



MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Mayor's Parlour, Shire Hall, Monmouth, NP25 3DY
Telephone number:(Town Clerk's Office) 01600 715662
Email address townclerk@monmouth.gov.uk

**Minutes of meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee of Monmouth Town Council
Held on Monday 12th February 2007 in the Community Room starting at 7.00 pm.**

Present: Deputy Chairman, Councillor R Hayward
The Mayor Councillor T Christopher, Councillor Mrs S Chivers, Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst,
Councillor N Hacket Pain, Councillor Mrs V Mitchell and Councillor D Stevens

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

1. Apologies were received from: -

Councillor G F W Buckland, Councillor R Bond and Councillor L Robson

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

N/A

3. To consider for approval the minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee of 8th January 2007.

The minutes were approved and signed as correct

**Proposed Councillor Mrs Chivers
Seconded Councillor Stevens**

Unanimous

a To receive the summary of expenditure.

Decision Required To approve the accounts between 01/01/2007 & 31/01/2007 for payment.

The accounts were received and approved for payment.

**Proposed Councillor Hacket Pain
Seconded Councillor Mrs Chivers**

Unanimous

b To review a statement of the bank reconciliation's as at 31/01/2007 (pages 2,3 & 4).

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

**Proposed Councillor Christopher
Seconded Councillor Stevens**

Unanimous

c To review budget and year to date expenditure.

The Clerk brought a number of items of expenditure to member's attention that would need virements to be agreed at the next meeting. There was also confirmation of those items that were still awaiting to receive invoices prior to the year end and two items, namely Future Development Plans and Clerks Contingency Fund where no expenditure had been made and the balance would be transferred at the end of the financial year into the general reserves.

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

N/A

6. To receive RFO's report.

Report re expenditure of Mayor's allowance 2005/2006 (for information only).

The Clerk reported that in line with Standing Orders the accounts for the 2005/2006 Mayors Allowance prepared by Councillor Mrs Chivers had been looked at and checked and members were advised that everything was in order.

7. To consider appropriate action to take in connection with cessation of CCTV contract.

Councillor Hayward reminded members of the decision that had been taken by Full Council in September 2006 to withdraw from the CCTV contract at the earliest point of exit. It had been subsequently clarified at the Finance meeting in October that it would be deemed 'the earliest point of exit' when negotiations to renew the Contract had failed. Councillor Hayward pointed out that whilst the previous contract had already expired there had been a commitment by Monmouth Town Council to continue for the year 2006/2007 and monies had been allocated in the budget to make the payment in the sum of £11,500.00. It was made clear that in his opinion Monmouth Town Council as of the end of March was no longer under contract and as such requested that members agreed to give The Clerk authority to write to MCC advising that the one month notice period was being invoked with a view to terminating the agreement. Members were appraised of the current situation that was in force whereby the taped evidence from the monitoring centre was inconsistent and not guaranteed to be of sufficient quality or standard to be used as evidence in obtaining prosecutions. Despite all the best efforts of the CCTV User Group there has been no measurable progress made during the last six months. It was agreed by members that if Monmouth Town Council despite withdrawing from the Contract, was allowed to remain on the CCTV User Group it would be a good opportunity to continue to be involved with the negotiations with a view that at some future date and with full Council approval the opportunity to opt back into the scheme would be available.

The proposal was made that The Clerk should write to MCC advising that Monmouth Town Council was with effect from 31st March 2006 withdrawing from the contract, and that when the invoice is received that it should be paid in full up to this date.

**Proposed Councillor Stevens
Seconded Councillor Hackett Pain**

Unanimous

8. To review staff holiday arrangements.

Members had been circulated with details of The Clerks and Admin Assistant's holiday entitlement, and some information regarding time taken in lieu, holidays taken to date and outstanding days to be carried forward to next year.

Councillor Hayward recommended to members, with The Clerks approval, that there should be a ceiling placed on the number of days that should be allowed to be carried forward into the next year's holiday entitlement. It was agreed that the industry norm of five days be accepted with the balance of remaining days paid at the standard rate at the end of March. The Clerk agreed that this would be acceptable and suggested that the Contract of Employment be amended to reflect this change.

The Clerk also advised members that The Admin Assistant has planned to take an extended four-week break during the summer. Members were advised that during holiday periods every endeavour would be made to ensure that the office stayed open however there would undoubtedly be occasions when this would not be possible and notice advising of closure will be given in advance and posted on the notice board.

9. To discuss website upgrade.

The Clerk reminded members that within the budget there was a provision to develop the website. There are monies allocated within the 2006/07 budget in the sum of £500 and 2007/08 also for £500. Members were asked whether or not they wished to approve expenditure of £1000.00 to build a new website. The Clerk advised that the present webmaster had been consulted and it had been ascertained that there were no copyright implications, that all materials currently used are available for future use and that there is no formal contract in place. There was general consensus that the present site was not very user friendly and it needed a new image. Members requested that The Clerk approach a number of local companies and put the contract out to tender with a maximum spend of £1000.00 and that at the next Full Council meeting members wishing to volunteer could form a small working group to look at the implementation.

**Proposed Councillor Stevens
Seconded Councillor Christopher**

Unanimous

10. To consider re-instating the list of Town Clerks in The Council Chamber (discontinued since 1974 re-organisation)

The Clerk showed members the 'List of Town Clerks' role from The Borough of Monmouth, which had ceased in 1974, this is a framed list that hangs in the Council Chamber alongside the role of Mayors. An up to date list of Clerks dating back to 1690 was circulated showing details of all the Monmouth Clerks. Members were asked to consider whether the role should be re-instated and if so, what format it should take. Members agreed that The Clerk should contact a number of local artists and get quotes for a new role, it should have a hand painted crest and should be of a similar design and lay out to the previous one. The Clerk agreed to report back to the committee with details in due course so that further consideration can be given to the matter.

11. To confirm virement request from Environment Committee of £350.00 from Street Decorations Budget to Christmas lighting to cover additional work in Church Street replacing eye bolts.

The Environment committee have agreed to vire £350.00 as detailed above and request authorisation from the Finance and Policy Committee as per Standing Orders. Members agreed that this was in order and approved the virement.

**Proposed Councillor Stevens
Seconded Councillor Mrs Dewhurst**

Unanimous

12. Matters arising from previous meetings.

i) Risk Assessment.

Members advised that this is still on going.

ii) Review Staff Appraisals.

The Clerk advised that the appraisal for the Admin Assistant had been completed. A number of objectives have been agreed, including the revision of the Assistants job description and an increase in the duties that will be performed to provide more assistance to The Clerk. A copy will be kept in the personnel files in the office.

iii) Confirm change of electricity supplier.

The Clerk advised members that the changeover of supplier from SWALEC to Ecotricity is in hand. This is a company that provide renewable and sustainable energy, and when cost comparisons had been made proved to be the most cost effective at that time.

iv) Any other matters arising from Finance and Policy Meeting of 8th January 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, i.e. general information or notification of future discussions, no decisions can be made at this meeting on items that arise under this heading.

The Clerk advised members that Laserbroadcasting had been in touch to confirm that a licence has now been approved for a local radio station broadcasting in the Monmouth and Hereford areas. There have been suggestions that the launch date could be in August to coincide with the Monmouthshire Show day.

The Clerk advised that an informal meeting of committee chairs had been arranged with Debbie McCarty and Jenny Lewis to consider proposed plans for town centre regeneration. The chairs will report back to their committees for information. The meeting will take place in The Mayors Parlour at 3.00pm on Monday 19th February.

14. Next meeting Old Library Community Room Monday 26th March 2007.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.00pm.

Signature: _____

Date: _____