

Monmouth Town Council

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MINUTES OF MEETING OF MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Held on 11 June 2007 at 7.00pm
In The Old Library Community Room

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

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

Ms Clare Webb gave a short presentation regarding this years Monmouth Festival and made a request for further funding. She informed members that this year there has been no funding from Monmouthshire County Council creating a short fall of £5,000. MCC will be charging £100 for licences and £1,000 for street cleaning with recycling bins being introduced this year for the first time. One of the largest costs is the insurance which has increased substantially. Last year the Festival tried different types of music but this was not received well so this year it is staying with soul type music which seems to be preferred. Additional funding for Monmouth Festival is due to be discussed at the next Finance & Policy meeting to be held on Monday 18th June. If there is additional call for fees it will have to come from the reserves as there is no other funding set aside in the budget.

13. To receive declaration of interest in items on the agenda.

Agenda Item 24: Councillor R Bond, Councillor G W F Buckland, Councillor Mrs S Chivers and Councillor Mrs S White

Presentation : Councillor T Christopher and Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst. (Monmouth Festival Committee)

14. To Receive Apologies for Absence.

Councillor L Robson and Councillor S Roberts.

15. To Confirm & Sign the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 15th May 2006

Confirmed correct with the following corrections,

Page 3 Ben Hamilton Bailey should read Ben Hamilton Baillie and 'Shared Spaces' should read 'Shared Space'

Proposed: Cllr Mrs S White

Seconded: Cllr R Bond

Unanimous.

Standing orders were suspended and members proposed to bring Item 24 forward

Proposed: Cllr R Hayward.

Seconded: Cllr Mrs S White

Unanimous.

24. To resolve to act as guarantor to the Shire Hall Stewards for their contribution towards the refurbishment up to a maximum of £28,000.

There has been an unexpected condition as part of the second phase of the HLF grant application that the Stewards should have their funding in place by December 2007. The Stewards need to find £40,000 of which they have already raised approximately £12,000. There are functions and grant applications which are in the process of being organised by the stewards to raise this money but it will not be available until the end of the year or later as grants have a specific time scale for making the application. Councillor Buckland proposed the Town Council offer to act as guarantor for the difference up to a maximum of £28,000. The Town Clerk gave a brief report on the Town councils finances and explained how the already committed amount of £125,000 would be raised. It was recognised that this funding would not be required until the summer of 2009 when the money would then be payable.

It was agreed that a legal document should be drawn up so that a charge could be placed on any future funds raised by The Stewards post refurbishment in the event that there was a shortfall and the guarantee called in. The Clerk is to investigate how this will be achieved. Councillor Buckland strongly recommended that we go ahead with this and a letter be written to MCC or a copy of the minutes pointing out that this is the second time we have stepped in with funding and stating that the members would request that the Council Chambers remain as it presently is with the dais so that the Town Council can use the room for its' meetings post refurbishment.

Proposed: Cllr G W F Buckland

Seconded: Cllr R Hayward

Unanimous.

(Councillor Mr G W F Buckland left the meeting at 7.30 pm)

16. To receive the town clerks report (for information only).

1. European Heritage Weekend will take place once again this year over the weekend of 15th & 16th September. The event is organised by Monmouth Civic Society. As part of the event The Shire Hall will be open between 2 – 5pm on each day. Members of the public are invited to go to various places of interest in and around town including the Castle and Regimental Museum, The old Monnow Bridge, The Priory, The Methodist Church and The Roundhouse at The Kymin. The regalia will be on display in The Council Chamber, there will also be photographs on display. The Court Room will be open and also there will be an opportunity to see The Henry V Tapestry in the Court Room before the proposed removal to the staircase as part of the refurbishment. I will be asking for volunteers to help out in The Shire Hall during this time and will contact members again nearer the date to confirm arrangements.
2. Veterans Day will be held this year on June 27th. The Royal British Legion will celebrating the event by holding a social evening on Saturday 30th June to which The Mayor will be invited to attend to represent the town. It is a day intended to give thanks to those men and women who gave their lives to service in the armed forces.
3. I am pleased to report that the replacement bins and benches in Chippenham Park are now in situ. They are made out of recycled material and the bins that have been chosen because they are the best-designed bin to repel any fire that is started within the bin. I have been in recent correspondence with MCC regarding littering problems in this area and have been advised that due to budget cut backs the present programme for the collection of litter from the field will need to be looked at. I have discussed this matter with the Chair of Environment with a view to widening the remit of the litter-working group to include this area, and this will be discussed at the forthcoming committee meeting.

4. Following my recent correspondence with MCC regarding the litter underneath the arches of the Shire Hall after a bank holiday, I have been advised today that this has now been included into the cleaning programme for the following public holidays, Easter, the two bank holiday Monday's in May and the August bank holiday. Cleaning already routinely takes place on a Sunday afternoon and since the last bank holiday when the area was at its worst and a series of letters were sent encouraging local participation there has been a marked improvement in the level of general rubbish and debris that is left behind. This will be monitored and I will liaise with Estates should any further problems occur.

17. To receive correspondence that the mayor wishes to place before the council.

Councillor R Hayward requested that the correspondence in relation to the noise mitigation measures on the A40 be read and asked what was being done about it. The Clerk advised that this matter had been referred to the Planning Committee.

18. Matters raised by members: - Nothing received in writing:

19. To receive and consider reports & minutes of committees:

a. Planning Committee: As per minutes.

b. Environmental Affairs Committee: As per minutes.

