

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 MEETING OF MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL held on 4 February 2008 at 7.00pm in the Community Room, Shire Hall

Present: Chairman the Mayor Councillor T Christopher, Deputy Mayor Councillor D Stevens, Councillor Mrs M C Atkins, Councillor R Bond, Councillor Mrs S Chivers, Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst, Councillor J Fletcher, Councillor N Hackett Pain, Councillor Mrs V Mitchell, Councillor Mrs C Pearce, Councillor Mrs A Were and Councillor Mrs S White.

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

To receive questions from members of the public for a maximum of 10 minutes:

Presentation by Simon Brown on behalf of the Monmouth Partnership Forum to briefly outline the many projects carried out by the Forum and the aims of cooperation.

Sergeant Steve Thorpe gave a brief résumé of crime figures in the area, highlighting two initiatives for this year. The first is to distribute purse straps linking purses to hand bags, these will be handed out free of charge hopefully preventing purse thefts in the town. He highlighted the latest scam which is the taking of handbags and purses, victims subsequently receive a hoax telephone call from the offender posing as a bank official asking for personal information. The second initiative will be the handing out of tea towels to vulnerable people warning of the dangers of inviting strangers into the home. These will have useful information and contact numbers printed on them. A presentation on February 28th will be held at The Shire Hall to talk to members of the public about these initiatives.

103. To receive declaration of interest in items on the agenda:

None received

104. To receive questions from members of the public for a maximum of 10 minutes:

None received

105. To receive apologies for absence:

Councillor G F W Buckland, Councillor R Hayward, Councillor S Roberts and Councillor L Robson,

It was agreed by members to bring agenda item 119 forward

119. To consider offer of a chain for the Deputy Mayor's pendant:

Mr John Blake asked if the Town Council would accept the offer of a chain for the Deputy Mayor's pendant. He stated that during his many years service as a macebearer he had noticed that other towns have two chains of office and Monmouth only has one. A copy of the proposed design was circulated for member's approval.

Councillor Mrs Chivers thanked Mr Blake for his very generous offer and Councillor Mrs Were suggested that it should be engraved to ensure that in the future it would be known who had donated the chain.

Proposed: Councillor Stevens

Seconded: Councillor Mrs White

Unanimous

The Mayor Councillor Christopher invited Mr Blake to the next and last meeting in the Shire Hall due to be held on 17th March to present the chain to the Town Council. Mr Blake asked if this could be held in the Council Chambers.

It was agreed that as it was not possible to hold the meeting upstairs in the Chamber but that there could be a presentation after the meeting that would be held there.

Proposed: Councillor Mrs Chivers
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Mrs White

106. To confirm & sign the minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2007 and the minutes on Pink Paper dated 10th December 2007

Confirmed correct with the following amendment:

Page 36 last paragraph ref to November last year, 2006 to be added for clarification

Proposed: Councillor Mrs White

Seconded: Councillor Mrs Chivers

For: 10

Against: 0

Abstentions: 2

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

Plans are well in hand now for the move of the office to Market Hall. This will be subject to the awarding of the HLF monies for the refurbishment of The Shire Hall. The proposed move date is Tuesday 11th March. This will inevitably cause some disruption whilst removals are in progress and I would anticipate that the office will be closed for several days. I hope that there will be a minimum amount of inconvenience in relation to the telephone lines so that messages can be left and we will endeavour to resume business as usual by the end of that week.

The Shire Hall Stewards are arranging a Closure Party in The Shire Hall on 6th March. This is being held on the date that the HLF will be announcing the result of the Stage 2 submission for the renovation project. Tickets are available for sale at a cost of £10.00 in the office or the Museum. There will be an opportunity for people to have a tour of the building and listen to live music whilst enjoying a drink from the bar. Please support this event as the proceeds will form part of the contribution that The Stewards have committed towards this project.

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

There was a request received from a member to read out correspondence item 20: Welsh Community Electors Group

109. Matters Raised by Members:

Nothing received in writing.

110. To Receive and Consider Reports & Minutes of Committees:

a. Planning Committee: As per minutes.

