

Monmouth Town Council

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MINUTES OF MEETING OF MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL Held on 20 August 2007 at 7.00pm In The Community Room, Shire Hall

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 N Hackett Pain, Councillor R Hayward, Councillor Mrs V Mitchell, Councillor L Robson, Councillor Mrs A Were, and Councillor Mrs S White.

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

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

Inspector Geoff Smith spoke regarding a request for the Town Council to assist with funding another Police Community Support Officer in Monmouth. The costs for a full time Officer would be in the first year £29,000, 2008/09 - £74,000, 2009/10 - £85,000 and 2010/11 approx £100,000. The officer although primarily would be available for town based wards would be utilised in other Monmouthshire areas if needed. To be referred to the Finance & Policy meeting on 12 November 2007.

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

None

45. To Receive Apologies for Absence.

Councillor R Bond, Councillor Mrs C Pearce and Councillor S Roberts.

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

The minutes were confirmed and signed with the following change to item 38.

A member who fails to attend 2 consecutive meetings or fail to provide prior apologies of a particular committee without reasonable cause will be deemed to have failed to comply with the spirit of these Standing Orders and as a consequence will be named, verbally, as failing to attend at the next Full Council meeting. An opportunity to justify non-attendance will be given as an item on the Full Council agenda. Acceptance of the stated justification will be indicated by a vote of members attending the Full Council meeting. If the justification is not accepted, or no justification is presented then the failing members name will be recorded in the Full Council meeting minutes as a matter of public record.

Proposed: Cllr N Hackett Pain Seconded: Cllr G F W Buckland
Unanimous

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

1. I have been advised that planning permission to change the location of the markets from The Shire Hall to the Old Cattle Market car park was applied for on 27th July 2007. As yet formal papers have not been received for The Town Council planning committee to consider the application. It has been confirmed that The Shire Hall and markets will continue to be open and operating until 20th March 2008 by which time a decision should have been made by the Heritage Lottery Fund regarding the granting of funding for the restoration of The Shire Hall.
2. European Heritage Weekend will take place on 15/16th September and this will be the last occasion for The Shire Hall to participate in this for at least the next two years with the proposed refurbishment taking place. Please could I ask for six volunteers to spend a few hours on either the Saturday or Sunday to provide cover for this event. If you could please let me know if you are available after this meeting. If there are not enough volunteers then I will ask the Shire Hall Stewards if they have any members who are free to help.
3. Staff holidays, I will be away from the office starting tomorrow for the next two weeks returning on Wednesday 5th September. The office will remain open for normal office hours during this period with Jane providing cover. There will however be one day when cover is not available and the office will be closed. The date of the closure is Thursday August 30th; a notice advising members of the public of this has already been placed on the notice board.
4. The first of a series of high profile fund raising events for The Shire Hall took place recently. A Masked Ball organised by Jenny and Debbie from the OSS attracted about one hundred and twenty people to what proved to be a very enjoyable and successful evening. There was a huge amount of goodwill and support from MCC. The Stewards and others assisted with setting up the evening. It is anticipated once all of the invoices have been paid and the outstanding monies collected that there will be a profit of approximately £2500.00 plus additional monies from the sale of photos that were taken on the night.

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

Cllr Mrs Chivers asked for letter 30 to be read out regarding the suggestion of a link road improvement along the old railway track to link up with Wonastow Road, a suggestion put forward 40 years ago. The Town Clerk advised members that the letter has been forwarded to MCC.

49. Matters raised by members

Nothing received in writing.

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

a. Planning Committee: As per minutes.

A meeting is to take place tomorrow (21st August) with the residents of the Rockfield Estate Development to discuss the proposed plans for Croft y Bwla.

b. Environmental Affairs Committee: As per minutes.

Consideration was given to the opportunity for funding under the Rural Development plan for Wales, the committee has agreed to formally express an interest in 2 projects, developing a plan for care of the river bank and seating and the other is the creation of a business enterprise scheme for young people. It was agreed that letters could go to schools, fast food out-lets, voluntary groups and official bodies regarding litter.

The contract for Christmas lighting was considered with the main change being that they should be put up as soon as possible after Remembrance Sunday and switched on by 16th November rather than waiting until December.

The committee has received a presentation from the Civic Society regarding a blue plaque scheme in Monmouth. Next year the Civic Society is hoping to have another phase, which will encompass privately owned buildings with financial assistance hopefully from the owners and match funded by CADW. It was agreed that there needed to be a formal cessation of the contract with the Flower Project. The Committee have decided to hold a competition for a planting scheme in the town and the five gateways, which will be launched shortly.

c. Community Affairs Committee: As per minutes

The Community Grants closing date is 28 August with the second part of the scheme being advertised again for distribution in February.

The summer play scheme will be on a reduced level this year with a visit to The Leisure Centre by committee members to be arranged.

