Contact Us (top menu, right) > Customer Experience (scroll down to the bottom of the tiles)

The survey is available until 12th May here

Pathway:

Homepage > Contact Us (top menu, right) > Consultations in Powys (scroll down to bottom tiles) > Our Consultation Hub

Theatr Brycheiniog refurbishment

The refurbishment of Theatr Brycheiniog has been completed.

It included:

- New front of house public toilets and back of house dressing room toilets.
- Upgrade to all internal and external light fittings, increasing energy efficiency.
- New external windows and doors throughout.
- New public lift.
- New cargo lift.
- Upgrade to the air handling system in the auditorium, studio and public areas.

The refurbishment complements improvements made to the theatre's main reception, café and bar in 2022.

The funding for the project was secured by the county council's Economy and Climate Service. 90% of the £1.8 million total was awarded by the UK Government.

The refurbishment works were managed by the county council's Strategic Property Team, and carried out by SWG Group, based in Welshpool, Beacons Business Interiors, based in Brecon, and county council engineers.

Theatr Brycheiniog contains a 477-seat auditorium and a 120-seat studio and rehearsal space. For more information visit its website, here: <https://www.brycheiniog.co.uk>

Ty Brycheiniog update

Tŷ Brycheiniog is the new multi-agency hub on the Brecon Enterprise Park, a refurbished call centre now comprising offices for Powys County Council and for partner organisations.

The aim was to create a cost-effective building for the staff of different partner organisations to work in and to enhance partnership working.

County council staff are in the process of moving from Neuadd Brycheiniog to the new offices.

Y Gaer will remain the main point of contact for members of the public. Some individual appointments between residents and council staff might be arranged at other public buildings.

The funding for the project was secured by the county council's Economy and Climate Service. The UK Government's contribution of £3.5 million represents 90% of the total cost.

Avian influenza disease control zone extended into Powys

Disease control zones declared after a case of Highly Pathogenic Avian influenza H5N1 was confirmed at a premises near Kington, Herefordshire were extended into Powys at the start of March. A 3km protection zone and a 10km surveillance zone have been imposed by Declaratory Order around the Kington premises to limit the risk of disease spread. A part of the 3km protection zone and 10km surveillance zone, declared by Defra and by Welsh Government, extends into Powys.

Within this zone, bird movements and gatherings are restricted and all holdings where birds are kept must be declared.

Powys County Council's Animal Health Team are notifying Powys bird owners within the 3km protection zone and the wider 10km surveillance zone of their obligation to comply with the measures set out in the Declaratory Order.

Bird owners outside the protection zone and surveillance zone are reminded that the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (AIPZ) will remain in force across Wales until further notice.

This means all bird keepers in Wales (whether they have pet birds, or a commercial or a backyard flock) must until further notice continue to abide by the mandatory biosecurity measures, and complete the mandatory biosecurity self-assessment checklist. This includes refraining from touching or picking up any sick or dead birds.

Responsibilities of people who keep birds:

All keepers of birds are asked to:

- be vigilant for signs of the disease, such as increased mortality, respiratory distress and drops in food or water intake, or egg production.
- consult their veterinary surgeon in the first instance if birds are unwell.

If a keeper or their vet suspect that avian influenza could be causing illness in their birds, the keeper must, by law, report this to the Animal and Plant Health Agency.

Keepers must apply strict biosecurity measures to prevent any materials, equipment, vehicles, clothing, feed or bedding that could have been contaminated from wild birds coming onto their premises.

Anyone who finds dead wild birds of any species should report them to the Defra helpline on 03459 33 55 77.

Public health advice remains that the risk to human health from the virus is very low and food standards bodies advise that avian influenzas pose a very low food safety risk for UK consumers.

Latest updates on Avian influenza can be found at: <https://gov.wales/avian-influenza-bird-flu-latest-update>

Growing Mid Wales: employing prison leavers project

Two upcoming events to connect employers and skilled prison leavers have been organised by the Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership (MWRSP), North Wales Regional Skills Partnership (NWRSP), and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The aim of the events is to challenge perceptions, highlight the skills and talents available to businesses from this potential workforce pool, and the potential benefits to businesses, and support employers to consider hiring people with lived experiences of the justice system.

Each event will feature a panel discussion with employers who have successfully hired prison leavers, and first-hand accounts from people with lived experience who have transitioned into the workforce. Sessions led by representatives from the Prison and Probation Service, Working Wales and Communities 4 Work+, and DWP work coaches, will address common concerns and misconceptions about employment after prison.

