

# Monmouth Town Council

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## Finance & Policy Committee

**Minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee meeting  
held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2012 at The Shire Hall Monmouth**

**Present:** Chairman Cllr Mr R Hayward  
Cllr Mr N Hacket Pain  
Cllr Mr G Bright  
Cllr Mr R Bond  
Cllr Mrs J Gunter  
Cllr Mr M Jones  
Cllr Mrs Chivers  
Cllr Mrs B Smith  
Cllr Mr J Fletcher  
Cllr Mrs Dewhurst  
Cllr Mr T Christopher

In Attendance: Mrs S James, Town Clerk

**1. To receive declarations of interest on items on the agenda**

None declared

**2. To receive apologies for absence**

Apologies received from Cllr Mrs J Hall and Cllr Mr C Munslow

**3. To approve and sign the minutes of the previous meeting dated Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2011.**

Cllr Mrs A Dewhurst proposed that item 6 Action review details updated be recorded on the minutes as well as the action review. Not carried.

Minutes approved and signed.

Proposed: Cllr N Hacket Pain, Seconded: Cllr J Fletcher

For: 10, Abstention:1

**4. To receive and approve the summary of expenditure**

- i. To approve the accounts for payment between 14/12/11 and 23/1/12
- ii. To review a statement of the bank reconciliations as at 31/12/11
- iii. To review a statement of income from 14/12/11 to 23/1/12
- iv. To receive report on committee's expenditure to 23/1/12.

It was confirmed that £77,650 had been transferred to Cash book 1 (Combined account) from Cash book 2 (Lloyds TSB Treasury account) to cover agreed expenditure from reserves. Some large invoices were still awaited for Agincourt Street toilets and the Shire Hall SLA, and the Salaries budget was as expected overspent and will be so due to salary corrections and back payments.

Accounts for payment, statements of bank reconciliations and income approved.

Proposed: Cllr R Bond, Seconded: Cllr N Hacket Pain

Unanimous

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

Nos. 1 and 9 were discussed with questions still raised over toilet opening hours. Confirmed a meeting to be arranged mid February

No.13 Confirmed interest in and withdrawal from vacancy

No. 22 The Monmouthshire Association and Monmouthshire flag received and discussed, but no decision on when it should be used.

No. 26 Consideration given to proposal to move date of local government elections in Wales by one year from May 2016 to May 2017 and noted. No comments to be submitted.

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

Action Summary noted and updated.

Clerk's Report:

The Mayor has been invited to visit HMS Monmouth in dry dock on 15<sup>th</sup> February. As he is unable to attend, the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Christopher will attend in his place, accompanied by Cllr Mrs J Gunter. The internal auditor has visited to continue planned checks, with the final visit for the current tax year planned for 18<sup>th</sup> April.

The VAT Return for the third quarter has been submitted with a repayment of £1,289.88 due.

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

Cllr M Jones gave additional information to that already reported to Full Council in that the Carnival and Olympics date clashed, with the Carnival to be moved to 19<sup>th</sup> August and the Festival had been moved forward. Police presence would be available for all dates. It is anticipated that 40,000 people will be in Monmouth for the torch relay with suggestions that MCC should look into providing a temporary Park and Ride Scheme.

Cllr G Bright raised concerns once again regarding bicycles being ridden on pavements and dog fouling on pavements. It was established that enforcement was the main problem and concerns raised that public apathy from apparent lack of enforcement has possibly led to less reporting of offences. This in turn leads to apparent decreases in such anti-social behaviour through non-reporting.

It was agreed that the public should be encouraged to report all instances by ringing 101 so that recorded statistics accurately reflected the problem and could lead to more enforcement action being taken.

It was proposed reporting by ringing 101 be advertised and promoted through a joint press release with the local police, otherwise asking the police to discuss reasons at a future meeting.

Proposed: Cllr M Jones, Seconded: Cllr T Christopher

Approved

**8. To discuss communication of Town Councils work to the public (to be reviewed from last meeting**

Thanks were expressed to the Councillors involved for composing the letter to the local newspaper. This item was deferred to the next meeting awaiting any further responses to this letter.

**9. To discuss and confirm date of this year's Civic Service as Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2012 or alternative.**

Correction – date should read Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

The Clerk outlined issues in booking road closures (8 weeks notice), the Church and other arrangements, if the Civic Service was to be held on 10<sup>th</sup> June, and confirmed other local Town Councils positions, mainly being that their Civic Services were to be determined by Mayor after election.

