

1. Community Information

20 MPH default speed limit review update

The Welsh Government's strategic road network correspondence team have confirmed that they are in the process of reviewing the 20mph and 30mph speed limits on the trunk road network against the national guidance and that the work is likely to complete in the summer, at which time the team will share a list of the trunk roads where the speed limit will change.

The review stage includes engagement between the Trunk Road Agency and local authority officers, which will be completed before the list of roads is finalised. Changes to speed limits as a result of the review will be taken forward through the normal process of traffic regulation orders and will therefore be subject to statutory consultation.

I will keep the community council updated about the process as information is made available to me.

Reducing speeds on roads subject only to the national speed limit

The options available to us to control speeds are different depending on whether the road in question has a speed limit or not. Go Safe's rules prevent speed watching on roads with only the national speed limit, but there are actions that communities can take, such as, with the permission of landowners, putting up their own signs asking people to slow down, or warning that children, walkers, riders, etc use the roads in question.

I would be very happy to approach landowners and to purchase signs, but I aim to do this in collaboration with the communities concerned. I'm going to hold more community discussions about how to reduce speeds, focusing on the roads that currently don't have speed limits. I'll have experts there to provide information and advice, and because the events will be focused specifically on roads without speed limits we should be able to come up with action plans for each road, co-created with residents, and so informed by local knowledge and expertise (as happened at the events last year).

I'm keeping the events on hold at the moment because the Welsh Government is in the process of putting together new Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales guidance for highway authorities. The county council isn't currently assessing requests for new speed limits because it wants to assess them under the new guidance, which will include new assessment criteria and seems likely to move to a more risk-based system. I intend therefore to hold the community events after the new guidance is in place, so that the Highways officers who take part can give us advice and information in light of the new guidance.

While awaiting the new guidance, the Highways service is collating a list of roads currently without speed limits which local communities believe should have speed limits and would like to be

reviewed. These roads will be considered for speed limits after the new guidance is produced.

I've compiled a list of roads in the Llangorse with Bwlch ward currently subject to the national speed limit only on which residents have reported routine and frequent dangerous vehicle speeds, and I'm going to put some messages out into communities asking for feedback in case there are more roads where this is a problem that I don't yet know about. Community Councillors are welcome to make suggestions themselves and to share my request for suggestions with residents.

Bwlch litter picking group update

To date 24 people living in Bwlch have volunteered to be members of the group. Before its first litter picking session, the group must conduct a thorough risk assessment of every route it plans to litter pick from and to create a risk mitigation and management plan. Five members and I met on Thursday 25th April to do that. We confined ourselves, as per the Keep Wales Tidy guidance and the conditions that enable the group to be covered by Keep Wales Tidy insurance during sessions, to the sections of the A40 and the B4560 limited to speeds of 20MPH and 30 MPH. We co-created a thorough assessment and mitigation plan, and included in the plan three residential lanes without pavements - Tregraig, Darren and Old Roads - with the same risk management measures agreed for the section of the B4560 towards Llangorse which is also without a pavement.

I have shared the draft document with all members of the group and it has been agreed by those who have responded to date. I have also submitted it to keep Wales Tidy and it has been approved. A safety briefing on the risk management plan must be given before any session in which new volunteers are litter picking for the first time, either to the whole group or to the new volunteers, separately.

The next step is to arrange a schedule of litter-picking sessions with the group.

Rogue gardener alert

Powys County Council's Trading Standards Service has cautioned residents to be aware that rogue gardeners and landscapers are operating in the Brecon area.

Landscaping is an unregulated industry, and this enables people without gardening or landscaping skills, training or experience to seek gardening and landscaping work. Signs that a gardener might be rogue are statements of lower than average prices, refusal to provide a written quote or references, offers to begin work immediately and asking for cash up front. Claiming that trees are illegal and need to be cut down is a common feature. Common services offered by rogue traders include general building work, landscaping and gardening, roofing, repairs and maintenance and driveway resurfacing. Work is often of very poor quality, can be dangerous and in some cases isn't

completed or even attempted. While costs quoted are often low, actual prices charged are usually excessive and customers providing a rogue trader with work are likely to pay much more ultimately than intended.