Ministry of Justice data show that 27% of working-age adults in the UK have a criminal conviction, and that 17% have difficulty finding work following a conviction, irrespective of

the nature of their crimes. Further information is available [here](#)

The events are in North Wales and in Powys, details below.

- Venue Cymru, Llandudno: 8th April: 9am - 12pm
Register [here](#)

- Hope Church, Newtown: 9th April: 9am – 12pm
Register [here](#)

Mid Wales Growth Deal additional funding

In March, the UK and Welsh governments confirmed the release of £11.8m of additional funding for Mid Wales as part of the Mid Wales Growth Deal investment package aimed at boosting the regional economy. The Mid Wales Growth Deal is backed by £110m from both governments.

The announcement came as Ministers toured the first project to secure support from the growth deal, the Elan Valley Lakes development, which aims to set a new benchmark for sustainable tourism.

The first package of work at the development aims to enhance the visitor experience, boost local revenue and safeguard the natural beauty and biodiversity of the Elan Valley, and will focus on two key areas:

- Celtic Rainforest Expansion: Connecting and restoring 117 hectares of fragmented woodland as part of the National Forest for Wales.
- Visitor Centre Design: Initiating redevelopment designs to integrate environmental education and sustainable practices.

This first phase is projected to deliver an annual economic impact of £4m, with an estimated further contribution to the regional economy of £17m by 2040.

Support for businesses to expand into or relocate to Powys

The county council is offering support to businesses that want to expand or relocate to Powys but are hindered by being unable to identify a suitable site or building that meets their needs.

Businesses are asked to provide the county council with information about their ambitions, and what they need in order to realise them: An online form has been created for this purpose and is available [here](#)

Further information about economic development in Powys can also be obtained by emailing the county council's economic development team, at: economicdevelopment@powys.gov.uk

Grant funding for organisations tackling child poverty in Powys

The Local Engagement Pilot Initiatives was a small grant scheme created last year by the county council to enable organisations to deliver community focused initiatives and events to support families experiencing poverty, on low incomes or impacted by the cost of living. The initiative was funded by a grant secured by the county council from the Welsh Government's Child Poverty Innovation and Supporting Communities Grant Scheme.

37 organisations across Powys shared a grant worth £30,000 to help deliver a range of activities and events across Powys, which included multi-sports programmes in Knighton, Newtown and Welshpool for children aged four to 12, family arts activities in Llanfair Caereinion, Llanfyllin and Montgomery, weekly dance sessions in Brecon for children up to the age of five and a healthy breakfast club with creative activities in Llandrindod Wells.

The full list of organisations which received funding from the initiatives is as follows (continues to page 11):

Activ8Kids: £3,810 for a five-day multi-sports programme in Knighton, Newtown, and Welshpool for children aged 4-12 during half-term.

Arts Connection, Cyswllt Celf: £1,077 for family art sessions in Llanfair Caereinion, Llanfyllin, and Montgomery.

Berriew Pre-School: £463.87 for a pre-Christmas trip to Powis Castle and Christmas dinner for children and parents.

Brecon Flying Start: £630 for weekly dance sessions for children aged 0-5.

Brecon Youth Club: £500 for Cooking Good sessions for young people aged 11-25.

Buttington Trewern Playgroup: £258 for stay and play sessions and lunch at a local garden centre for 3-4-year-olds and their parents.

Celf o Gwmpas: £1,500 for 12 weeks of Saturday morning breakfast clubs with healthy options and craft materials.

Community Focused Schools (Brecon): £350 for drop-in sessions for parents to engage with the Family Liaison Officer and support services.

Community Focused Schools and Flying Start: £600 for a Free Fun session during February half-term in Brecon, including an animal experience and face painting.

Cultivate (Cwm Harry) Cyfyngedig: £1,000 for cooking sessions in three schools, culminating in a communal meal.

Cylch Meithrin Carno a Ti a Fi: £1,000 for free activities for children aged 2-4, including Supastrikers, Emma's Donkeys, cooking club, and messy play.

Cylch Meithrin y Drenewydd: £400 for Football Multi-Skills sessions for children aged 3-4.

Dolau Cylch: £450 for an afternoon tea with Santa, a picnic lunch, Christmas crafts, and presents.

