

Monmouth Town Council

Mayor's Parlour,
Shire Hall,
Monmouth NP25 3DY

Tel: 01600 715662

Email: townclerk@monmouth.gov.uk
www.monmouth.gov.uk



**Minutes of the meeting of Monmouth Town Council
held on
Monday 12th November 2007 at 7.00pm
At Kymin View Primary School, Wyesham, Monmouth**

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

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

In the absence of The Chairman the meeting was chaired by the Deputy Chairman Councillor Stevens

A Presentation was made by Mr A Williams from Monmouth Comprehensive School on the Kenya trip of 2007. The Kenya trip was a project in association with The Princes Trust to take twelve or thirteen young people who had problems such as drug abuse or no self esteem to try and help them to engage with society. The students aim was to make a difference to their lives and to be seen to be making a difference or just help the lives of others. The work would be to renovate two classrooms in a school in Kabira which is in the slums of Nairobi. Each individual had to raise their air fare and £1,000 towards the renovation work. BBC Wales came to the school to make a documentary on the efforts made by the students. This trip made a huge difference to the young people who on their return are now helping with the fund raising for this years planned trip. One of the students no longer has drugs in his life and another who couldn't get a job because of her reputation will hopefully be starting work soon.

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

None Received

75. To Receive Apologies for Absence.

Councillor Mrs M Atkins, Councillor T Christopher, Councillor R Hayward and Councillor S Roberts

76. To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 1st October 2007

Minutes confirmed as correct

Proposer: Councillor J Fletcher
Unanimous

Seconder: Councillor Mrs V Mitchell

77. To receive the town clerk's report (for information only)

1. The future of the CCTV system in town was one of the items that was discussed at the last MCC Cabinet meeting which was held in County Hall last week. There was a report submitted by Mrs Tracey Harry, Head of Resources and Performance Management in which she recommended that those towns that had withdrawn funding from the system should have it removed from their town. So far Monmouth and Caldicot have withdrawn funding and Chepstow have written giving notice that they will withdraw in January unless some progress is made in relation to the outstanding issues from the User Group. The Clerk at Abergavenny Town Council confirmed that at present it is still participating but that it will be reviewed at a meeting due to be held this week. I am waiting for formal confirmation from a County Councillor as to the outcome of the meeting and will report back with further information in due course. Councillor Hayward is liaising with Andrew Crump on this matter also.
2. There will be another Highways surgery on November 15th between 9.00 – 12.00 noon at the One Stop Shop in Priory Street. This time it will be necessary to make an appointment to see Mr Keeble who is one of the senior highways managers. He will be available to see members of the public who wish to express their comments in relation to any aspect relating to highways.
3. There is an invitation from Action 50 plus to all members to attend a meeting on Thursday 15th November 2.00pm at Drybridge House to discuss the potential advantages of having a Shopmobility scheme in Monmouth.
4. Following the recent reports by members relating to antisocial behaviour in the Drybridge Park area, this item was discussed at the CSAT's meeting but there was not sufficient evidence available and few members of the public had reported these incidents to The Police. It was therefore agreed that a request would be made to Youth Services for an outreach worker to work with the young people in this area. There will be further updates on this once more information is available.
5. There will be another fund raising event of The Shire Hall Stewards in aid of the restoration fund for The Shire Hall. A Murder Mystery night has been organised for Friday 30th November, which will be held in the Community room at 7.30pm. The tickets cost £15.00 and include a drink and buffet and are available from The Museum and Line of Fire in Monnow Street. There will not be a bar at the function so you can take your own bottle if you wish.

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

Letters

The following letters were read out to the members and attendees.

Letter 60: Mr & Mrs Ramsden – Copy has been sent to MCC lighting and a response to Mr & Mrs Ramsden.

Letter 36: Monmouth in bloom, written response to Mr J Roocroft.

