PENWORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY CENTRES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting held at Priory Lane Community Centre on Tuesday 18th December 2025 at 1:00pm.

Committee Members Present: Councillors D Bennett, H Crewe, A Rae, D Shaw, and I Watkinson.

Substitute Committee Members Present: Councillors G Crewe and T Flannery.

In attendance: Councillor T Young
Marie Curran, Town Manager
Daniel Guise, Democratic Services Officer
Representatives of Whiteley Eaves Ltd, David Whiteley and Robson Thornton

21. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Jim Patten, Robert Taylor and Angela Turner.

Cllr Patten was substituted by Cllr Flannery.
Cllr Turner was substituted by Cllr G Crewe.

22. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

23. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Cllr Shaw proposed that the minutes of the last meeting be approved. Cllr Rae seconded the proposal.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the last meeting, held on 18th November 2025, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

24. Priory Lane Community Centre and Penwortham Arts Centre Refurbishment Works

The Town Manager introduced the representatives of Whiteley Eaves Ltd, who had been appointed to project manage the refurbishment at the centres. She explained that it was possible the Council would like to extend the scope of the work beyond the most critical jobs, and to explore greener alternatives.

The Committee discussed the options at length. Cllr Bennett noted that funds were a lot more limited when the need for refurbishments was first investigated. Cllr Bennett commented that, although at the time it made sense to pick out the most urgent items, the situation had changed and it was possible look at a fuller, more holistic refurbishment. Cllr Rae noted that a holistic approach may make it easier to obtain grant funding, and advised that a query had been sent to the local MP, to see what may be available. Whiteley Eaves advised that the holistic approach may be more attractive for contractors.

Cllr Bennett suggested that the process for The Venue (Penwortham Arts Centre) be slowed down, and that the Council focus on the work at Priory Lane. He explained this was because of uncertainty internally about how The Venue would be managed, and precisely how the building would be used.

Amongst several other details, councillors discussed obtaining a Simplified Building Energy Model (SBEM) for Priory Lane Community Centre. Whiteley Eaves advised that this would require them to engage a firm of specialist mechanical and electrical engineers, and they had a trusted partner who they would usually rely on for this. Whiteley Eaves also advised that the process would produce recommendations for enhancements to the building's energy efficiency and sensible aspirations for making the building more eco-friendly.

Cllr Rae asked about the presence of asbestos at Priory Lane Community Centre. The Democratic Services Officer advised that there was known to be asbestos in some cellar areas. These had warning signage on the doors, and were kept locked and off-limits. Councillors identified a need for the whole centre to be tested for the presence of asbestos. Whiteley Eaves noted that these were destructive tests which could not be conducted while ordinary centre activity took place. The Town Manager advised that Whiteley Eaves would need to liaise with her, to arrange for the tests to be conducted safely.

RESOLVED: i) that Whitely Eaves be instructed to source 3 quotes for comprehensive asbestos testing at Priory Lane Community Centre;

ii) that Whiteley Eaves be instructed to source a quote from their preferred partner for completing an SBEM at Priory Lane Community Centre, and a second quote for the same service to provide a benchmark; and

iii) that all the above quotes be reported back to the Committee for consideration.

……Chairman

(The meeting finished at 1:40pm.)

The minutes of this meeting will be published on the website
www.penworthamtowncouncil.gov.uk