Dolau Recreation Association: £914 for free events, including film evenings for families.

Dolau Ti a Fi: £500 for weekly sessions for children aged 0-5, including messy play, a farm visit, storytelling, and pottery painting.

Enfys Fach Nursery (Brecon): £550 for Christmas activities for 2-4-year-olds and their families, including a wreath-making workshop, Christmas party, movie night, and swimming party.

Feathers Youth Club (Welshpool): £700 for activities for young people aged 12-16, including trips to Black Hawk Laser, Inflation, and Shrewsbury Town Football Club.

Knighton and District Community Centre: £534 for workshops for young people aged 11-16, including Christmas decorations and Valentine biscuits.

Llandrindod Community Focused Schools: £350 for Coffee and Croissant mornings for parents to discuss concerns and access support services.

Maesyrhandir County Primary School: £500 for a multi-agency event offering essential provisions and support, including cooking demonstrations.

Mid and North Powys Mind: £1,497 for weekly sessions for 16-25-year-olds, with free hot drinks, toast, art and craft workshops, and sports activities.

Newtown Integrated Family Centre: £600 for three engagement events for Flying Start families, single parents, and Flying Start dads with children aged 0-5.

Newtown Integrated Family Centre: £1,500 to expand its Baby Bank service with a dedicated space, extended hours, and additional sessions.

Neath Port Talbot College (NPTC): £2,700 for sessions at Brecon and Newtown campuses to raise awareness of poverty support and provide warm coats and hygiene packs.

NPTC Student Union: £750 for a project to raise awareness of clothes recycling and consult on poverty, and create a Repair Café and access to second-hand clothes.

Oriel Davies Gallery (Newtown): £1,000 for three day-long creative workshops for 12-18 year-olds with a professional artist and youth worker.

Powys Flying Start: £450 for a trip to a local family farm for Flying Start families.

Powys Flying Start and Schools Service: £490 for an information and engagement event for families, including craft activities and play opportunities.

Priory Church in Wales Primary School: £350 for four Winter Warmer sessions with cooking demonstrations and multi-agency drop-ins for support.

Regent Cinema (Newtown): £350 for a free Christmas Eve movie showing with snacks, drinks, and presents for children.

Rekindle (Newtown): £786 for a horse-riding excursion for 16-25 year-olds, including stable management and grooming.

Severn Wye Energy Agency: £300 for a Family Information Day in Llandrindod Wells on energy saving, money advice, and scam protection, including Baby Bank and Uniform Exchange.

Welshpool Church in Wales School: £84 for weekly parent/carers drop-ins.

Welshpool Integrated Families Centre: £784 for three art sessions for 12-25 year-olds, culminating in an exhibition with meals provided.

Ysgol Golwg Y Cwm: £430 for multi-agency support events highlighting available support for families in Ystradgynlais.

Ysgol Maesydderwen and Powys County Council: £1,000 for a family/community gardening project with three 3-hour after-school sessions.

Ysgol Trefonnen: £300 for a family literacy event for 0-17 year-olds and their families.

Ystradgynlais' Family Liaison Team: £500 for a family learning engagement event, including cooking sessions.

Business growth grants update

Powys Business Growth Grants are available to support businesses to develop or to secure their futures with support to fund capital schemes and one-off revenue projects. The grants are funded by a grant of £1.2 million secured by the county council's Economy and Climate Service from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Seventy-one Powys companies received between £940 and £25,000 each, totalling £994,000, in 2024. The grants helped to create more than 200 new jobs in total (full and part-time) and to safeguard many existing jobs.

The list of successful projects follows (continues to page 17).

Accommodation and food:

Castle Inn, Llangorse: £2,000 towards the cost of creating a new outdoor eating space with a gazebo.

Beacons Guest House, Brecon: £25,000 towards the cost of a new restaurant, bar and function room, with outdoor space.

Ca's Camping: £7,500 towards the cost of building new toilets, showers and a kitchen at their site in Ffrwdgrech.

The Granary, Hay-on-Wye: £4,550 towards the cost of a new awning for the front of the café and restaurant.

Collard Trading: £25,000 towards the cost of kitchen and carvery equipment and dining furniture for The Lion Royal Hotel in Rhayader.

Cwm Chwefru Holiday Cottages, Llanafan Fawr: £4,990 towards the cost of website development to allow direct bookings.

Cwmfarm Charcuterie Products, Ystradgynlais: £4,990 towards the cost of equipment for producing and packaging biltong.