The council cautions that rogue traders often target people with vulnerabilities, particularly elderly people, and advises that anyone feeling threatened by an unsolicited doorstep caller should call the police on 101. Residents are asked to remain alert to the signs outlined above, particularly in respect of elderly friends, relatives and neighbours

Should a resident be considering providing work to an unknown tradesperson, the advice of the council's Trading Standards Service is, before going ahead, to:

- Check the trader's credentials, particularly any phone number and address provided by the trader
- Carry out internet research, including a check for any negative reviews
- Ask friends or neighbours if they have heard of the trader or business
- Ask the trader for references, and if possible view an example of their work
- Ask for a written quotation before going ahead. Make sure the trader's name and address is on it and that the price for the work is clear
- Use a trader who is a member of a trade association, and if an unknown trader claims to be a member of an association, check the claim with the trade body
- Keep a note of the trader's vehicle details, including the registration number

The service also advises residents to insist on waiting until the work is completed to their satisfaction before making any payment to the trader, always try to pay by cheque or bank card and never be persuaded to go to their bank or building society to withdraw cash.

Legislation requires cold callers to provide consumers with a 'cancellation notice', giving the consumer 14 days to cancel a contract for any work above £42. Failure to issue a cancellation notice in the correct manner is a criminal offence.

Anyone who thinks they or someone they know may have been a victim of rogue trading is advised to contact the Citizens Advice consumer helpline, free of charge on 0808 223 1133 (English) or 0808 223 1144 (Welsh).

Post-16 education review

The county council has undertaken a strategic review of post-16 education in Powys and the recommendations from the review will be considered by the Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee on 2nd May and by the Cabinet on 13th May.

The recommendations present a long-term vision for post-16 education in Powys and include significant changes to the model of post-16 provision in the county, to address a range of challenges to the current model. These include meeting diverse learning needs, providing equitable access to post-16 education for Welsh-medium and English-medium learners and enhancing the range of subjects available.

The recommended changes aim to achieve a critical mass of learners in each institution in order to meet the needs outlined above, to minimise duplication, improve resource allocation, and attain financial sustainability.

The review identified three options to rationalise sixth form provision, one of which is a completely new model of post-16 centres, one in Newtown and one Brecon, which would coordinate provision in partnership with Neath Port Talbot Group of colleges and other external providers. The review recommends the fostering of stronger collaboration between all providers in the county, to offer a broader range of courses that support local businesses and assist the development of emerging technologies.

The review recommends engagement with key stakeholders to support the development of a preferred way forward. The engagement process would gather feedback from a wide range of perspectives, including headteachers, learners, school staff, governors, parents/carers, Welsh Government and other stakeholders. The learner voice would be central to the development of the preferred way forward.

The review examined Powys school-based provision and does not affect other providers that deliver post-16 education in the county.

Growing Mid Wales partnership newsletter

The April edition of the Growing Mid Wales newsletter provides an account of three years of Shared Prosperity Funding in Mid Wales.

The newsletter is available [here](#):

First Board of the Marches Forward Partnership

The Marches Forward Partnership comprises Herefordshire Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Powys County Council and Shropshire Council and aims to reshape the economic landscape of the Marches region by fostering collaboration and innovation. The Partnership has established a shared commitment to developing a high-productivity rural and town-based economy, and healthy and connected places, and to becoming a 'green economy trailblazer' region.

The Partnership is in process of establishing its first Board, to include the Leaders and Chief Executives of the four councils and representatives of other key strategic partners. The Board will meet quarterly and will focus on identifying and tackling complex and cross-cutting issues more effectively, and collectively and more effectively addressing shared challenges such as funding uncertainties, rising costs, and increasing demands.

