Contents

Page 1	**Community Information**
Page 2	Review of waste and recycling route optimisation process
	Drain and ditch clearance programme
Page 3	New 'Family Voices' initiative
Page 4	Shamonda virus detected in livestock in Britain for first time.
Page 5	Growth grants to support Powys businesses
Page 6	Identifying families eligible for Attendance Allowance or Pension Credit
Page 7	Warm spaces winter 2026/27
	Secondary school applications process
Page 8	Brecon Active Travel Network next developments
	New bowls carpet at Brecon Leisure Centre
Page 9	Wellbeing resources available from Powys libraries
Page 10	Powys Regional Partnership Board update
	Marches Forward Partnership present to the Senedd and Westminster
Page 11	Tour De France update
Page 13	Contacting the county council
Page 14	Partner agency updates
	Powys Teaching Health Board – additional funding to address waiting times
Page 15	Dyfed Powys Police – Report Fraud update
Page 17	Natural Resources Wales flood warning register
Page 18	UK Be Ready campaign, and Priority Services Register
	Council Information
	Financial planning update
Page 19	Defence Employer Gold Award
	Update on PCC fostering, residential and supported accommodation services
Page 20	Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and Full Council meetings

Note: Direct online links below are to pages in English. To access pages in Welsh, please go to the homepage of the subject website and select your preferred language. For Powys County Council this is Powys.gov.uk

1. Community Information

Review of waste and recycling route optimisation process (discussed at scrutiny committee on 21st October; see Council Information section below)

The recent waste and recycling route optimisation process was undertaken to modernise the waste and recycling service, respond to growing demand and create a more efficient and resilient operating model for the future. The introduction of the new routes in March 2026 caused more disruption than anticipated in some areas, but the first six months' review shows performance has now improved significantly. Reported missed collections fell from 0.47% in March to 0.12% in August and September, and the time taken to return to finish uncompleted rounds is at its lowest level in recent years.

The process has achieved its projected budget saving. The introduction of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) funding enabled the service to retain and add waste and recycling resources to improve resilience and service continuity, and at the same time to reduce pressure on the council's core budget.

The review report acknowledges that governance and project management arrangements should have been stronger and sets out a series of improvements that will be applied to future transformation projects, including clearer governance, stronger financial monitoring and enhanced project planning.

The report is open about the challenges the service faced, the lessons it has learned and the improvements it has made and will make.

The report concludes that the strategic case for route optimisation remains valid and that the service focus is on maintaining service improvements, embedding the lessons learned and continuing to improve reliability for residents across Powys.

Drain and ditch clearance programme

The county council commenced a targeted programme of ditching and drainage works in 2025/26 to help protect roads from flooding and water-related damage, and continues the programme in 2026/27.

The 2026/27 programme is currently being delivered across Powys. Locally sourced contractors are undertaking planned ditching and drainage works, and in-house highways teams are focusing on reactive maintenance, winter service duties and emergency response.

Last year's programme delivered more than 174,000 metres of ditching, almost 180,000 metres of siding work (where verges are cut back so drainage features are visible and functioning), over 11,000 grip reinstatements (where channels are cut through verges to allow water to leave the carriageway and enter drainage systems) and more than 10,800 gullies emptied across the county.

This winter's programme is targeting known drainage issues, local priorities and identified problem areas. It supports the county council's longer-term ambition of developing a rolling programme to address known flooding hotspots and improve drainage across the highway network. Focusing resources on known problem locations in an increasingly targeted approach aims to reduce the risk and impact of highway flooding, improve the resilience of Powys roads and reduce water-related deterioration.

New ‘Family Voices’ initiative

The Powys Parenting Forum network has relaunched as Family Voices Powys.

The network is open to parents, grandparents, foster carers, adoptive parents, kinship carers and anyone with parental responsibility. It offers a welcoming space to share experiences, discuss the issues that matter to families and influence how support and services develop in Powys.

No previous experience or specialist knowledge is needed. Members are asked to attend four online forum meetings each year. Support, guidance and training is provided.

Participation offers members opportunities to:

- share their experiences and help improve services for families
- raise issues affecting parents, carers and children in their communities
- receive training on participation and safeguarding
- access information and resources to share with other families
- represent their communities at Wales-wide events and meetings
- develop communication and organisational skills
- connect with local support and advice.

The county council recognises that listening directly to parents and carers improves understanding of what matters to families and supports services and support that better meet their needs and helps ensure that the experiences of parents, carers and children inform decisions about parenting and family support in Powys.