Daisy Bank Caravan Park, Churchstoke: £15,000 towards the costs of building a retreat style glamping unit.

Discover Parks, Presteigne: £25,000 towards the cost of installing a telescope and dome for stargazers and a new garden feature, at their Rockbridge Holiday Park.

Meadow Springs Country and Leisure Park, Trefeglwys: £20,000 towards the cost of paddleboards, kayaks, changing shelters, a jetty and security gates and fencing for a new water sports lake.

Plas Dolguog, Machynlleth: £9,730 towards the cost of creating a sensory garden at their visitor accommodation and events site.

Severn Arms Hotel, Penybont: £25,000 towards the cost of creating a covered outside bar and dining area and making improvements to the toilets.

The Cross Keys, Llanfyllin: £17,400 towards the cost of creating a multi-sensory garden at the back of the community hub, providing meals, food storage and sharing, and a venue for activities and training.

The Walsh, Llanddewi: £3,000 towards the cost of building an outdoor pizza oven, training, an ice cream bike and outdoor crockery for their food and wellbeing business.

Agriculture, forestry and fishing:

RJ Rees, Ffrwdgrech: £12,500 towards the cost of a log cabin for visitors, as part of a farm diversification project.

Llandre Sawn Wood: £25,000 towards the cost of a new building at the Hundred House sawmill.

Mid Wales Incineration: £25,000 towards the cost of lifting equipment for the farm waste and animal carcass collection centre near Nantmel.

No6 Egg Company, Abbeycwmhir: £4,370 towards the cost of farm management software to help with the production of organic free-range eggs.

Arts, entertainment and recreation:

Cantref Adventure Farm, near Brecon: £21,750 towards the cost of improving its family boat ride, training, hiring a videographer and buying new video equipment to help with the promotion of the visitor attraction and accommodation.

Drover Holidays, Hay-on-Wye: £25,000 towards the cost of expanding its cycling hire fleet, a café awning and coffee machine, a large-scale outdoor map, solar panels, vehicle livery, branded staff clothing, training, certification and website development.

Jessica Rising Studio, Presteigne: £5,460 towards the cost of a new website, computer and camera equipment, training, marketing materials and hiring a photographer.

Beyond Breakout, Newtown: £10,000 towards the cost of turning its escape room business into a mobile one, including website redevelopment.

Nomadic Washrooms, Forden: £18,810 towards the cost of a new shower trailer and suction pump, and for the legal fees and software needed to establish a new franchise model.

Snow Broker, Machynlleth: £1,300 towards the cost of a computer, telecoms equipment, software, trade show attendance and travel, and for branded marketing materials.

Construction:

Ben Jones Ecology, Welshpool: £1,640 towards the cost of recording equipment for bat surveys.

Davies, Roberts and Bowen Builders, Montgomery: £21,870 towards the cost of certification, training and a new digger.

Ithon Valley Groundworks, Llanbister: £7,720 towards the cost of a lorry, jackhammer and other road building and maintenance equipment.

Vyrnwy Construction, near Meifod: £25,000 towards the cost of a new digger.

Finance and insurance:

ASW Accountancy, Meifod: £940 towards computers and telecoms equipment for a new branch of the company.

Human health and social work:

Mid Wales Medical Services, Rhayader: £15,000 towards the cost of defibrillators, a ventilator and two ambulances.

Manufacturing:

Advantage Automotive, Presteigne: £25,000 towards the cost of a blow moulding machine.

Bulk Automation, Llanidloes: £25,000 towards the cost of lifting equipment for use at its new premises.

CastAlum, Welshpool: £25,000 towards the cost of updating two of its die-cast machines, as part of a wider refurbishment programme.

CellPath, Newtown: £11,800 towards the cost of an additional heated tank to produce chemicals used for detecting cancer in tissue samples.

Compact Orbital Gears, Rhayader: £10,870 towards the cost of new laptops and software to help with quality assessments and process improvements.

Davlec, Welshpool: £25,000 towards the cost of an automated circuit-board printer.

Dylan Glyn, Caersws: £3,090 towards the cost of woodworking machinery, website development and hiring a photographer.

Heartwood Saunas, Glantwymyn: £25,000 towards the cost of fitting out a new workshop and office, and a forklift truck.

Interior Products Group, Welshpool: £25,000 towards the cost of a large-scale digital printer.

