

Monmouth Town Council

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MINUTES OF MEETING OF MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Held on 11 December 2006 at 7.00pm

In The Community Room, Shire Hall, Monmouth.

Present: Chairman The Mayor Councillor T Christopher,
Councillor Mrs M Atkins, Councillor G F W Buckland, Councillor Mrs S Chivers,
Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst, Councillor J Fletcher, Councillor R Hayward,
Councillor Mrs V Mitchell, Councillor D Stevens, Councillor Mrs A Were and
Councillor Mrs S White.

In Attendance: Mrs Sarah Robson Town Clerk

1. To Receive Questions From Members Of the Public for a Maximum of 10 Minutes:

Mr C Boase and his son Tom Boase spoke to members about their dissatisfaction regarding the lack of facilities for children wishing to ride BMX bikes. Local children have been looking for an alternative venue since the ramps that had been built at Drybridge Park were demolished earlier in the year. It was reported that Monmouthshire County Council has declined to make any alternative provision due to the perceived risks. Two options were considered, Vauxhall Field is not suitable because it is overgrown and has poor access, and the town field would be too far away. The Town Council agreed to add this item to the next Environmental agenda for discussion.

2. To Receive Declaration of Interest in Items on the Agenda.

None received.

3. To Receive Apologies for Absence.

Councillor R Bond Councillor S Roberts and Councillor L Robson

4. To Confirm & Sign the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 30th October 2006 and Special meeting on 30th October 2006.

Confirmed Correct.

Proposed: Councillor Hayward

Seconded: Councillor Mrs White

Unanimous.

5. To Receive the Town Clerks Report (For Information Only).

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report at this meeting.

6. To Receive Correspondence that the Mayor Wishes to Place Before the Council.

MWF: Invitation to reserve tickets to Radio 4's 'Any Questions' on March 9th. Members were asked to advise the Clerk if they wished to reserve tickets.

7. Matters Raised by Members: - Nothing received in writing.

Councillor Mrs Chivers wanted to raise the question of Christmas lights in the trees in Drybridge Street and asked why they had not gone up as usual? It was also noted that there are still bulbs out in the strings of stars across Monnow Street and also some of the new snowflake motifs needed repairs doing already because the l.e.d.'s are not lighting up.

The Clerk reported that this action would be followed up.

8. To Consider and Approve Reports & Minutes of Committees:

a. Planning Committee.

Councillor Buckland reported as per the minutes, he stated that there had been some major considerations that had been looked at recently, including Croft y Bwla. This application has needed a considerable amount of discussion given the potential large-scale problems with drainage from this area, and the accessibility to the proposed new dwellings. It is imperative that the report due from The Environment Agency is carefully considered before any recommendations are made. The other major plan has been the application by Lidl's for a new food store. The committee have approved the plan with recommendations to include screening as had been previously requested. The appeal regarding the development of 7-11 Monnow St has been withdrawn, but the Planning Inspectorate has been contacted about the appeal against three new dwellings at The Cottons, Beaufort Road.

b. Environmental Affairs Committee

Councillor Stevens reported as per minutes and advised that discussions had taken place at the previous meeting with MFP about future proposals, however the committee did agree to defer future discussions to a later date. A proposal was made to integrate street scene provision; also support was given to write to MCC about parking and overnight facilities for HGV Lorry drivers. Two Monmouth Police officers attended and reported on the increased patrols in town over the weekends, trading standards and the crackdown on alcohol and underage drinking.

c. Community Affairs Committee.

Councillor Mrs Dewhurst reported as per minutes and said that the survey of play areas had now been completed and proposals put forward, particularly regarding provision in Woodland View, Wyesham. Also the summer play scheme, she reported that payment for the scheme last year has not been made and is held pending the promised information from Mike Moran. There had been a review of the effects of the closure of the cash office at the OSS following the press article and a letter had been sent to Colin Berg – MCC requesting specific information on the impact of the closure. There was a second community meeting held to discuss the Christmas Parade arrangements and members have received a plan detailing the arrangements.

d. Finance & Policy Committee.

Councillor Buckland reported as per minutes, the main items that have been dealt with are the budget, revision of the standing orders, and CCTV partnership agreement, all of these matters have been referred to full council and will be dealt with at this meeting. Other than that there were routine accounting and procedural matters.

It was proposed that the minutes of the committees be accepted.

Proposed: Councillor Mrs Chivers

Seconded: Councillor Mrs Mitchell

For: 10

Against: 0

Abs: 1

e. Monmouth Partnership Forum.