There was a late start with the planting of the flower beds but they are now beginning to look good. 'Reclaiming Our Town Centre' was discussed but was deferred to the next meeting.

It was reported that there are rats on Monnow Bridge, this has been reported and the problem is being looked into.

Councillor Mrs S Chivers reported that she had had two complaints regarding the poor state of planting of some of the flower beds in Monmouth.

c. Community Affairs Committee: As per minutes.

The committee had received an apology from MCC for taking so long to respond regarding the request for further information on this year's summer play scheme.

The forward plan was discussed and deferred and the annual report which Councillor Mrs Dewhurst prepared in to be included on the website.

There is continued work which is being carried out with County Councillors and Town Councillors to improve the play areas, this is on going matter.

The committee have agreed to have two awards for the Community Grant scheme but with only one presentation evening.

d. Finance & Policy Committee: No meeting has been held.

Proposed: Councillor Mrs S White
Unanimous.

Seconded: Councillor Mrs S Chivers.

e. Monmouth Partnership Forum: As per minutes.

At the meeting of 13 May the concept of 'Shared Space' was discussed and it arose that 'Sustrans' are interested in Monmouth becoming a sustainable town. A further meeting is to be arranged regarding this. There may be grant funding available for up to £5,000 under a Community Safety Fund to have a feasibility study undertaken. It was agreed that the chair would write to MCC to request a moratorium on further signage in the town. Councillor Mrs S White advised that she has spoken with Mr Hoggins from MCC and he has offered to spend an evening and walk around with Town Councillors to discuss any problems raised in relation to this. Next meeting to be held on 25 July 2007.

f. Other Meetings:

One Voice Wales:

The meeting of 19 July Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst will be attending the 'Planning Aid Wales Training' if anyone has any queries they would like raised please inform Cllr Mrs A Dewhurst before the 19 July. Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst will be raising the issue regarding

the decision to send correspondence electronically because not all people have this facility. It will also be a request to ensure that planning notices also have a condition for letters of objections be sent to MCC Planning and the Town Council.

20. To nominate representatives for outside organisations:

Members agreed to some changes as per the attached appendix.

21. To consider alternative accommodation for the Town Council whilst The Shire Hall refurbishment takes place:

The Town Clerk reported that she had looked at the accommodation at the old Jobcentre offices, which MCC have suggested we have use of on a shared basis along with the Tourist Information Centre. The Clerk confirmed that in her opinion the premises are suitable and The Clerks office would be upstairs, a lift is not available however there is a room downstairs to hold Town Council meetings and meet with anyone who would have difficulties negotiating the stairs. In the event of a larger meeting to include more members of the public, it would however be necessary to consider using alternative accommodation such as the Leisure Centre. The furniture and other items from The Shire can be stored on the first floor which would reduce the necessity of arranging other storage. Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst asked about the notice board and requested that one should be put up. It was also pointed out that the rooms would need to be redecorated as they very shabby and dirty.

Members agreed that this was provide suitable temporary accommodation and agreed to accept the proposal.

Proposed: Cllr R Bond

Seconded: Councillor Mrs S Chivers

For: 10

Against: 2

Abstention: 0

22. To consider adopting the One Voice Wales model complaints procedure:

Councillor Mrs S Chivers proposed this be deferred to next meeting to give all members an opportunity to consider the document.

Proposed: Cllr S Chivers

Seconded: Cllr S White

Unanimous.

23. To confirm recommendation from F&P committee to give delegated authority to the Clerk for expenditure within the Administration budget:

Confirmed.

Proposed: Cllr R Hayward

Seconded: Cllr N Hackett Pain

Unanimous.

24. Moved forward after agenda item 15.

25. To resolve to participate in 'European Mobility Week' starting on Sunday 16th September and ending on Saturday 22nd September 2007:

Withdrawn.

26. Any other business:

Councillor R Bond: Asked whether there was a problem with the Shire Hall clock, as it was noted that it had not been working for some time.

Councillor Mrs S Chivers:

a) Asked what the procedure was regarding members of the public speaking at committee meetings. The Clerk reported that standing orders state that it is up to the discretion of the chairman as to who speaks at committee meetings.

b) When is the Drybridge Nature Park to be re-opened to the public following the work on the flood alleviation scheme. The notice says March 2007 and it is still not open. To be placed on the Community Committee Agenda.

Councillor Mrs M Atkins: Pointed out that there is still bare earth that needs to be grassed over or meadowed at the Nature Park. It was reported back that it would be reinstated and The Clerk was asked to follow this up.

Councillor Mrs S White: Wanted to ask Cllr Buckland questions regarding the article in the paper and the problems with rats on Monnow Bridge but as he had left the meeting couldn't. The Clerk was asked to pass a list of questions on to Cllr Buckland to respond to.

Councillor D Stevens:

a) Reported that he was very disappointed to hear that Wigmores Bakery was to only produce bread at the weekends and would be looking to lease out the coffee shop. This is a loss to the town as it had been a family run business for approx 100 years.

b) It was also noted that there had been a very poor attendance at the Civic Service by Town Councillors members who were outnumbered by visiting Councillors as only eight members attended.

Councillor R Hayward: Suggested that the Town Clerk's office should have a complaints book logging all complaints. The Clerk pointed out that there is a complaints file and that all complaints are listed in correspondence which is put before the Full Town Council meeting or dealt with through the Ombudsman, as appropriate.

It is to be noted that the Environment Committee meetings will now start at 7.00 pm

27. To agree meeting dates.

Agreed next meeting to be held on 9th July 2007.

Their being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.30 pm