Makefast, Newtown: £25,000 towards the cost of a wire forming machine that would reduce its production costs.

Marches Precast, Presteigne: £15,750 towards the cost of containers, stairs and moulds.

Marrill Powys, Llanfyllin: £15,130 towards the cost of fitting inverter drives to pumps in its paint section, to reduce energy consumption.

Polyco (W Howard), Newtown: £25,000 towards the cost of a dryer for converting MDF waste into loose fill insulation.

Radnor Preserves, Newtown: £31,090 (two grants) towards the cost of jam making equipment, a conveyor belt, printer and shelving.

Stashed Products, Abermule: £25,000 towards the cost of installing mezzanine flooring, workstations, and a marketing and retail suite, and for stacking and picking equipment and training.

Professional, scientific and technical:

KG Ecology, Glasbury: £1,200 towards the cost of recording equipment for bat surveys.

Agri Advisor Legal, Welshpool: £3,710 towards the cost of tele-conferencing equipment and touch-screen laptops, and for hearing loops and magnifying glasses.

Cleobury Project Management, Knucklas: £4,670 towards the cost of a drying system.

Crabb and Company, Machynlleth: £4,000 towards the cost of training.

Reeco Automation, Newtown: £23,390 towards the cost of a new website, marketing support and marketing materials.

Services:

Velocity Fitness, Brecon: £10,000 towards the cost of equipment and weights for the gym in Brecon.

Bradleys Garage, Llanidloes: £25,000 towards the cost of moving its MOT garage to a new location.

Call of the Wild, Abercraf: £5,000 towards the cost of a marketing campaign to raise the profile of its training centre and conference venue.

Eureka Physiocare, Newtown: £15,000 towards the cost of a new customer interaction and sales data base.

LA Ink Printing Studio, Cefn Coch: £3,500 towards the cost of laptops, software, cloud storage, training and website improvements.

WPG (Welshpool Printing Group): £25,000 towards the cost of digital folding and embroidery machines.

Zing!, Newtown: £4,760 towards the cost of a new website and video equipment.

Wholesale and retail:

Markertech, Llangattock: £15,780 towards the cost of fitting out a new warehouse and marketing software, after expanding its range of products.

Old Railway Line Garden Centre, Three Cocks: £25,000 towards the cost of a new plant canopy and entrance, as part of a refurbishment project.

Rodell and Jones, Three Cocks: £10,000 towards the cost of buying scaffolding, security cameras, a storage container, computers, chimney sweeping and sales equipment.

Dressed To Impress, Brecon: £23,940 towards the cost of a new website, pop-up shop venue hires and fittings, and a marketing campaign.

Bee Welsh Honey, Builth Wells: £10,000 towards the cost of building a larger honey extracting room and extra storage space.

Cofion Cynnes, Ystradgynlais: £1,470 towards the cost of an improved display area for greetings cards.

Cosmic Collectables, Welshpool: £1,870 towards the cost of redecorating and furnishing a store room to create an area for playing table-top games.

E George and Son, Caersws: £25,000 towards the cost of buying new loading and delivery vehicles, bulk bagging and moving equipment.

Fleet Vans Direct, Cwm-twrch Isaf: £9,990 towards the cost of woodworking machinery for constructing van linings.

Fuze, Newtown: £5,510 towards the cost of website development and training, computers, software and printers, for use in the design, production and sale of Welsh-themed gifts.

KDM Local, Llandrindod Wells: £2,310 towards the cost of tables, seats, monitors, storage and display units, and a shop counter for its gaming shop.

Knighton and District Community Centre: £1,580 towards the cost of promoting the relaunch of its Community Market.

The Old Temp Fish Bar, Ystradgynlais: £6,330 towards the cost of a new frying range.

Trailhead Fine Foods (Get Jerky), Welshpool: £6,720 towards the cost of scales and software, a blast chiller and boiler for making salt beef.

These grants represent rounds 2 to 8 of the Powys Business Growth Grants programme. Round 1, in 2023, awarded 13 companies a total of £143,000.

For further information about economic development in Powys and the support available:

Email: economicdevelopment@powys.gov.uk

Visit: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/businesses>

Support can also be accessed through Business Wales: <https://businesswales.gov.wales/>

Contacting the county council

Powys county council aims to be an open, accessible and responsive council. Set out below is a range of ways to contact the council, report faults or issues with council services, and make a complaint.

