

Monmouth Town Council

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**Minutes of Meeting of Monmouth Town Council
Held on 6th March 2007
At the
Bridges Community Centre, Monmouth**

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

In Attendance: Mrs Sarah Robson Town Clerk and Mrs Jane Lloyd Clerical Assistant.

1. To Receive Declaration of Interest in Items on the Agenda:

None received.

2. To Receive Apologies for Absence:

Councillor L Robson.

3. To Confirm & Sign the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 23rd January 2007:

Confirmed correct.

Proposed: Councillor Mrs S Chivers

Seconded: Councillor J Fletcher

For: 10 Against: 0 Abstentions: 5

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

1. At the last meeting of the North Monmouthshire Police Liaison committee which was held on 22nd January it was discussed and agreed that the committee should be disbanded. The committee felt that the pattern of consultation was changing and that there was a need to deal with local problems at source. It was also noted that many Councils had never been represented, and that there was a need for change. There were no proposals made at the meeting as to how any changes would be brought about. Councillor Mrs Pearce was the Town Council representative on this committee.
2. The Community Safety Team from Monmouthshire County Council has advised me that the CCTV camera which is located at the top of Church Street has been out of operation due to a fire that occurred in the column where the electrics are housed. The repair work is being carried out and it is expected that the camera will be fully operational again very soon.
3. The derelict pavilion situated on Vauxhall Fields has recently been demolished by the landowner for safety reasons. Appropriate measures were taken with due consideration to Health and Safety and in particular to the implication of the presence of asbestos being found at the site.

4. The National Assembly is proposing to make an order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to reduce the speed limit on the A40 to 50 mph between the Gibraltar tunnels and Dixton roundabout. The consultation period runs for a period of 21 days from 1st March. A copy of the order together with the plan and a statement of reasons for making the order are on display in the One Stop Shop.
 5. I have received confirmation that the A466 Wye Valley Road that has recently been closed between Redbrook and Tintern due to a landslide should now be re-opened. There is a one-way system in operation at Tintern as there was another landslide there over the weekend.
 6. Monmouth and District Chamber of Trade and Commerce is holding a meeting on Wednesday 28th March in the Community Room at 6.00pm to discuss the promotion of business in public places. It should be of interest to businesses using advertising boards, selling products outside their premises and for cafes using the footway for seating their customers. The purpose of the meeting is to propose a strategy for business advertising for the benefit of all parties. There will be officers from Monmouthshire County Council present at the meeting and representatives of disabled and other groups who are affected by this issue.
 7. I have four tickets available for the BBC Radio 4 programme 'Any Questions' which is being held this Friday 9th March in The Blake Theatre. The tickets are courtesy of Monmouth Women's Festival. This is your opportunity to influence national debate on topical issues by putting a question directly to a panel of four leading public figures. If you are interested in attending please can you let me know tonight, otherwise due to high demand for the tickets they will have to be returned.
- 5. To Receive correspondence that the mayor Wishes to place before the Council.**
 Letter from Mr Peacock raising concerns regarding flooding at the new proposed development at Croft-Y-Bwla after monitoring the water levels through the winter months.
 Invitation from One Voice Wales to nominate members for an invitation to a garden party at Buckingham Palace.
- 6. Matters raised by members:**
 Nothing received in writing.
- 7. To consider and approve reports & minutes of Council's committees:**
 (All confirmed minutes can be found on the Monmouth Town Council website):
- a. Planning Committee:**
 As per minutes
 - b. Environmental Affairs Committee:**
 As per minutes. The proposed policy to combat littering in the town was deferred to the Town Council meeting in order to involve all Councillors. (See agenda Item 10).
 Members agreed to authorise payment of £3,500 to match fund lighting at Chippenham Field.
 Flower project: It was decided that a press release should be made offering the contract to go out to tender this year. There was a unanimous agreement not to continue with the watering system, the cost works out at £2,500 per year to run the scheme and in the last year of operation only 21 businesses took part with hanging baskets.
 There was concern raised regarding market traders putting stalls on the flat paving stones within the cobbled area of the apron of The Shire Hall as it is causing problems for disabled and other users.
 - c. Community Affairs Committee:**
 As per minutes. Councillor Mrs Hackett Pain has agreed to attend the meeting on Monday 23rd April to discuss progress regarding Woodland View play area.
 The committee is to liaise with staff at Monmouth Museum about the reduction of opening hours.
 Civic Awards: There are five sponsors to date, one more is required to complete the six categories. The awards will be on a similar basis to last year with nominations of people in

the community who deserves recognition for their work. They will be given a permanent piece of memorabilia and a cheque to be donated to their chosen charity.

The Carnival Committee is working hard, the date for this year's event will be Sunday 29 July 2007 and it has been agreed that this year there will be a Carnival King & Queen. Next meeting will be 23 March 2007.

