



MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

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Minutes of meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee of Monmouth Town Council Held on Monday 8th January 2007 in the Community Room starting at 7.00 pm.

Present: Chairman, Councillor G F W Buckland
The Mayor Councillor T Christopher, Councillor R Bond, Councillor Mrs S Chivers,
Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst, Councillor R Hayward and Councillor Mrs A Were

In attendance: Mrs Sarah Robson Town Clerk. Councillor J Fletcher.

1. Apologies were received from: -

Councillor Mrs V Mitchell and Councillor D Stevens

2. 'Declarations of interest' in items on the agenda: -

N/A

3. To consider for approval the minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee of 20th November 2006.

The minutes were approved and signed as correct

Proposed Councillor Hayward
Seconded Councillor Christopher

Unanimous

4. a To receive the summary of expenditure.

Decision Required To approve the accounts between 14/11/2006 & 31/12/2006 for payment.
(page 1)

The accounts were received and approved for payment.

Proposed Councillor Bond
Seconded Councillor Hayward

Unanimous

b To review a statement of the bank reconciliation's as at 11/12/2006 (pages 2,3 & 4).

The bank reconciliation's were received and approved as correct.

Proposed Councillor Bond
Seconded Councillor Hayward

Unanimous

C To consider raising a virement to cover over expenditure on the below budget items:

Officer Travel is over budget by £13.00
This is due to increased travelling by the Clerk to meetings and courses.

Members agreed to raise a virement in the sum of £100.00 from the contingency fund.

Utilities is over budget by £230.00.with pending bills for payment in the sum of £100.00
This is due to the large increase in wholesale electricity costs.

Members agreed to raise a virement in the sum of £500.00 from the contingency fund to cover the next quarters bill.

Proposed Councillor Buckland
Seconded Councillor Hayward

Unanimous

5. To consider the authorisation of payment of the following invoices and decide where to allocate spending within the agreed budget:

Open Spaces Soc Renewal of Subscription £30.00

Members agreed to continue with this subscription and make the payment from the contingency fund.

**Proposed Councillor Mrs Chivers
Seconded Councillor Mrs Were**

Unanimous

6. To Receive RFO's Report.

N/A

7. To confirm recommendation to full council re budget and precept demand.

Councillor Buckland advised members that he would suggest that the recommendation to Full Council should be based on a 3% rise on last years precept demand of £124,367.00, making a total request of £128,098.00. It was agreed that this would be the recommendation of the committee.

**Proposed Councillor Hayward
Seconded Councillor Bond**

Unanimous

8. To consider setting up a Shire Hall working group.

Councillor Buckland confirmed that the HLF have passed the application for approval and that steps were now being taken to plan for the future refurbishment of the Shire Hall. A meeting had taken place between The Clerk and Councillors Buckland and Hayward with Jo Carter from MCC Asset Management to discuss a number of issues. It was suggested that it would be useful to continue to have quarterly meetings on this basis to review development of the project and feedback information. In addition to this a working group should be set up to manage change in order to minimise disruption and to provide continuity. The group should be made up of 4 Town Council members, an officer from OSS to represent markets, and a representative from TIC.

It was agreed to defer this item to be discussed in further detail at the next Full Council.

9. To agree purchase of new photocopier for Clerk's office.

Members were advised that the lease for the present copier is due to expire on 3rd April 2007. The Clerk has seen three companies with a view to a replacement machine that will offer more functions and give greater flexibility. The proposed machine will offer colour copying and printing facilities, scanning options and also e.mail as it will be connected to the network system. The three companies that made presentations were BOSS of Hereford, Konica Minolta Business Solutions of Cardiff, and Canon. Canon declined to quote, and Konica was the cheaper of the two companies that did provide a quote. The cheapest quote will cost £1068.16 per annum with a three year lease and cost per copy is 0.49 pence for black, and 5.5 pence for colour. It was also noted that the cost per copy price of the quote from Konica Minolta Business Solutions was also cheaper than their competitor. The Clerk advised that these costs had been incorporated into the budget for next year and recommended that the cheaper tender be accepted and members agreed to this.