Further information, including how to register interest in joining the network, is available on the Family Voices Powys page on the Powys Have Your Say platform: https://www.haveyoursaypowys.wales/parenting-forum-powys

Shamonda virus detected in livestock in Britain for first time.

Shamonda virus (SHAV) is an emerging virus identified in animals in several European countries during 2026 and more recently in cattle in Jersey and the Republic of Ireland. In October 2026 SHAV was detected in cattle at two UK dairy farms, one in Powys and one in Shropshire. The samples were collected and tested at APHA laboratories in Weybridge.

Shamonda virus is thought to be spread primarily by biting midges, Culicoides. It is not a notifiable or reportable disease and there is currently no evidence to suggest that additional disease-control measures are required. Defra, Welsh Government, Scottish Government and APHA will continue to monitor the epidemiological situation and review the response as further evidence becomes available.

Livestock keepers are asked to continue to monitor their animals for clinical signs and contact their veterinarian if they have concerns, and to treat animals, based on clinical signs, as early as possible. Vets are asked to familiarise themselves with the clinical signs described for SHAV.

Diagnostic investigation can be discussed with the local APHA Veterinary Investigation Centre (VIC) or Surveillance Pathology Partner, here

Information about the clinical presentations associated with SHAV in cattle, sheep and goats is available in the Disease Information Note, here.

To date, one human case of Shamonda virus infection has been identified, in France, in a person with a severely weakened immune system who was receiving treatment for a serious underlying illness. The person died subsequently and French authorities are continuing to investigate how the infection was acquired and the role SHAV may have played in the person's illness and death. There is currently no evidence of human-to-human transmission, and French public health authorities have not identified a risk to the general population. Despite the virus being found widely in livestock across Europe during 2026, and in animals in other parts of the world for many years, this is the only reported human case of infection by Shamonda virus. There is currently no evidence of wider transmission among humans and the current risk to the general population is considered very low. The UK Health Security Agency is continuing to monitor the situation closely

Shamonda virus is a member of a family of viruses that are typically transmitted between animals by biting midges and the Food Standards Agency has confirmed that there is no evidence that it poses a food safety risk.

SHAV is not a notifiable or reportable animal disease in Britain and there are no mandatory control measures or restrictions. APHA already has diagnostic capability for the virus.

There is currently insufficient evidence that restrictions on livestock movements would provide a proportionate and effective means of controlling transmission. Current evidence indicates that Shamonda virus is not transmitted through direct contact between animals. The World

Health Organisation and the World Organisation for Animal Health state that its only known animal to animal infection route is from mother to foetus during pregnancy.

Government will continue to review the evidence and will review its disease-control response should understanding of Shamonda transmission or its impacts change.

There is currently no vaccine available for Shamonda virus and the WOAH reports that there is currently no specific treatment. Field experience from affected herds in Europe indicates that early use of anti-inflammatory drugs appears to reduce the severity of clinical signs and the duration of illness in some animals.

Government and scientific partners will continue to monitor developments, including emerging evidence on the impact of SHAV in European livestock and the potential need for additional disease-management tools.

Practical options for reducing the risk of infection are limited, because it is transmitted by midges. Housing animals to reduce exposure to midges will be impractical for most farms as it is difficult to create housing that is properly midge proof and still allows adequate airflow. Livestock keepers are advised to work closely with their vets, remain vigilant for signs of disease, and raise concerns promptly.

Two main clinical presentations associated with Shamonda virus (SHAV) have been described. Acute disease has predominantly been described in cattle, particularly adult dairy cattle, but also in young stock. The proportion of animals that become ill or show signs of disease has been variable, but has been 100% in some cases, with clinical signs lasting two to three weeks. Direct deaths have not been described. To date, acute disease has not been observed in sheep or goats.

Congenital abnormalities associated with SHAV have been described in cattle and sheep following in-utero infection.

Further information about the virus is available from the World Organisation for Animal Health, here.

Growth grants to support Powys businesses

Businesses throughout Powys will benefit from Growth Grants totalling £509,000, in the latest round of funding from the Local Growth Fund.

More than 150 applications were received. The assessment process has been completed and applicants have notified of the outcome.

Subject to the completion of funding agreements, 37 businesses across 15 Powys towns and communities, including Brecon, Crickhowell and Hay-on-Wye.

The funding will support projects connected to six of the seven key growth sectors identified in

the county council's Grow in Powys Economic Strategy:

- Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering: £179,000
- Foundational Economy: £143,000
- Construction and Retrofit: £67,000
- Agriculture and Rural Resilience: £60,000
- Tourism, Culture and Events: £49,000
- Energy: £11,000

The Local Growth Fund is funded by the UK Government and managed in Wales by the Welsh Government.