79. Matters raised by members: Nothing received in writing

80. To consider and approve reports and minutes of the council's committees:

- a. Planning:** An application has been made to demolish Dixon Clinic and build twenty four flats on the site, this has raised concerns regarding the access from the school side because of children around the area and the increase of traffic.
Approval has been given to the application for the proposed Welcome Centre in Monmouth. There were concerns raised about the CCTV system at Kymin View School Wyesham due to the potential to overlook gardens and houses, assurances have been given that there will be a 'blinking' off area, anyone who has concerns should be referred to the school.
The new Lidl store is due to open soon and members of the public were advised that The Town Council had asked for the plans to be changed so that the appearance would be more in keeping with the entrance to the Wye Valley and also a screen of trees will be planted at the front elevation.
Next Meeting to be held on 26 November 2007
- b. Environmental Affairs:** At the meeting on 15th October, Sue Middleton, the HLF Officer of the Wye Valley AONB, outlined the plans for Monmouth Quay which is part of the Overlooking The Wye project covering 42 sites along the Wye from Chepstow to Mordiford, and costing, in total, £2.6 million of which the Heritage Lottery Fund will pay £1.9 million. The Monmouth Quay project will cost a total of £60,000 and £15,000 of match funding is needed over a period of three years. It was agreed that MTC should match fund 50% of this over a period of three years. The Litter Policy Working Group had received responses from several schools in regard to their initiatives and

Monmouth Comprehensive was to be commended on being particularly proactive. They have installed a reverse vending machine which takes cans and plastic bottles, and this has considerably reduced the amount of litter both within the school and around it. The school has also been a pilot in a countrywide campaign whereby the police have reminded all pupils and parents that all children over the age of 12 are responsible for their actions; it is an offence to drop litter in public places and enforcement officers may issue on-the-spot fines of £75 to those caught dropping litter. This too has considerably reduced the amount of litter.

At the meeting on 6th November the planting plans were approved, and the budget was set for the coming year. MCC has started its consultation for the proposed regeneration plan for Monmouth and the following items are to be included:- Shire Hall renovation, Welcome Centre development, Shared Space concept to be investigated as a possible solution to improving the environment for both vehicles and pedestrians and to improve safety, car parks and coach parks, sustainable transport scheme, as part of a transition town initiative, and to include suitable coach parking for national routes, development of riverside activities off the Dixton Roundabout, Monmouth Links proposals to be implemented throughout, a hotel development, Monmouth Quay restoration, new housing – but as small infill developments and not another large estate, and also to take into account the impact on infra-structure especially the drainage / sewerage system, planting scheme throughout the town, business start up scheme and amenities for school leavers, that the A40 be put in a tunnel from south of the Gibraltar Tunnels to the Dixton Roundabout so that the town is once again united with the river and with Wyesham. Additionally, that stretch of road, and particularly the junction with the Wye Bridge, is an accident black spot; rebuilding this stretch of road with modern design and engineering, and making the junction with the Wye Bridge for local traffic only, would save lives and injuries.

Shared Space: A quote of £4,850 has been obtained from Hamilton-Baillie Associates for an initial study to cover Agincourt Square, Monnow Street and Blestium Street. WAG is prepared to pay 50%; it was agreed that MTC should pay for one-third of the remainder.

Next Meeting to be held on 26 November 2007

- c. **Community Affairs:** Mike Moran from MCC gave a presentation on the Summer play scheme, there have been doubts regarding its' success, a meeting will be held with other town councils to look at improving and providing a better scheme for next year. Questionnaires are to be sent out to all primary schools to gain information.

The consequences of the closure of the job centre are still being looked into, this is being followed up as it is felt that a Jobcentre is still required in Monmouth. The provision of a direct telephone line to the Abergavenny Jobcentre from the One Stop Shop is inadequate and does not provide any privacy.

There was a review of expenditure for the supported schemes, the Carnival, CAB and Attik and the budget for the forthcoming financial year will be set at the next meeting.

Next Meeting to be 19 November 2007

- d. **Finance & Policy:** A review of the pay and conditions for staff was undertaken and the expenditure of other committees was considered. The committee has set up a working party to consider the recruitment of an apprentice mace bearer.

Next Meeting to be held on 4th December 2007.