There was an impressive and moving presentation from the Comprehensive School on their trip to Kenya. There will be consideration for funding the repair of benches at the Millennium field. Councillors Mrs Dewhurst and Christopher recently attended the One Voice Wales conference in July, notes from this will be available for those interested.

d. Finance & Policy Committee: As per minutes.

There was no report as the chair had not present at the last meeting.

Proposed: Mrs S White
For: 11

Seconded: Cllr Mrs V Mitchell
Against: 0 Abstentions: 2

e. Monmouth Partnership Forum: As per minutes

There have been further discussions that took place regarding the phasing out of plastic bags in town. The cemetery is now being cut once a year with volunteers being asked to help out. There have been two more public meetings arranged re sustainable transport.

Councillor Mrs A Were raised the concerns of grass being cut in the millennium field and left on the river bank.

Others:

Shire Hall: Councillor Buckland reported that MCC are totally committed to the HLF project and it is thought that the date of early December for the Stage 2 application will be met.

Friends of the earth:

Councillor Mrs Were informed members that the planned car free day would be 22 September although it is to be a low key event. The group is working towards a plastic bag free town banning all plastic bags from retail outlets. It is also looking into Bio Oils and South East Wales Waste Strategy on how to deal with waste.

One Voice Wales: Councillor Mrs Dewhurst reported that following the recent attendance at the AGM the notes would be photocopied and handed out to all Councillors.

CAB AGM: Councillor Christopher reported that there were 962 new clients over 25% of those were debt related issues. In October it is proposed that a new phone system will be installed which will enable telephone calls to be handled more effectively.

51. To discuss future use of the council chamber and consider options regarding the existing furniture.

Members agreed that the furniture owned by The Town Council should be removed to The Market Hall for storage when the building is closed for refurbishment.

The Clerk advised that the meeting room that will be provided in the temporary premises has limited space and will only seat about twenty people. It is on the ground floor and will therefore not cause any problems regarding accessibility.

Although The Town Council has fought hard to retain the dais MCC insist that after the refurbishment in order to keep the accommodation as flexible as possible that it will have to be removed. The dais is too large and the area in the room would reduce the capacity of people when hiring out for functions.

Proposed: Councillor Mrs S Chivers
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Mrs S White

52. To consider co-funding recruitment of further PCSO's for the Monmouthshire area:

Councillor Buckland felt that supporting this proposal would potentially cause problems for rural Community Councils suffering with lack of cover. He believed that this should stay centrally funded as it presently is.

Councillor Mrs Were agreed with Councillor Buckland that funding of PCSO's should come from the Council Tax.

Councillor Hayward stated that funding should be met by the police and not be the responsibility of town and community councils.

Councillor Stevens thought this was good value compared to the cost of the CCTV system.

It was proposed that this item should be deferred to the Community Affairs Committee.

Proposed: Councillor D Stevens
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Mrs M Atkins

Councillor Buckland then proposed that it would be more appropriate to discuss this matter at the next Finance & Policy meeting.

Proposed: Councillor G W F Buckland
For: 10

Against: 2

Seconded: Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst
Abstention: 1

53. To consider recommendation from Finance Committee to adopt a protocol for issuing press releases by the committees

The F&P committee felt that the Council should be preparing in anticipation of the next election and raising awareness in the public domain of what The Town Council is involved in. This would hopefully ensure that there would be a greater interest generated in standing for public office and appeal to potentially more new candidates. It was proposed that quarterly statements in the press should be published and that they should be issued by the individual committees.

Proposed: Councillor T Christopher
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Mrs V Mitchell

54. To consider recommendation from Finance Committee re informal guidelines for an induction process for the Mayor.

The Clerk circulated copies for each member and it was proposed to accept the document as it stands.

Proposed: Councillor G W F Buckland
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Mrs S White

- 55. To appoint Minor authority governor representative to Overmonnow Primary School**
Councillor Mrs S White was nominated for the position.

Proposed: Councillor J Fletcher
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst

- 56. To consider funding to a maximum of £200 for promoting the 'Connect 2' Day on 27th September.**

After some discussion it was agreed that this item should be deferred for discussion at the next Community meeting.

Proposed: Councillor R Hayward
For: 11 Against: 0

Seconded: Councillor L Robson
Abstention: 2

- 57. To confirm changes to committee membership**

The Clerk had previously circulated a list for approval. Members confirmed their wish to accept the list as it stood.

Proposed: Councillor Mrs V Mitchell
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor N Hackett Pain

- 58. Any Other Business**

A member reported that vehicles were being taken onto the Millennium Field and driven around. This is not allowed to happen on Chippenham field and questions had been asked as to why this was being allowed here. It was thought that this is common land and that the same law does not apply, whilst Chippenham is not common land and the legislation is different covering that area.

A suggestion was made that the PCSO's be asked to monitor the area.

This item is to be raised at the next Forum meeting to be held on Wednesday 26th September

- 59. To Agree Meeting Dates**

Next meeting to be held on 1st October 2007 venue to be confirmed

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.55 pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____