Further information about the individual businesses and projects receiving support will be announced once the funding agreements have been completed.

Identifying families eligible for Attendance Allowance or Pension Credit

The council has identified 661 households that may be eligible for Attendance Allowance or Pension Credit and is writing to them over the next few weeks, encouraging residents to check their eligibility.

The council's Money Advice Team can help residents check what they may be entitled to and support them with applications over the phone, in person at a council office or in their local community or at home.

Free and confidential money advice is available via the following contacts:

For council tenants:

Phone: 01597 827464

Email:

fsogroup@powys.gov.uk

Website:

https://en.powys.gov.uk/Financial-Support-Officers-Information

For all other households:

Phone: 01597 826618

E-mail: moneyadvice@powys.gov.uk

Website: https://en.powys.gov.uk/moneyadvice

Warm spaces winter 2026/27

Warm Spaces provide safe, accessible and inclusive environments that are open to everyone. In addition to offering somewhere warm to spend time, many venues also provide refreshments, advice and support services, as well as activities such as exercise sessions, arts and crafts, and cultural events.

The Powys network of Warm Spaces is being refreshed to ensure residents across Powys have access to welcoming places where they can stay warm, connect with others, and take part in local activities throughout the winter.

Residents can find a Warm Space near them using the directory on the county council's website: https://en.powys.gov.uk/powyswarmspaces

Community groups, organisations and businesses that can provide a Warm Space this winter are encouraged to ensure they are registered.

Any organisation, business or community group interested in being included on the register can find out more and submit their details on a bespoke page in the council's Warm Spaces pages: https://en.powys.gov.uk/creatingwarmspaces

Grant funding is also available to support organisations delivering Warm Spaces, including funding for improvements that enhance the comfort, accessibility or functionality of the space.

Organisations that have previously provided the service should receive an email from the county council asking whether they wish to continue participating and whether any details of their offer have changed.

For more information about establishing a Warm Space in Powys, or to update an existing listing, please contact the team at: costofliving@powys.gov.uk.

Primary school applications process

The applications process for a primary school place for children due to start reception class in September 2027 opened on 1st October 2026 and will close on 15th January 2027.

Applications are open to children born between 1st September 2022 and 31st August 2023.

Parents and carers will receive the results of their application on Friday 16th April 2027.

Further information, including the application and online submission process, and information about different schools, catchment areas, home-to-school transport and admissions arrangements, is available on the council's website, here.

Brecon Active Travel Network next developments

Work to improve walking, wheeling and cycling connections between Brecon and Brynich Roundabout, towards Groesffordd, is expected to begin in November 2026.

The scheme will widen the existing footway on the southern, canal side of the B4601, between the Cambrian Way mini-roundabout and Brynich Roundabout.

Most of the improved route will be shared by pedestrians and cyclists. Within the 20mph zone, the footway will remain for pedestrians, and cyclists will continue to use the carriageway.

The work will be delivered in two phases. The first phase, beginning this month, will improve the section between Cambrian Way, near Morrisons petrol station, and the Pen-y-Bryn junction. The second phase, extending the route towards Brynich Roundabout, is planned for 2027/28.

The scheme is funded through the Welsh Government Active Travel Fund and was identified through the Active Travel Network Map process. It aims to improve accessibility and encourage more people to walk, wheel and cycle for local journeys.

Traffic management will be needed while the improvements are carried out, and the service will plan arrangements to minimise disruption.

New bowls carpet at Brecon Leisure Centre

A new bowls carpet will be installed in the four-rink indoor bowls hall at Brecon Leisure Centre. The existing carpet has reached the end of its operational lifespan and is affecting the quality of play, and replacement is necessary to ensure the continued provision of indoor bowls at the centre.

Brecon Leisure Centre works closely with Brecon Indoor Bowls Club and is committed to supporting the long-term future of the sport in the town.

The work will comprise installing a new indoor bowling carpet and underlay, rink markings and associated equipment and represents an investment of approximately £28,000 in the facility by the county council.

Powys recently welcomed competitors from across Europe for the third Bowls Europe Championships at Llandrindod Wells Bowling Club.

Bowling at the leisure centre involves players of all ages and abilities. The Leisure Centre is operated by Freedom Leisure, commissioned by Powys County Council, and the three organisations collaborate to enable provision of the sport for Brecon and the surrounding area.