**Proposed Councillor Bond
Seconded Councillor Christopher**

Unanimous

10. To consider options regarding change of payroll administration, and agree new charges.

Members were asked to consider a number of options that The Clerk provided including annual costings. Four companies had been asked to provide quotes and it was noted that there was a big difference in cost between the highest and lowest. The Clerk was asked to contact a local company to see whether or not they could match the cheapest quote that had been provided but if they could not then it was agreed by members that the administration of the payroll would remain with the present provider.

**Proposed Councillor Buckland
Seconded Councillor Bond**

Unanimous

11. To consider request from Community Affairs Committee to use residual funding from Community Grants budget towards contribution for 'Bordertown 20 years on' and 'World Challenge'.

Councillor Mrs Dewhurst reported that a number of requests for donations had been received by the Community Affairs committee. The committee had met recently and decided that as there are residual funds left in the Community Grants Award budget the monies should be distributed to worthwhile causes. Members of the Finance and Policy Committee were asked to approve a £300.00 donation to 'Bordertown 20 years on' and this was agreed unanimously. Secondly a request for funding towards 'World Challenge' from an individual student from Monmouth Comprehensive School, members however felt that it would be more appropriate to make a donation towards the group as a whole rather than an individual. And it was agreed that a maximum of £500.00 could be awarded to the group, and that the final decision regarding the actual amount should be left to the discretion on the Community Committee.

**Proposed Councillor Mrs Dewhurst
Seconded Councillor Bond**

Unanimous

12. Matters arising from previous meetings: -

i) Risk Assessment.

The Clerk advised members that the implementation of a risk register was still on going. Further progress would be reported in due course.

ii) Sworn Declaration by Derek Watts re use of Shire Hall in 1974.

The Clerk advised members that this has now been completed. Mr Watts accompanied her to the Solicitors on 7th December to swear that the declaration was true and accurate. The original copy will be placed in The Shire Hall file which is located in the Clerk's office.

iii) Review Staff Appraisals.

The Clerk confirmed to members that this would be completed prior to the next F&P meeting and had been deferred due to circumstances in the office.

iv) Review change of electricity supplier.

The Clerk provided members with a spreadsheet showing a comparison of prices between several suppliers. Members were advised that by changing from the present supplier, who was the most expensive to the cheapest supplier a saving of approximately three hundred pounds per annum could be achieved, based on the current information. Councillor Mrs Were requested that another quote be obtained from a company offering a renewable energy source, and this was agreed. Members agreed unanimously that they would give The Clerk delegated authority to make the decision based on the information available in order to achieve a cost saving.

v) CCTV Partnership Agreement Update.

Councillor Hayward advised members that at the recent CCTV User Group meeting in December it had been revealed that a problem had been identified with the recording equipment at the monitoring centre. The cameras have not been affected by this technical issue and monitoring remains the same. In light of this new development the partnership agreement has been put on hold while other suitable alternatives are looked into. This might present an opportunity to move the facility to a number of locations, amongst those suggested were County Hall, Police Headquarters or even local Police Stations. There is another meeting due shortly and members will be updated once there is more information available. Councillor Buckland reminded members that funding for the CCTV system would finish at the end of this financial year and that there is no provision with the 2007/8 budget for continuing with funding the system.

vi) Receive Town Council half yearly report on paid invoices and petty cash vouchers.

Councillor Hayward confirmed that this has now been completed, and that he could only find one minor anomaly with the VAT which only amounted to less than a pound. Other than that all duties have been completed to his satisfaction.

vii) Any other matters arising from Finance and Policy Meeting of 20th November not covered elsewhere. As they are not specifically listed, no decisions may be taken on any of these other matters arising.

N/A

13. Any Other Business, ie general information or notification of future discussions, no decisions can be made at this meeting on items that arise under this heading.

Members asked when the Christmas Lights would be taken down. The Clerk advised that a meeting would be taking place on 9th Jan with the Contractor in order to discuss and review this years provision. Once that had taken place arrangements would be made for them to be removed as soon as possible. The Clerk confirmed that any feedback from the meeting would be given as a report at the next Environmental Meeting. Councillor Buckland thanked The Clerk for her hard work and efforts in resolving the problems that been encountered with the lack of supply from the lighting columns to the new lights.

14. Next meeting Old Library Community Room Monday 12th February 2007.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.05 pm.