Opening a My Powys Account

A My Powys account can be used for a range of activity, including:

- Keeping a record of requests and reports made by the resident, and information obtained by the resident (such as school bus routes, as discussed above)
- Enabling the resident to view and track requests and reports
- Pre-filling forms submitted by the resident with the resident's address and contact information
- Expediting phone calls made by the resident by enabling the call handler to view and track the
- resident's requests and reports
- Enabling the council to send residents updates about their requests and reports

Residents can open a My Powys account here: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/login>

The pathway is via the 'Log in/Register' function at the top right of the county council's homepage, here: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/>

All residents, with or without a My Powys account, can contact the council by any of the following means:

Contacting the council online

- Use the online live Chat function on the website's Contact Us page, here: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/contact>

The pathway is via the 'Contact Us' function at the top right of the council's homepage.

- Identify the email address for the service required and contact the service direct (on the same Contact Us page, scroll down to the grid of different services at the base of the page)

Contacting the council by phone

General Enquiries: 01597 827 460

Enquiries for a specific person whom the resident can name: 01597 826 000

Contacting the council in person

Several transactions with the council can be undertaken at local libraries, Monday to Friday.

Library staff can signpost residents to the council services required and put them in touch with the appropriate council staff member/s for their enquiry.

Information about all Powys local libraries is available [here](#).

The pathway from the county council's [website](#) is:

Homepage > Services > Libraries (page 2 of the Services section).

Reporting an issue

Residents can report a range of service-related issues directly via the council's website, here: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/816/Report>

Pathway: From the county council's [homepage](#), scroll to the first row of options below the search bar. 'Report' is second on the left. The function enables the uploading of photographs, also.

Complaining and commenting about a service

Residents can submit complaints and comments about any council service directly via the 'Contact Us' page of the county council's website, here: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/>

Scroll down to the grid of options at the base of the page. The complaints and comments function is the first option in the second row in the grid. There is a separate function (second grid on the second row) specifically for complaints and comments about Social Services.

Complaining formally in this way ensures that the complaint is logged and can be tracked by the resident making the complaint.

The direct link to the general complaints page is here: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/complaints>

All of the functions outlined above can be performed via a resident's My Powys account, and 'as a guest' for anyone without an account.

2. Council Information

Estyn reports on standard of education and on Youth Service in Powys

The education and training inspectorate for Wales inspected the council's education services in February. The findings of the inspection were published on 27th March. Inspectors found education in the county to be a cause of significant concern, requiring necessary improvements.

The report contains the following recommendations:

- Ensure that the local authority addresses urgently important school site security issue
- Strengthen the quality and impact of leadership, including political leadership, at all levels
- Strengthen the quality of support and challenge to schools to improve outcomes for all learners, including those with ALN
- Work with partners to rapidly develop and implement a model for 16-19 education that is financially viable and sustainable, and meets the needs of all learners, and considers Welsh-medium and ALN provision.

Estyn acknowledged the council's recent work to strengthen relationships and trust with schools, which has involved engaging with school leaders to consider the barriers preventing them from securing rapid improvements in the quality of the provision for their pupils.

Estyn found that the broad aims and intentions of the council's ten-year Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys are clear and integrated with the council's other strategies, including the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP); and acknowledged that the WESP has had a positive impact on increasing opportunities for children and young people to access their education through the medium of Welsh.

The inspectorate found that the council's early years team have a good oversight and understanding of the non-maintained settings and provide helpful, tailored support which has had a positive impact on improving the provision and leadership in settings and is valued by staff.

Estyn found that the council knows the financial position of its schools well and that finance officers provide timely and clear information to education leaders about the financial position of all schools.

The council has accepted the report and the recommendations and has committed to working with Estyn and with schools and governing bodies to deliver the improvements. The report and recommendations will form the basis of an action plan to address the key areas requiring improvement. Estyn will review the council's progress through a series of monitoring visits.

The Leader of the county council, Cllr James Gibson-Watt, has arranged for an Extraordinary Meeting of Council to take place to set out and discuss the actions that Cabinet Portfolio Holders and the council's Corporate Leadership Team will be taking to address the areas where urgent progress is required and to build on the progress identified in the report. The meeting will take place on 10th April.

Estyn also published its inspection report into the council's Youth Services on 27th March. The report highlights the positive work by the service, which sits within Education Services.