The minutes and reports were approved:

Proposer: Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst

Seconded: Councillor N Hacket Pain

For: 9

Against: 0

Abstentions: 2

- e. **Shire Hall Renovation Project:** The final application for the HLF Bid will be submitted in December and in January tenders will go out for the work.
- f. **Monmouth Partnership Forum:** There has been no meeting since the last Town Council meeting. However, on 21st November there will be a public meeting at 6 pm in the Shire Hall to discuss the MCC policy on waste management and recycling. At the next regular meeting on 28th November there will be a presentation by Treenergy Ltd on their proposed wood fired power station to be situated along the Hadnock Road which will provide electricity for 10,000 homes.

- g. Others: Links Project Board:** This is a proposed project to provide eight different cycle routes around Monmouth included within this will be the replacing of the surface at the iron bridge Wyesham. This will be part of the Connect2 bid and will be featured in 'The Peoples 50 million' a television competition, this project is now in the final four along with the Eden Project plus two others, the dates for voting are via internet on 10 December and by telephone 7-10 December 2007
- One Voice Wales:** Councillor Mrs Anthea Dewhurst reported that the report for G P out of hour's questionnaire would be discussed at the next Commuity Meeting.

81. To consider failure by members to attend committee meetings without prior apologies:

A new policy was adopted at the July Full Council meeting that a record would be kept to show when members have not sent apologies for missed meetings and that any member failing to send apologies for more than two consecutive meetings should have to account for their reasons why. Members were in agreement that a lot of work is carried out at committee level and that members of the public should have an opportunity to see which of their elected representatives is working on their behalf. This item has been raised due to non attendance by Councillor Mrs Pearce at the Community and Environment Committee meetings.

In response Councillor Mrs Pearce said it was a misapprehension that she was on the Community and Environment Committees, because of her added responsibilities at work she can no longer make meetings in the earlier part of the week and did feel that in the past she has worked very hard at Committee level.

Some Councillors present expressed concerns and thought it was unfair to single one Councillor out. Councillor D Stevens explained that any other member failing to observe the procedure will also be asked to account for their actions as and when necessary. He confirmed that this has only come into force with effect from 9 July when the policy was instigated and attendance before this date is not taken into consideration.

For the benefit of the visiting public Agenda Item 86 was brought forward for fifteen minutes question time.

86. To receive questions from members of the public:

There were a number of questions raised regarding the very bad state of the roads around Wyesham. Councillor Hacket Pain explained that resurfacing would take place at Woodlands and Wyesham Avenue next year, but that no date has been set as yet.

Councillor Stevens explained that highways issues are part of Monmouthshire County Council responsibilities and the Town Council can support the issue but cannot enforce.

Residents wanted to know why there were no 30 mph signs around Wyesham, it was reported that Highways had advised that as it is a built up area there are therefore no signs required. There was also concern expressed and a request for larger more prominent 50 mph signs on the A40 dual carriageway as the small ones that are there at present are not prominent enough and traffic continues to speed. There was a suggestion from the residents for lighting up signs however it was pointed out that these cost approx £5,000 each. Councillor Stevens said he would look into this; as it is a National trunk road it comes under the jurisdiction of the Highways Agency which is out of the control of Monmouthshire County Council. A resident advised that a letter had been written to the Minister of transport suggesting large 50 mph signs be installed in the central reservation, the reply that came back was that it was too dangerous for workmen to install them in that position.

Concerns were also raised regarding the banners for advertising business's being placed on the junctions by the traffic lights which were causing a distraction for motorists.

Another item raised was the problem of street lights which had been out for two months on the Redbrook Road and that a resident had been told by the OSS that it was the responsibility of Western Power.

The blight of graffiti was raised and Councillor Mrs Mitchell explained that the police had had a blitz during the summer holidays on offenders who are usually from outside of the town.

There were a number of people present who raised the issue of the old school site, and members advised them that the site has to be sold for housing in order to fund the new school. The figure of sixty five houses was only a suggested figure; residents wanted to know where young children were going to play as at the moment they were playing in the streets. The point was made that if more houses are built it will cause more traffic and more children with nowhere to play safely. Councillor Hacket Pain explained that the play areas at Woodland View and Tudor Road had been a subject of debate over

their ownership, it was now agreed that they would remain in the ownership of MCC who have approached the housing association along with GAVO to help finance the development of the areas. It was also pointed out that it is against the law to park on pavements so the police could be told, another resident did point out that is all very well but the call goes through to Pontypool with not always a response.