Options of avoiding road closures were discussed, as well as the possibility of St Thomas' Church being chosen for the Service dependent on the elected Mayor.

It was proposed that the Clerk continue with arrangements for the Civic Service on 10<sup>th</sup> June, at St Mary's Priory Church with usual road closures, and if arrangements were changed at the determination of the new Mayor, the date would be changed accordingly.

Proposed: Cllr M Jones, Seconded: Cllr Mrs J Gunter

For: 10, Abstention: 1

**10. To discuss the introduction of a Monmouth Town Council Facebook page**

Discussion took place regarding how a Facebook page would be used; by whom, and the extent to which it would replace email and other methods of communication. The potential workload that it may eventually require, and the possible use of outside agencies to administer it and possible twitter accounts were expressed by the Clerk. Examples of other Council Facebook sites were distributed, and the difference between a profile and page was raised by Cllr N Hackett Pain.

It was proposed that it was not necessary to set up a Facebook account at present, but to keep the option under review.

Proposed: Cllr G Bright, Seconded: Cllr Mrs J Gunter

For: 10, Abstention: 1

**11. To consider request from Wikimedia to use a QRpedia code for Monmouth on all published material.**

A brief explanation of a QR code was given, and it was confirmed that a QR code could be used to take a user directly to the Monmouth Town Council website. It was confirmed that Monmouthpedia was a non-profit making site. It was hoped that John Cummings could help to set up a page, and Cllr Mrs A Dewhurst was also willing to assist with this.

It was proposed to use both a Monmouth Town Council QR code, and a QRpedia code on published material.

Proposed: Cllr G Bright, Seconded: Cllr R Bond

For:10, Against:1

**12. To discuss and decide whether to co-opt a new Councillor for the Wyesham ward following resignation of Cllr J Singh Saran, and agree timetable to follow.**

Following Cllr Singh Saran's resignation within 6 months of an election, the Chair and Clerk outlined the Council's options. Much discussion took place on whether to co-opt at all before the election, and then whether to advertise the co-option and to what extent.

It was proposed to co-opt a new member and to advertise the co-option.

Proposed: Cllr G Bright, Seconded: Cllr T Christopher

Cllr R Bond left the meeting at 8.30pm

The proposal was then amended to co-opt a new member and to advertise on notice boards only, rather than incur expenses through newspaper advertising. The reasons for this being shortage of time and that the notice boards would attract the attention of people with a sense of civic responsibility.

Proposed: Cllr R Hayward, Seconded: Cllr M Jones

For:2 Amendment failed

It was then proposed to co-opt a new member with advertising to be included in the local newspaper.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs A Dewhurst, Seconded: Cllr Mrs B Smith

For: 7, Against: 2

It was then proposed to advertise in the local newspaper at the cheapest rate of £65+VAT

Proposed: Cllr T Christopher, Seconded: Cllr Mrs B Smith

For: 7, Against: 2

The Clerk then read aloud a draft advertisement. It was proposed this was accepted.

Proposed: Cllr R Hayward, Seconded: Cllr T Christopher

For: 8, Against: 1, Abstention: 1

**13. To discuss meeting dates for this year.**

The Clerk explained that this years meeting dates list was distributed last November with the Mayor and Chairs agreement. The number and frequency of meetings remained the same, with a change being that a Planning Committee meeting would now take place before a Finance and Policy meeting. This change means that approximately one Monday in every six is without a scheduled meeting, and can be utilised for a meeting for urgent items, an extra meeting, a public meeting or other Council event which would otherwise incur a cost for room hire, such as the Community Grant awards. It would also be advantageous to the office allowing a catch-up period without the following weeks agenda being prepared immediately after a meeting. A meeting-free week has been used over the Diamond Jubilee Bank Holidays.

The Annual Meeting following the election is to be added to the meeting schedule, on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> May. Subsequent further changes are that the Environmental Affairs Committee meeting scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> May is changed to 21<sup>st</sup> May, and that Planning Committee meetings scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> April and 8<sup>th</sup> May are cancelled and replaced by a single meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April. (By request of Chair). It was confirmed that the updated Meeting Date list would be distributed to all Councillors.

**14. Items of discussion for future meetings**

No items put forward.

**15. To confirm date of next meeting:**

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2012, 7pm, Shire Hall, Monmouth

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.40pm