The work be undertaken by specialist supplier Greengauge Surfaces between Monday 16th and Friday 20th November.

More information on the facilities available at Brecon Leisure Centre is available on the Freedom Leisure website: https://www.freedom-leisure.co.uk/centres/brecon-leisure-centre/

Wellbeing resources available from Powys libraries

A new initiative, Wintering Well, now provides specially developed wellbeing resources in local libraries across Powys, as part of a new programme supporting people through the winter months.

Wintering Well loan boxes are based in the libraries in the five core Powys towns. This includes Y Gaer in Brecon. They can also be ordered through the county council's online library service and delivered to any other library in Powys. Each box can be borrowed for two weeks.

The boxes were developed by researchers from the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh and created in consultation with people who experience symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). The project follows successful trials in Scottish libraries.

Each box includes a therapeutic light lamp and a guidebook containing ideas for simple indoor and outdoor activities that can help people establish a healthy winter routine. Borrowers will also be able to access a free online course offering further support and information.

Powys libraries volunteer, Sammi Orme, who has trialled one of the boxes, said: "I would definitely use this again. I've found the light has been really beneficial. I've called it the 'happy lamp', instead of the 'SAD lamp'. Over a longer period of time, the boxes can definitely give you some good ideas to boost your happiness during the darkness.

A photographic exhibition, Winter through the eyes of people with lived experience, will accompany the Wintering Well programme at Rhayader Library from 26th October until 6th January 2027. The photographs were taken by people involved in the university research study and reflect their experiences and perceptions of the darker seasons. The exhibition also includes quotations from participants.

The exhibition is expected to move to another Powys library from 11th January 2027.

Powys libraries will also launch a winter photography challenge ahead of Blue Monday on 18th January.

Mood Boosting Adult Reading Challenge

Powys libraries have also launched a Mood Boosting Adult Reading Challenge, which will run until 29th March 2027. The challenge will invite adults to read all 10 books in the Reading Agency's Mood Boosting Collection for 2026.

The collection has been selected for adults aged 18 and over by a panel of young adults aged 18–25. Young people from across the country recommended books that had boosted their

mood. Other young adults, librarians and booksellers read and reviewed the titles to create the final collection.

The list includes fiction and non-fiction chosen because readers found the books uplifting or meaningful. Participants will be challenged to read the complete collection during the five darker months of the year.

The Wintering Well programme was developed with funding from the Economic and Social Research Council. The original project was led by Professor Hester Parr from the University of Glasgow and co-led by Professor Hayden Lorimer from the University of Edinburgh.

Further information about events and activities taking place in Powys libraries, museums and archives is available on the StoriPowys What's On page: https://storipowys.org.uk/whats-on/

More information about the wider programme is available on the University of Glasgow's Wintering Well webpage, here.

Powys Regional Partnership Board update

Powys Regional Partnership Board brings together representatives from Powys County Council, Powys Teaching Health Board, the third sector, housing partners, care providers, citizens and unpaid carers to improve health and wellbeing services across the county through collaborative working.

It has recently appointed a new Chair, Rhiannon Beaumont-Wood, who is the Vice Chair of Powys Teaching Health Board. She will work alongside Co-Vice Chairs Councillor Pete Roberts, Powys County Council's Cabinet Member for a Caring Powys, and Gary Mitchell, Chair of the Board of Trustees for Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations.

The board's tripartite leadership arrangement supports consistency of leadership across Powys public sector bodies and the third sector. Its aim is to ensure partners work together to improve health and wellbeing in Powys.

Marches Forward Partnership present to the Senedd

Regional leaders and industry partners attended events at the Senedd and in Westminster in October, to present a case for investing in solutions to flooding, drought and wildfire risk, to help secure the long-term future of rural communities while driving economic growth.

In the Senedd, representatives from Powys, Monmouthshire, Herefordshire and Shropshire, the Marches Forward Partnership, and organisations including NFU Cymru, Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water and SP Energy Networks, worked together to demonstrate how the region can play a leading role in strengthening food security, water resilience, energy security and economic growth.

Speakers highlighted the need for new approaches to address increasingly frequent flooding, extended dry periods and the growing risk of wildfires.

The MFP is making the case that tackling climate and environmental challenges can also drive economic growth, help create jobs, attract investment and develop new skills while supporting rural communities and businesses.

The event showcased growing support from influential organisations and sector leaders, including NFU Cymru, and reflected a shared belief that the Marches are central to building long-term resilience and prosperity, not peripheral to it.

