

# Monmouth Town Council

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## Finance & Policy Committee

### **Minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2011 at The Shire Hall Monmouth**

**Present:** Cllr Mr R Hayward (Chair) Cllr Mr G Bright  
Cllr Mrs S Chivers Cllr Mr J Fletcher  
Cllr Mrs J Gunter Cllr Mrs J Hall  
Cllr Mr N Hacket Pain Cllr Mr C Munslow  
Cllr Mrs B Smith

**In Attendance:** Mrs S James, Town Clerk, Cllr Mrs A Dewhurst

- 1. To receive declarations of interest on items on the agenda**  
None received
- 2. To receive apologies for absence**  
None received
- 3. To approve and sign the minutes of the previous meeting dated Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2011.**  
Proposed: Cllr Mr R Bond, Unanimous  
Pink Paper minutes  
Proposed: Cllr Mrs J Hall Unanimous
- 4. To receive and approve the summary of expenditure**
  - i.** To approve the accounts for payment between 21/5/11 and 05/07/11
  - ii.** To review a statement of the bank reconciliations as at 31/05/11
  - iii.** To review a statement of income as at 31/05/11
  - iv.** To receive report on committee's expenditure to 31/05/11.

The Clerk talked through the summaries of expenditure already received by members. It was confirmed that it was not appropriate that the £20,000 CCTV budget be returned to reserves, as this was included in the precept demand. The £20,000 has been vired to a new budget heading of Agincourt Street Toilets, which previously had no budget allocation. This does not imply that the whole sum should be spent, but only as agreed. Some discussion took place regarding Agincourt Street Toilets opening hours, and events noted by councillors. It was confirmed that an agreed and signed Service Level Agreement is not yet in force, but that the Town Council has now taken over insurance costs. It was confirmed insurance costs would

come from the Toilets budget this year, but in future should be included within Insurance budget heading.

It was proposed that the Agincourt Street Toilets budget be delegated to the Finance and Policy Committee.

Proposed: Cllr Mr R Bond, Seconded: Cllr Mr R Hayward

For: 6 Against:3

Recommendation for Approval to be made to Full Council.

It was agreed that more information and details need to be established regarding opening times, lighting and contacts – these should be included in the Service Level Agreement if not otherwise established.

The summary of expenditure was approved.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs J Hall, Seconded: Cllr Mr N Hackett Pain

Unanimous

#### **5. To receive correspondence (listed separately)**

Correspondence no. 11 regarding interest on deposit accounts was discussed, with differing small interest and account options.

It was proposed to change from the existing account to new one offered.

For: 2 Against:7

The existing account held to remain.

Correspondence no. 4: The Clerk drew the members' attention to a Pension Fund underpayment which is to be corrected.

#### **6. To consider action review summary and receive Town Clerk's report**

The Action Review summary was considered.

Members were reminded to give the Clerk details of any training courses undertaken.

Samples for a new Clerks wig, and costs had been received.

Protocol working group to meet

Surplus furniture disposal- a further sale was considered, any other cost free options to be considered.

Cllr Mrs B Smith left the meeting

Cllr Mr J Fletcher left the meeting at 7.25, returning at 7.35pm

#### **Town Clerks Report.**

A Local Council Advisory Service seminar in Cardiff has been recently attended by the Clerk. The internal auditor recently visited, signing off the annual return, and discussing various issues. As a result of this, specific forms for the future claiming of travelling expenses will be used, and another change to implement will be that copies of telephone bills will now need to be submitted with claims.

An initial meeting regarding the Remembrance Day Parade and service was held. Copies of notes from the meeting have been received and circulated to members of the Protocol working group.

Town council signs are being investigated for the Agincourt Street toilets, with tactile options, and the same easily identifiable format is hoped to be used for signs to be placed on bins, the gate at the Rowing Club, and possibly Drybridge Park play area

Some surplus furniture still remains at the Market Hall. Several items have been sold to the public, through a sale, with thanks to Cllr Mrs J Hall for organising. However, the remaining items are not suitable for St David's, and Homemakers will charge up to £170 to collect and clear, so

any further suggestions gratefully received. If time allows, other options such as Ebay will be considered, otherwise will return to Homemakers.

The new Monmouth Town Guide, which the Town Council supported, is now available from the Tourist Information Centre, and includes a welcome from, and information about the Town Council, with pictures kindly taken by Cllr Mr C Munslow.

Some discussion took place regarding the auditor's advice on submitting telephone bills with claims

It was recommended that the council adopt the auditor's advice to produce a bill with telephone claims.

Proposed: Cllr Mr R Hayward, Seconded: Cllr Mr N Hacket Pain

For: 7, Against:1

**7. To discuss CSAT'S issues**

No reports as Cllr Mr R Hayward had not been informed of the meeting. Communication to be confirmed and resolved.

**8. To receive end of year 2010-11 accounts**

The high level of reserves were explained.

It was proposed that the accounts are recommended for approval at Full Council.

Proposed: Cllr Mr R Hayward, Seconded: Cllr Mrs J Gunter

Unanimous

**9. To agree format for budget details on website**

This item was deferred from a previous meeting for examples of how other councils publicise budget details. The Clerk confirmed that Chepstow produced budget details as those suggested, but other local Town Councils did not have this information readily available from their websites. Some other Town Councils included the information as a report from their finance software. There was some discussion on options to show how much each household paid, or whether the figures should be given as budget headings in percentages, or by descriptions of what is provided for each budget.

It was proposed that the decision is delegated to the Clerk to put on the website whatever she feels is appropriate.

Proposed: Cllr Mr R Hayward, Seconded Cllr Mr R Bond

For:5, Against: 3

To be reviewed in 6 months.

**10. To discuss a gift of champagne received on behalf of the Town by the Deputy Mayor during his visit to Waldbronn**

There was some discussion over the number of bottles received, with 3 being produced. A decanter and book were also received as gifts.

It was proposed that the champagne be opened at the Christmas meal.

Proposed: Cllr Mr C Munslow, Seconded: Cllr Mr G Bright

Unanimous

- 11. To agree the Administration Assistant's hours at 16 per week from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2011**  
It was explained that the assistant's hours had been 10 per week and increased to 20 per week in the recent past due to scanning and staff issues. It was confirmed that both the Clerk and assistant thought 16 hours was more appropriate, and this was normally worked as additional hours.  
It was proposed that the Administration Assistants contract be amended to 16 hours per week.  
Proposed: Cllr Mr R Bond, Seconded: Cllr Mr R Hayward  
Unanimous.
- 12. To review subscriptions, contacts, fees and contracts**  
The Clerk explained that historically this was delegated to individual committees, with the Finance Committee approving reviews  
The Chair suggested a list of subscriptions and contracts be produced and then reviewed for the next meeting.
- 13. Items of discussion for future meetings**  
List of Contracts and subscriptions for review  
Review of Town Clerks pay and conditions
- 14. Date of Next meeting: Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2011**
- 15. To resolve to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business, by virtue of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1 (2), on the grounds of confidentiality**  
  
Proposed: Cllr Mr R Hayward, Seconded: Cllr Mrs J Hall.  
Unanimous

For further background information or an explanation of any of the information provided, please contact the Town Clerk on receipt of this agenda. Please also contact the Town Clerk if you foresee any problems with any of the agenda items; if possible these will then be resolved before the meeting.