Both reports are available to view on Estyn's website: www.estyn.gov.wales

Cabinet and Full Council meetings

Cabinet met on 4th March and 25th March

Cabinet meetings are open to the public and are live-streamed and recorded for public view. The links to the live-streaming and the webcasts, the Minutes, and all documents discussed, are available on the PCC website.

The pathway to access the papers for all Cabinet, Full Council and Committee meetings is:

PCC homepage > My Council (top menu bar) > Committee Meeting Information > Cabinet and Committee Meetings > Calendar of Meetings > The relevant date and meeting in the calendar grid

Items discussed on 4th March included:

- The county council's strategy for the promotion of Welsh language 2025-30 (approved)
- The Business Rates: retail, leisure and hospitality rates relief scheme (adopted)
- The financial forecast reports for the county council's revenue and capital budgets for the year ending 31st March 2025 (noted; virements approved)
- The recommendations of the Trochi (schools Welsh language immersion programme)

- working group (noted; officers to bring a costed proposals report to Cabinet)
- A proposed charter for families bereaved by public tragedy (adopted)
- The Corporate Safeguarding Board activity report (noted)

The direct link to the page is [here](#)

Items discussed on 25th March included:

- A proposal to establish a new all-age Welsh language medium school in Builth Wells (approved)
- A report on the county council's performance in quarter 3 2024 against the objectives of its Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan, 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener', and mitigating actions where appropriate (accepted)
- A report on the county council's Treasury Management in quarter 3 (noted)
- A report on the actions carried out under the county council's Strategic Risk Register in quarter 3 (noted)
- A proposal for a Locality Anti-Poverty fund to be administered by ward councillors (approved)
- An update report on the Bwyd Powys Food partnership, of which the county council is a member (noted)
- The 30-year financial business plan for the county council's Housing Revenue Account starting 2025/26 (approved)
- A report on the county council's strategic workforce planning (noted)
- A report on the apportionment of funding for Housing Service activity from the Housing Revenue Account and proposed action to address recent identification of disproportionate relative to the funding of the activity from the Housing General Fund (approved)

Two items of the agenda were discussed in confidential session owing in both cases to potential impact on the financial or business affairs of individuals, as per the Access to Information Procedure Rules. These were:

- A proposed acquisition of property by the Housing Revenue Account (approved)
- Recommendations for the future service design and operation model for care homes owned by Powys County Council (approved)

The direct link to the page is [here](#)

Full Council met on 6th March 2025

Items discussed by Full Council included:

- The proposed Council Tax Resolution and Council Tax charges for 2025/26
- A proposed virement amendment to the budget for 2024/25 to remove a request for use of the Housing Revenue Account reserve which is no longer required
- The proposed Pay Policy Statement for 2025/26 setting out the methods by which employee salaries are determined, as required by the Localism Act 2011.

Motions discussed at the meeting comprised:

- A motion that Full Council endorses the report titled The Road Safety Crisis in Powys authored in 2024 by Cllrs Charlton and Church and submitted to Welsh Government; endorses an approach to work with motorcyclists to improve their safety and with partner agencies to improve road safety for all users; and calls on Welsh Government to fund a trial of the Perceptual Rider Information for Maximising Expertise and Enjoyment (PRIMES) motorcycle safety scheme in Powys.
- A motion that Full Council supports the work of a campaign group, Protect Bronglais Services, to prevent reduction of services at Bronglais Hospital in Aberystwyth

Members of the public are invited to submit questions to Full Council. Questions are submitted and responded to in writing in advance of the meeting. Questioners are able to submit one supplementary question each and also to attend Full Council to ask their supplementary questions. They are not required to give advance notice either of their intention to ask a supplementary question or of the question itself.

Questions from members of the public on 6th March comprised:

- A request that the county council ensures that none of its pension fund investments are at risk of benefiting companies that may be linked to potential war crimes
- A question challenging the compliance of the council's Home to School Transport Policy with the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure
- A question challenging the lack of 3G football pitch provision in Powys
- A question challenging road surface maintenance of a specific Powys unclassified road.

The papers for the meeting, the minutes, the answers to the questions from residents, the voting results and the webcast, can be accessed via the pathway outlined above.

The direct link to the page is [here](#)

Further information about public participation at council meetings is available [here](#)

It can be reached via the following pathway:

Powys home page > Contact Us (top right) > Consultations (bottom left) > Get Involved (bottom left) > Document Public Participation (bottom right)

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7th April 2025