There has been no meeting held since the last Full Council met.

f. Others.

Councillor Mrs Mitchell reported on behalf of the Fairtrade Forum and their aim to make Monmouthshire a fair-trade county, and hopefully following on to make Wales a fair-trade country.

9. To Review Recommendations from F&P Committee Regarding the Proposed Changes to the Standing Orders.

Councillor Buckland confirmed that Full Council needed to formally accept the recommendations of the Finance and Policy committee and adopt the revised standing orders. A copy of the revision will be forwarded to all members in due course.

Proposed: Councillor Buckland

Seconded: Councillor Hayward

Unanimous.

10. To Receive Recommendations from F&P Committee Regarding 2007/08 Budget and Agree Precept Demand.

Councillor Buckland suggested that the budget is accepted as it stands and that a 3% increase on last year's precept figure bringing the demand to £128098.00 would be advisable. It was suggested that these figures are provisionally adopted and referred to the next full council meeting for final approval

Proposed: Councillor Buckland

Seconded: Councillor Hayward

For: 10

Against: 0

Abs: 1

11. To Consider Proposed CCTV Agreement.

A copy of the new proposed partnership agreement has been circulated to all members along with a schedule of suggested changes. Councillor Hayward advised members that all of the previous feedback, comments and concerns had been considered and that those members sitting on the CCTV User Group would ensure that these changes are incorporated into the agreement. He confirmed as had previously been discussed that the earliest point of exit is when the negotiations for the new agreement fails and an impasse reached. The main issues raised relate to the police agreeing to sign up to the agreement, the exit strategy, a greater involvement and control over monitoring, maintenance and management of the system. He advised members that all of these points would be put forward at the next meeting to be incorporated into the document. The next meeting of the user group will be held on Monday 18th Dec.

Councillor Stevens commended the group for the work that had been done, and repeated his concerns over monitoring and statistical information.

The Mayor, Councillor Christopher requested that his appreciation be recorded and suggested that the item be deferred until the next meeting, when hopefully the amended document would be ready for approval.

12. To Resolve to Confirm Changes to Committee Membership.

The Clerk advised that due to resignations by members from the some of the committees it was necessary to accept and confirm those changes.

Proposed: Councillor Mrs Chivers

Seconded: Councillor Stevens

Unanimous

13. To Resolve to Restrict the Wearing of The Mayor's Chain to Formal Occasions.

Proposed: Councillor Buckland

Seconder: Councillor Fletcher

Councillor Buckland advised that he would like to amend his resolution to propose that the Mayors chain is only worn on formal and other important occasions.

It was agreed that the chain is of historic importance and of great value, but that the wearing of the chain must be at the Mayors discretion.

Councillor Buckland conceded that this is a difficult decision to make.

A number of other members spoke as a reminder that The Mayor is much more than just the Chairman of the Council; the position is that of representing the people of Monmouth. The chain is a symbol of that office, and the regalia displays The Mayor to the people of Monmouth. It was pointed out that whilst the chain is of value that the risk of damage or theft was not severe. A former Mayor said what an honour it is to wear the chain, and that it is worn with pride.

The Mayor pointed out that a risk assessment was carried out prior to any official visit and that precautions are taken to minimise any risk. The chain belongs to the people of Monmouth and is a symbol of the Town Council and when the chain is worn by The Mayor it shows that the council is supporting community and voluntary organisations and events.

Councillor Buckland withdrew his resolution.

14. To Agree to Hold Full Council Meeting at Osbaston Church in Wales School on 22nd January 2007, and on Tuesday 6th March 2007 at Bridges Community Centre.

Councillor Stevens pointed out that the meeting on 22nd January clashed with a governors meeting at Osbaston School, and as there are three members of the Town Council and the Clerk who sit on the governing body, it would be advisable to consider moving the Town Council meeting to Tuesday 23rd January instead. It was agreed that the Head teacher would be approached to see if this was convenient.

It was agreed that providing there was no cost to use Bridges Community Centre, the following meeting could be held there.

Proposed: Councillor Christopher

Seconded: Councillor Stevens

For 10 Against 1 Abs 0.

15. Any Other Business.

Councillor Mrs Were advised members that the Sustainable Communities Bill has been adopted by MP Nick Herd and that there is a real chance that this will be passed by Government in due course.

16. To Agree Meeting Dates.

Agreed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.35 pm.

Signature: _____

Date: _____