The closure of the job centre is an on going issue; One Stop Shop has ideas of offering office space that could be used for half a day per week to save local people having to travel to Abergavenny to look for work. The committee is working with local AM, MP and One Voice Wales regarding this issue.

World Challenge Expedition has been awarded £400 to the trip organised by Monmouth Comprehensive School.

Library Bus: Councillor Hayward has agreed to take this to the scrutiny committee of the Economic and Development Committee.

The next meeting of the committee is to be held on 12 March 2007.

d. Finance & Policy Committee: As per minutes.

The accounts were received and approved.

The CCTV contract was discussed, there has been no progress yet towards an acceptable new contract or terms of operation. A letter giving formal notice has been sent advising that the Council will be withdrawing from 1st April.

There was a discussion and information regarding the Clerks and Assistant holiday arrangements.

The request from the Environment Committee to vire £350 for eye bolts for Christmas decorations in Church Street was accepted.

The Clerk advised that some work needs to be done to revise the Assistant's job description.

There has been little progress with working with MCC to develop a charter on how the County Council is to interact with Town and Community Councils in the future, it is hoped this can be firmly established by this time next year so that new candidates for the Town Council will know what they will be taking on.

Proposed: Councillor J Fletcher

Seconded: Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst

Unanimous.

e. Monmouth Partnership Forum:

The last meeting looked at the way the Forum works and suggested a revision of the constitution.

The Shire Hall Stewards have been working with others and a monitor from the Heritage Lottery Fund to progress the application.

The Walking and Cycling group are working on the proposed routes which resulted from the consultation day.

Jenny Lewis reported that some of the reports in the local press regarding the County Council's budget situation were alarmist and incorrect. Monmouthshire County Council is not going bankrupt, money will be tight and there will be cuts in services but not as bad as sometimes feared.

Last year the regeneration officer of the County Council prepared a regeneration policy for Abergavenny he plans to undertake one for Monmouth to start in the Autumn. The Forum has decided to update the working document titled 'Monmouth on the Move'.

Next Meeting is on Wednesday 4th April.

f. Others:

Fair Trade: A 'Fair Trade in Monmouth' leaflet has been produced for the Fair Trade fortnight, this pinpoints businesses in Monmouth that sell or have Fair trade products.

Shire Hall Stewards: The grant application is in between two stages at the moment, part one being when lottery fund is allocated to the scheme, this is complete. Stage two is the detailed plan that need to be accepted. Gareth Gregory the HLF monitor is concerned with the interpretation plan and considers it is too definitive limiting the possibility of variation at a later date. Data sheets have been circulated to the project team members for completion. The Clerk and Councillor Buckland will have to provide information about the rooms that the Town Council use i.e. the Mayors Parlour, Town Clerks office and Council Chamber.

8. To approve changes to committee membership:

Councillor R Hayward to be reselected onto the Planning Committee

Proposed: Councillor J Fletcher **Seconded:** Councillor Mrs S Chivers

For: 14 **Against:** 0 **Abstentions:** 1.

Councillor D Stevens asked that due to timing problems could he be taken off the planning Committee.

Proposed: Councillor D Stevens **Seconded:** Councillor Mrs V Mitchell

Unanimous.

9. To Set up working group to develop new website :

Following a recent decision made at the Finance and Policy committee to develop a new website it was agreed that £500 is to be earmarked from this year's budget along with £500 from next years.

Members at the F& P meeting suggested to set up a working party for the new Town Council website. Volunteers for the working party are:

Councillor T Christopher, Councillor G W F Buckland, Councillor J Fletcher,

Councillor Mrs V Mitchell and the Town Clerk. Councillor D Stevens agreed to advise on an ad hoc basis.

Proposed: Councillor Christopher **Seconded:** Councillor Mrs V Mitchell

Unanimous.

10. To set up working group to develop a policy for anti-littering.

This item was deferred from the previous Environment meeting following proposals from Councillor Mrs Atkins whose aim is to set up voluntary groups in each ward to combat the problems of littering. It is recognised that whilst MCC do a very good job some areas are missed, it has been identified that this is due to a lack of funding and cannot be rectified at present. In the long term it is desirable that an education programme is considered but in the short term the solution is going out and picking up litter. It was pointed out that schools already play a large part in educating children regarding litter, recycling and the environment. There are further issues that need consideration such as insurance, equipment and risk assessments. Members agreed that this working group should come under the remit of the Environment Committee.

Volunteers for the working party are:

Councillor Mrs M Atkins, Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst, Councillor J Fletcher, Councillor Mrs A Were, Councillor R Bond and Councillor S Roberts.

Proposed: Councillor Mrs M Atkins **Seconded:** Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst

Unanimous.

11. To consider motion to support the 'car free day' on 22 September and sign the official charter:

As part of a national campaign Friends of the Earth are planning for one day a proposed closure of Monnow Street, as part of a car free day. There are events planned which include having markets and street entertainers in the street. Park & ride facilities would be available for those drivers unable to leave cars at home. Councillor Mrs Were requested support of this initiative from the Town Council by signing the charter to support this event.