The event highlighted how established partnerships are already developing practical solutions in areas including flood resilience, environmental investment, rural innovation and sustainable growth and asked for £2.5m from Welsh Government to support that aim.

The event in Westminster made the case for the Marches to be recognised as the 'Capital of Rural Britain': a connected cross-border economy with nationally important strengths in food, farming, water, energy and environmental innovation. Representatives from Shropshire, Herefordshire, Powys and Monmouthshire met with ministers, MPs, investors, infrastructure leaders and regional partners at the House of Commons. They set out how county councils, businesses, universities, agencies and infrastructure partners are already working across geographical and administrative boundaries to develop investable projects and tackle challenges that no single organisation can solve alone.

The MFP's growing pipeline includes work on green growth, business resilience, food and farming, digital innovation and water management.

The partnership is seeking recognition as a national pathfinder for rural growth and resilience, and government support to develop its delivery model, unlock investment and take forward its pipeline of projects.

Tour De France update

The owner and organiser of the Tour de France, Amoury Sport Organisers (ASO) revealed the full route for the 2027 race, and confirmed the location of the sprints on the five British road stages.

Llandrindod Wells will host the intermediate sprint on stage three, on the A483 entering the town. A detailed interactive map of the Welsh stage, showing the location of the sprint and the eight official climbs, can now be found on the dedicated stage three page here.

Ahead of the official presentation of the full route in Paris on 22nd October, Councillors Glyn Preston and Raiff Devlin, and the Llandrindod Wells Breeze women's cycling club, got together to try out the Tour de France intermediate sprint in Llandrindod Wells. Local children from

Ysgol Cefnllys came out to watch the riders. Councillor Preston persevered to the finish line with a puncture, cheered on by the children.

Both the Tour de France and the Tour de France Femmes avec Zwift will start in Britain next summer. The women's team time trial will pass through the heart of London and finish on The Mall, for the first time in the modern history of the race.

Britain's role in the 2027 races was showcased during the official presentation at the Palais des Congrès in Paris on 22nd October. The presentation included the premier of a film featuring a bespoke poem by award-winning performance poet Sophia Thakur, and a Q&A with the Rt Hon Douglas Alexander, Secretary of State for Scotland, UK Government; Stephen Flynn MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport, Scottish Government; and Heledd Fychan, MS, Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Welsh Government.

The Grands Départs represents the Tour de France's fifth visit to Britain. Its three-week process will begin in Edinburgh on Friday 2nd July, and move through three stages in Scotland, north-west England and Wales. Stage 4 will start in Welshpool and travel through Powys towards Cardiff.

All six stages of the two Grands Départs will be broadcast live on free-to-air television in the UK on Five. There will be live coverage on TNT Sports, who will broadcast the entirety of the 2027 races.

More information and regular updates about the 2027 Grands Départs is available on the county council's dedicated webpages, and on the Tour de France official site, at:

- https://en.powys.gov.uk/countdowntotourdefrance2027
- Letourgb.com

Details of the route timings and road closures are expected by early January 2027.

£244,950 investment to help Powys prepare for the 2027 Grand Départ

Powys has received £244,950 in Welsh Government investment to boost cycling tourism, attract visitors and support local economies during the Grand Départ in 2027.

The funding will support cycling hub projects in key cycling destinations across Powys. £100,000 has been allocated to the North Powys Cycle Hubs Project, £100,000 to the South Powys Cycle Hubs Project and £44,950 to the Welshpool Cycle Hub project.

The Powys Cycle Hub projects will provide cycle parking, repair stations, bike-wash facilities, e-bike charging, route improvements, signage and visitor information. The hubs will help cyclists discover nearby attractions, including Powis Castle and the National Cycle Museum, and encourage visitors to explore and spend in local communities.

The Powys projects form part of a £4.5 million Welsh Government investment in cycling

tourism across Wales ahead of the Grand Départ. The investment includes £3.19 million for 54 projects across Wales.

Further information is available on the county council's dedicated page, which includes its Countdown to Tour de France, at: https://en.powys.gov.uk/countdowntotourdefrance2027

Contacting the county 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.

The pathway is via the 'Log in/Register' function at the top right of the council's homepage, here.

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

Contacting the county council online

- Use the online live Chat function on the website's Contact Us page, here.

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 county council by phone

General Enquiries: 01597 827 460

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

Contacting the county 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 online

Residents can report a range of service-related issues directly via the council's website, here.

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 online

Residents can submit complaints and comments about any council service directly via the 'Contact Us' page of the county council's website, at Powys.gov.uk

A direct link to the homepage is here.