Another request was made for designated parking spaces near the Chippenham play area for the use of people using the play area only as all spaces are taken by the near by school.

82. To consider a request to MCC to impose a sign moratorium until a feasibility study by WAG regarding shared spaces has been conducted

Members were in agreement that a letter should be sent to MCC requesting that consideration is given to this.

Proposer: Councillor D Stevens
For: 9

Against: 1

Seconded: Councillor Mrs V Mitchell
Abstention: 1

83. To consider letters from MCC regarding a proposal to change the current electoral arrangements in Monmouth and review Polling Stations:

MCC have asked for a response from the Town Council to a request to create a new Community Council for the Wyesham Ward. The members debated at some length this request and they felt strongly that this is not a viable option for a number of good reasons, such as the increased financial cost to the electors of Monmouth, also that it would be detrimental in alienating Wyesham from Monmouth, that it would be uneconomic and that also there would not be such a wide range of talents and skills to draw on.

After the members had discussed this and a vote taken the Chair asked the members of public if they were in agreement with the decision that had been taken, and it was unanimous by those present that they felt that this would not be for the benefit of Wyesham.

There has also been a request from MCC to consider the siting of the polling districts, places and stations to ensure that they are suitable for purpose in the individual wards. There was a general consensus that the 'Town Ward' whilst having a smaller number of electors, because of the infrastructure, is a large area to be covered by one member. It was therefore requested that consideration be made to increase the number of councillors in the town ward to two. There was also a point made in relation to the 'Drybridge Ward' that with the building of the new development this area too is under subscribed with only three members. This area of town is still developing with a planning application imminent for another substantial phase of new housing.

Proposer: Councillor D Stevens
For: 8

Against: 0

Seconded: Councillor Mrs V Mitchell
Abstention: 1

84. To adopt recommended Environment Committee proposal to ensure the Town Council fulfils its stated aim of promoting the cleanliness of the town and its open spaces

The following Town Council policy was agreed:-

1. Liaise with and encourage fast food and other retail outlets in efforts to reduce the litter generated by their business
2. Liaise with and support local schools in their anti-litter education programmes
3. Encourage and support voluntary bodies and users to keep clean those areas outside direct responsibility of any identifiable organisation
4. Monitor litter build up and report problem areas (via the Town Clerk) to the One Stop Shop
5. Ensure sufficient adequately sized litter bins are available and regularly emptied in all litter prone locations.

Proposer: Councillor D Stevens
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Mrs V Mitchell

85. To adopt recommendations from the F&P Committee in relation to a vehement between budget heads within the Community Budget and the expenditure from earmarked reserves

A request has been made by The Environment Committee to allocate monies from Earmarked Reserves to be used as follows: It is proposed that the project to regrade the allotment road is paid from the balance in the 'Footpaths' earmarked reserves account of £3000 and the 'Allotments Fencing & Road' account of £250.00. The outstanding balance due of £250.00 will be paid for from the 2007/08 transport scheme budget.

There is also a request to use £500.00 from the 'Millennium Trees & Plaques' earmarked reserve to fund the purchase of a blue plaque for The Shire Hall.

A request on behalf of The Community Committee to vire £1000.00 from the Summer play scheme budget into the Community Grant Scheme budget had been approved by the Finance Committee also and was recommended to Full Council for approval.

Proposer: Councillor G F W Buckland
Unanimous

Seconder: Councillor Mrs C Pearce

87. Any other business:

Councillor Mrs S Chivers brought to the attention of the committee the dangerous state of the skateboard park, with the ditch in need of clearing out.

88. To agree meeting dates

Agreed

To resolve to exclude the public and press from the meeting during consideration of the following item:

Proposer: Councillor D Stevens
Unanimous

Seconder: Councillor G F W Buckland

At 8.45 the Council moved into closed session

Councillor Bond left the meeting at this point.

Signature: _____

Date: _____