Other members raised concerns about how deliveries to retail outlets would be made, the effect on local small businesses and the associated problems for residents. It was thought that this day could highlight the problems of how ineffective local transportation is.

Proposed: Councillor Mrs A Were **Seconded:** Councillor Mrs M Atkins

For: 5 **Against:** 7 **Abstentions:** 3

Motion not carried.

12. .To receive presentation from Anne Rollings with an update on the Monnow Vale Society and Healthcare facility: (Doctor Brian Harries – Clinical Director, was also present)

Ms Rollings explained that the facility is the first of its kind in Wales and that other regions are keen to use this model. It is recognised that there are some teething troubles still and the treatment of minor injuries needs to be looked at as there are problems and it is still not right at present. There have been many misconceptions about the services that the new site offers. Although the old hospital on the Hereford Road site was a unit staffed by GP's it is fully understood that people living in Monmouth would like an A&E facility in town. However surveys have been conducted and the results would indicate that there is not enough workload to warrant a full time doctor at the site. It is understood that there have to be improvements but some help is needed to recognise the gaps.

Councillor Mrs S Chivers commented that when Monnow Vale was proposed the impression given was that there would be a better service. It had been anticipated that there would be a doctor covering weekends and residents are very disappointed that this is not happening. Dr Harries explained about the long hours doctors were previously working under the old charter and the strain that the medical professional was under was reflected in a dramatic shortage of new doctors. Councillor Mrs Chivers asked why local G.P's couldn't cover at least part of the weekend as there must be at least fifteen doctors in Monmouth. This would work out as only working one weekend in fifteen.

Members were given a hand out showing more detailed information on the presentation which is available from the Town Clerks Office.

13. To Receive questions from members of the public:

Mr W Leddington – Street Lighting Drybridge Park: Mr Leddington brought to the attention of the Council the need for lighting at Drybridge Park. Councillor T Christopher is in discussions with MCC regarding this matter. This item to be deferred to the Environment Committee.

Mrs H Jones - Unadopted Roads on Rockfield Estate: Councillor Bond confirmed that the spinal road to the south of the development - Chartist Road was adopted on January 19th 2007 and by the end of this week Kingswood Road to the north, will be adopted. The other side roads off the spinal roads would hopefully quickly follow suit after remedial work is carried out by the developers. Councillor Hayward explained that the roads would only be adopted providing they were up to an acceptable standard, if nothing has happened within six weeks then letters to be written to the local County Councillor, Cllr Alan Wintle.

Mr D Hill – Pot holes in Monmouth roads: Mr Hill expressed his dissatisfaction at the state of roads in and around Monmouth. It was reported that there is currently a £46 million backlog of outstanding work on the roads.

Mrs L Jenkins Fencing at Playing Fields Wyesham: It was reported that before Christmas a chain link fence was erected approx six foot from her boundary. She asked why this had been put there as there had never been any previous problems. She wondered who had erected it at and at who's cost?

Councillor Mrs C Pearce understood that the contractors had erected the fencing for security of the equipment that is being used to build the new school. Councillor Mrs Pearce will find out more information and contact Mrs Jenkins personally.

Mrs Beavis – What progress of outstanding issues at Wyesham Avenue: Information was given that the Town Council had written to MCC highways following the meeting held in Wyesham. Councillor Mrs C Pearce advised that she is to have a meeting with County Councillor Mrs Hackett Pain along with the governors of Wyesham School, as works to the roadways have been delayed because of the building works on the new school. MCC are planning to introduce traffic calming measures and Councillor Mrs Pearce explained that after seeing the plans for this it would be alternative ideas such as a one way system that would be preferred.

Resident of Rockfield Estate - Planning Application DC/2006/00858: Croft-Y-Bwla:

Members of the public were advised that the Town Council had been trying to speak to The Environment Agency for a progress report regarding flooding issues that have been previously raised on the existing site. A member of the audience had been advised by MCC that it would

not be possible to have a copy of the report. Councillor Christopher suggested that if the Town Council could obtain a copy that it could be placed at the One Stop Shop for residents to view. The Town Council will put a notice in the press to inform people.

14. Any Other Business:

Councillor Mrs M Atkins: It was suggested that a request should be made to MCC to adopt the cycle track and common land around the new Rockfield Development. A number of problems are occurring such as trees being knocked over and vandalism taking place. It was pointed out that until the adoption does take place it is the responsibility of the builders and developers to maintain the area and any works that need to be carried out should be done so by them

This item to be referred to the Environmental Affairs Committee.

Councillor Mrs S Chivers: Members were reminded of the often patchy reception that the residents of Monmouth have to put up with on BBC Wales. This is due to the ariel at the Kymin not working which results in no service being received in Monmouth.

15. To Agree Meeting Dates:

Agreed.

After there being no further business the Mayor thanked members of the public for their attendance and the meeting was closed at 8.50 pm