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.

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.

Partner updates

Powys Teaching Health Board – additional funding to address 104-week waiting time standards

Powys Teaching Health Board has received Welsh Government funding of £3.5 million to help reduce waiting times for patients who require planned treatment and diagnostic services.

Eliminating waits for treatment of more than 104 weeks is an ongoing Welsh Government national priority. The funding forms part of a Welsh Government £145m programme to end

two-year waits and to bring the overall waiting list down to pre-pandemic levels before the end of this Senedd term. The Powys funding will support the health board's ongoing work to bring PtHB waiting times in line with NHS Wales waiting time standards and national planned care recovery objectives.

For Powys patients receiving care in other parts of Wales, funding has been allocated directly to the health boards providing those services.

For Powys patients receiving treatment from providers in England, funding has been allocated to Powys Teaching Health Board to work with NHS Trusts in England to secure additional activity and reduce the risk of patients waiting longer than two years for treatment.

The package also includes investment to support diagnostic services and improve access to essential tests within Powys, to help patients move more quickly through their care pathway.

The funding forms part of a wider national programme to reduce waiting times, increase planned care activity and improve patient access to NHS services across Wales.

Dyfed Powys Police – Report Fraud update

As part of Cybersecurity Awareness Month, DPP's Report Fraud service has launched a campaign encouraging people to better protect themselves online by switching to passkeys and strengthening account security.

Report Fraud has reported that stolen sums from email and social media hacking surged by 417 per cent in the last year. Reported losses rose from £1.2 million in 2024/25 to £6.3 million in 2025/26. Reports of account hacking increased by 34 per cent, making it the most reported form of cyber-crime in the UK. Other types of account takeovers were also identified, including gaming and streaming accounts, and travel and online delivery accounts.

Account hacking occurs when criminals gain unauthorised access to an email, social media or online account and use it to commit further fraud. Once an account has been compromised, fraudsters may impersonate the account owner to target family and friends, request money, sell fake tickets or perpetrate other types of fraud. One of the most common themes identified from reports is criminals using hacked accounts to impersonate trusted contacts.

What starts as a single compromised account can lead quickly wider impacts. Victims may lose access to important accounts, have personal information exposed and face the distress of knowing criminals could be using their identity to target others. Friends, family members and colleagues may also become victims if they mistakenly trust messages sent from a hacked account.

Report Fraud has set out simple steps to improve online security and make it harder for criminals to gain access to accounts. These include:

Using passkeys wherever they are available.

Where passkeys are unavailable, using strong, unique passwords generated by a password manager.

Enabling two-step verification whenever possible.

Reviewing privacy settings and ensure social media content is only visible to trusted people.

Being careful about sharing personal information online. Details such as birthdays, home location, family relationships or pet names can be used by fraudsters to build a picture of the person to make scams more convincing.

Verifying unexpected messages from known people by not automatically assuming them to be genuine, and by checking with the known person through another method before responding.

Anyone who suspects one of their accounts may have been hacked is advised to report it to Report Fraud and seek advice on recovering access and securing their accounts.

Amazon impersonation fraud

Report Fraud is running a specific campaign to raise awareness about fraudulent impersonation of Amazon. Within a nine day monitoring period, Report Fraud received 110 reports of Amazon impersonation. People aged between 50 to 79 were most impacted and accounted for 60% of reports.

Analysis by Report Fraud identified an emerging trend in which a criminal claiming to be from Amazon informs the intended victim of alleged suspicious activity on their Amazon account, then claims that unauthorised items have been added to the victim’s Amazon basket. To make the fraud appear genuine, they provide delivery addresses that do not belong to the victim and claim that someone is attempting to purchase the items using the victim’s bank details. The criminal then tells the victim that the transactions can be stopped and their account secured if they follow specific instructions. These include being asked to download money transfer apps, provide legitimate documents, such as a passport or driving licence, for "verification" purposes, and download remote access software. The criminals use the money apps to move money into accounts they control, use the information from the legitimate documents to facilitate the fraud and transfer money, and use the remote access software to take control of the victim’s device and carry out transactions purportedly on the victim's behalf but in reality stealing funds without their knowledge.

Victims are also told that gift cards have been added to their Amazon basket without permission. The criminals then claim urgent action is needed to stop the purchases and trick victims into authorising payments, which are instead sent to accounts under the criminals' control.

Report Fraud raises awareness that genuine service providers, banks and the police will never call asking a customer to transfer money, share personal financial details or hand over remote

control of their computer, phone or other device.