The Marches Forward Partnership Board will not make decisions on behalf of any partner organisation but will guide the direction of the partnership's Programme Management Groups to drive agreed, shared, activity. Key stakeholders will be involved, to share individual sector expertise and to provide constructive and informed input to proposals.

The Board's first meeting is scheduled for early summer and will be hosted by Shropshire Council at the Guildhall in Shrewsbury.

Powys Teaching Health Board 'Better Together' programme consultation

The Better Together programme is Powys Teaching Health Board's undertaking to work with key stakeholders and local people to review the provision of its services and develop a plan that meets the health and care needs of Powys over the next 10 to 25 years. The plan will seek to ensure that the health board can respond to changes in illnesses and treatments, invest more into preventing ill health, improve its facilities and build a sustainable workforce to meet future need.

The summary Case for Change, attached, asks for feedback and insight from Powys residents, patients and service users. It seeks to collate views from hundreds of health and care staff in Powys, and builds on feedback shared by patients, service users, partner organisations and the general public through 'compliments, concerns, complaints' processes, surveys, focus groups and other feedback routes, to develop a shared understanding of the problems the Health Board must solve.

The initial engagement began on 28th April and will conclude on 25th May.

The case for change and summary case for change, in document and video forms, and the online form for the engagement, are available on the Better Together page of the Health Board's website, [here](#).

Paper copies and an Easy Read version are available [here](#).

Residents can also request documents and submit their views by phone on: 01874 442917

And by email at: powys.engagement@wales.nhs.uk

Sustainable Powys town and community council engagement

Chairs of town and community councils have received invitations from the county council to send two representatives per council to the next round of Sustainable Powys meetings with town and community councils in May.

The meeting for our area is on 15th May, from 7pm to 9pm, in Ty Brycheiniog, Ffrwdgrech Estate, Brecon.

At a previous meeting I informed councillors that I had proposed a format for the meeting designed to focus discussion on the challenges that the county council and town and community councils face, exploring how we might support each other in the best interests of the residents we serve, and beginning to co-create a plan to enable collaboration and mutual support. My proposal was not accepted by the Corporate Leadership Team on this occasion, but the pilot for better engagement between the county council and residents which I designed with a fellow councillor from North Powys has been agreed by the Leader of the Council and accepted by the CLT, and I will continue to work with officers and Cabinet to develop and implement it.

In the meantime, your participation at the event for our area on 15th May would be very welcome, to help shape future engagement and ensure the development of mutual understanding and a better relationship between our two levels of local government.

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

Education Accelerated Improvement Board

Following the critical Estyn inspection report last month, an internal Accelerated Improvement Board has been established.

The priorities set out by the board are to:

- Support the development of strong and purposeful leadership and performance management of education improvement, including a whole council approach to excellent education in Powys
- Provide robust review and input into the direction of educational improvements
- Problem-solve potential barriers to educational improvement and ensure these are addressed.

The board's function is to drive forward action to meet the inspectorate's recommendations and accelerate improvements in the county's education services.

Cabinet and Full Council meetings

Cabinet met on 8th April 2025

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 8th April included:

- The financial and capital forecasts for the financial year 2024/25.
- The Corporate Complaints Policy (revision)
- The proposed formal vision for the Marches Forward Partnership
- A revised Outline Business Case for Sennybridge County primary School (discussed in confidential session).

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

Full Council met on 10th April 2025

The meeting was an extraordinary meeting to discuss the report in February from the education inspectorate, Estyn, and the response of the Cabinet and Corporate Leadership Team of the council to the report and its recommendations.

The meeting comprised a presentation by the Cabinet followed by a discussion.

The Estyn report and the recordings of the meeting are available on the calendar page for the meeting, via the pathway outlined above.

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

Cabinet meets next on 13th May. The agenda and papers will be published the week before the meeting.

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

Full Council meets next on 15th May. The agenda and papers will be published before the meeting.

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

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.

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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