The services advises anyone receiving a call that is out of the ordinary in a similar way to disconnect the call, then check if it's genuine by contacting the organisation directly using contact details obtained from an official website or app, or 159 for contacting any bank.

Report Fraud stresses that the caller ID display on the phone's screen is not proof of identity.

Fraud or suspected fraud can be reported by:

1.Sending a text to 7726 with the word 'Call' followed by the scam caller's number.

2.Contacting Report Fraud online or by calling 0300 123 2040.

Amazon has a dedicated webpage with information on how to identify and avoid scams impersonating Amazon, here.

Natural Resources Wales flood warning register

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is working with local authorities and other key partners to prepare for severe weather events, including flooding.

One in seven homes and businesses in Wales is at risk of flooding and the climate emergency will bring more extreme weather.

NRW operates a dedicated flood warning information service for Wales, to help people to know, understand and mitigate their flood risk. This includes an early warning service for people in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea, and a dedicated phone service, Floodline.

The flood risk information service is being developed to enable users to manage their own account online and customise their warning preferences (currently this is done by contacting the service via Floodline).

The improved service will also users to specify other locations of interest, such as a business or family member's home, so that they are informed about the potential for flooding in all of the places that are relevant to their lives.

The service currently includes:

An online flood risk postcode checker, here

A sign up service for flood warnings from rivers and the sea, here

Steps for being prepared when flooding is forecast, here.

Floodline on 0345 988 1188 (Typetalk: 0345 602 634).

Further information is available on the NRW website, at: naturalresources.wales/flooding

UK Be Ready campaign, and Priority Services Register

People who might need extra support during a gas, electricity or water outage may be able to sign up for the Priority Services Register (PSR). The PSR is a free service that ensures utility companies know who may need extra assistance. Many households are eligible, including those of pensionable age, people with long-term illnesses, and families with children under 5.

More information about how to prepare for outages, and how to check eligibility for extra help, is available on the Be Ready website at: https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/

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2. Council Information

Financial planning update, considered by Cabinet on 20th October

A financial planning update was considered by the Finance Panel on 15th October and by Cabinet on 20th October.

The report set out that Powys County Council is facing an estimated £10 million budget gap in 2027/28, with rising costs and growing demand continuing to put pressure on local services. It shows the projected gap has increased from £9.7 million in February, with a cumulative shortfall of £51.8 million forecast over five years.

Pressures include general inflation and rising interest rates, nationally agreed pay awards, energy and borrowing costs, increasing demand for social care, homelessness support, improvements in education, and provision for learners with additional learning needs. The report also highlights uncertainty around future funding.

The report focuses on early estimates, and Cabinet and officers will continue to review the figures as it develops its budget plans.

As part of that process, Cabinet and officers will continue to review how services are delivered, including opportunities to simplify processes, use digital technology, manage demand, increase income and make better use of buildings.

The financial model currently assumes a 5% Council Tax increase, but no decision has been made. The figure is for planning purposes and the final proposal will consider affordability for residents alongside the need to fund vital services.

The underspend reported at the end of the last financial year resulted from unexpected Welsh Government funding, and a small increase in income and savings achieved through service efficiencies. As this additional funding and income cannot be guaranteed each year, it does not remove the financial challenge facing the council and the council will plan its 2027/28 budget based on the resources it knows will be available. This means that the projected £10 million gap remains.

The council's assumptions will be updated as further information becomes available from the UK and Welsh governments, ahead of the final budget for 2027/28.

The report is available from the calendar page for the Cabinet meeting, here.

Defence Employer Gold Award

The county council has been awarded the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award by the Ministry of Defence. The award recognises outstanding support for the Armed Forces community.

The county council was one of eight Welsh employers honoured at the presentation event in September and one of 162 organisations across the UK to receive the Gold Award this year.

The award is the highest level within the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme. It recognises organisations that employ and support serving members of the Armed Forces, reservists, veterans and military families.

To achieve Gold Award status, employers must demonstrate a sustained commitment that goes well beyond the scheme's minimum requirements. This includes providing at least 10 days' additional paid leave for reservists, implementing supportive employment policies and advocating for the Armed Forces across their networks and sectors.

The Armed Forces Covenant is a national promise that those who serve, or have served, in the Armed Forces, together with their families, should be treated fairly.

Update on PCC fostering, residential and supported accommodation services

More children and young people are being cared for closer to home following the expansion of the county council's fostering, residential and supported accommodation services.

The improvements are helping to maintain family, school and community connections, and to reduce reliance on costly external placements.

They comprise:

Five council-run children's homes now operating across Powys, providing 13 bed spaces for local children and young people.

More children living with Powys foster carers, with in-house fostering placements increasing from 54% to 63% over the past year.

Fewer children placed with for-profit providers, with numbers down from 56 in September 2025 to 51 in September 2026.

25 supported accommodation places for care leavers provided through a commissioned not-

for-profit service.

Plans progressing to create a further eight bed spaces through the development of additional in-house 16+ accommodation.

A renovated residential home in Brecon will provide two additional specialist disability placements, helping more children return to care closer to home.

The work supports the county council meet its legal obligations under the Health and Social Care (Wales) Act 2025, which introduced a phased transition towards not-for-profit provision for children looked after across Wales. The legislation aims to ensure that public funding is reinvested in services for children and young people rather than used to generate private profit.

The county council is also preparing its first Annual Sufficiency Plan, to set out the council's current and future placement needs and explain how it intends to secure enough high-quality, local, not-for-profit provision while continuing to reduce its reliance on for-profit providers. The plan will be submitted to the Welsh Government by December 2026.

Further information about becoming a Powys foster carer is available direct from the team, as follows:

Phone: 0800 223 0627

Email: fostering@powys.gov.uk

Online form: https://powys.fosterwales.gov.wales/

Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and Full Council meetings

Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and Full Council meetings are all 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 material for all Cabinet, Full Council and Committee meetings is:

PCC homepage > My Council (top menu bar)

From the My Council page, all public meetings can be accessed from the left-hand menu, via **Calendar** or via **Meetings.**

Public participation at Full Council meetings

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 right) > Document Public Participation (bottom right)

Cabinet met on 20th October.

Items discussed included:

- A proposal to delay the first phase of the development of the agreed Welsh Medium high school in Builth Wells.
- An update report on the county council's financial planning.
- The treasury management quarter 1 report
- The annual information governance report.
- The Local Development Plan annual monitoring report.

The agenda, papers and livestream webcast link are available on the calendar page for 22nd September, via the pathway set out above.

A direct link to the page is here.

The Economy Residents and Communities committee met on 14th October.

The committee focused on the county council's quarter 1 performance report.

The agenda papers, minutes and webcast recording are available on the calendar page for the meeting, via the pathway outlined above.

A direct link to the page is here.

Joint Economy, Residents and Communities, and Governance Audit, committees meeting

A joint scrutiny meeting of the Economy, Residents and Communities scrutiny committee and the Governance and Audit committee took place on 21st October.

The joint committee considered a financial report in relation to the county council's waste and recycling route optimisation process, and the waste and recycling service's response to recommendations made previously in relation to the process by both committees.

The agenda papers, minutes and webcast recording of the meeting are available on the calendar page for the meeting, via the pathway outlined above.

A direct link to the page is here.

Information about other scrutiny committees (Learning and Skills, Health and Care and Finance Panel) is available via the calendar or meetings pages as set out above.

Full Council met on 8th October.

Items discussed included:

Questions from the public

- A question about culvert maintenance and flood risk management.
- A request that communications about pending road closures are improved.

Reports and proposals

- A report on the independent Panel Performance Assessment of Powys County Council, and the county council's response.
- A recommendation from the Democratic Services Committee to amend some sections of the Constitution related to whistleblowing, pensions and contract procedures.
- A proposal to introduce a stepped increase approach to the Council Tax premium on long-term empty properties.
- A report on Director recruitment and grade review.

Appointments

To appoint a councillor to the Powys Sports Association

Motions

- Strengthening Safeguarding Arrangements for Electively Home Educated Children
- Requirement for Full Council Determination of School Closure Proposals
- Protecting Hospitals and Hospital Bed Capacity in Powys
- Additional Funding to the Local Authority for Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

The agenda, papers, minutes and webcast recording are available on the calendar page for 8th October, via the pathway set out above.

A direct link to the page is here.

Public participation in next county council meeting

Full council meets next on 3rd December 2026.

Residents who would like to ask a question at full council are invited to submit their questions by 5pm on 11th November.

Questions must relate to the county and the services the county council provides, and if

accepted by the Chair of Powys County Council they will be added to the agenda in the order in which they are received, up to a total of four questions.

If the council receives more than four questions, other valid questions will be held over until the full council meeting in March 2027.

Questions should be submitted by email to: publicquestions@powys.gov.uk

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Sian Cox, Councillor for Llangors with Bwlch

4th November 2026

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