Councillor Mrs Chivers reported that the Planning committee have requested the Town Clerk to write to Mr Tim Bradfield MCC re parking at Chippenham Mead. The other ongoing issue is in relation to the proposed new care home at Watery Lane/Chartist Rise

b. Environmental Affairs Committee: As per minutes

Cllr Mrs Mitchell reported that the Committee was concentrating on finishing the various local area projects that had been started. At the meeting on 17th December, members agreed to include the following items in their submission to the Monmouth Regeneration Plan being undertaken by the County Council:-

1. It should be called a Monmouth Development Plan, not a 'regeneration' plan
2. Redevelopment of 20-24 Monnow Street to include a covered marked and pedestrian access from Monnow Street to Chippenham and the car parks, and to provide delivery access at the rear for shops in Monnow Street
3. Planting of evergreen shrubs along the A40 to provide a noise barrier and to enhance the view of Monmouth from the A40, and particularly to block out the flats in Granville Street

4. Car park behind the Queen's Head to alleviate the parking in Glendower Street car park and to alleviate the parking problem at the 'top' end of town.
It was noted that Councillor Mrs Chivers objected to the inclusion of the above item 2, and Councillor Mrs Atkins objected to the inclusion of the above item 4. Councillor Stevens proposed that they be accepted so long as 'subject to planning permission' was included. This was not acceptable and it was agreed that these items be referred back to the Committee.
So far as the Shared Space initial study is concerned, the commissioning body was to be MCC, with Colin Phillips as the contact. Clarification of the work to be undertaken had been agreed and work on the study is to start this week. The 'working group' for the study consists of Colin Phillips (MCC Regeneration Officer), Paul Keeble (MCC Highways Department), Debbie McCarty (MCC Area Services Manager), Councillors Christopher and Mrs Mitchell representing the Town Council, and Simon Brown, Chair of Monmouth Partnership Forum.
Next meeting to be held on 11 February 2008
- c. **Community Affairs Committee:** As per minutes
Councillor Mrs Dewhurst reported on the presentation from CC Eric Saxon on the introduction of the new strategy group for developing CCTV. A new notice board will be installed at Wyesham and the key will be held at the shop it will be used for Council and community notices.
There was a recent meeting in Cwmbran regarding the Post Offices network restructuring.
There had been discussion regarding a consultation document on Monnow Vale with proposals of social services and health care working together, also concerns were raised about the Minor Injuries Unit. The committee agreed that the prize money for the Civic Award Scheme had to be reduced for this year due to the difficulty in finding sponsorship last year.
- d. **Finance & Policy Committee:** As per minutes
Councillor D Stevens reported that the committee agreed to replace the computer in the Clerk's office. There had been a letter of confirmation received from the Shire Hall Stewards agreeing to accept the terms of the guarantee. There was also a discussion to consider changing appendix 10 item 2 of the standing orders, committee members agree to vote for no change. There was a discussion concerning the proposal from MCC called 'Connections', a document which is a framework for collaborative working. In principal it was proposed that MCC would like this agreement in place and signed before the elections in May. This would be further discussed at the next committee meeting.
Proposed by: Councillor Bond **Seconded by:** Councillor Mrs Chivers
For: 8 Against: 1 Abstentions: 3
- e. **MCC: County Councillor Mrs S White:**
Councillor Mrs White had no report to give as there had been no discussion concerning what members would like to have feedback on. It was agreed that a report will be given to the next Town Council meeting and that all Councillors would be issued a list of committees that each County Councillor sits on.
- f. **Shire Hall Renovation Project:**
No report
- g. **Monmouth Partnership Forum:** As per minutes.
Councillor Mrs Mitchell reported on the meeting of the Forum held on 30th January. The main project currently is 'Monmouth Links' for which MPF has successfully obtained funding of £250,000 and for which other bids are pending; it is essential that this project is run absolutely correctly and to this end Jenny Lewis has drafted a Protocol and Terms of Reference. This has been circulated to all MPF members and advice is to be obtained from the MCC Legal Department. Two public meetings are due to be held, the first on 5th February to show the film 'The Power of Community – How Cuba Survived Peak Oil'; there will also be a talk on Transition Towns, and an opportunity for discussion. Also on 4th March at 6 pm in the Shire Hall, the meeting will consider the MCC Draft Strategy on Climate Change and Sustainable Energy as a further stage in the consultation process.
The Graffiti Project: During 2007 the Youth Offending Team tackled 105 jobs and spent over 900 hours removing graffiti and litter picking in Monmouthshire, and the Probation Service similarly tackled 69 jobs and spent 3,340 hours doing so. If we did not have these two agencies it would have cost over £22,000 for the man hours alone, let alone supervision costs. Members are encouraged to contact the One Stop Shop with further requests for similar work to be undertaken.

h. Others:

One Voice Wales: Councillor Mrs Dewhurst reported that OVV want to know of any issues that Town or Community Councils feel have not been dealt with properly and these will be discussed, to include positive and negative issues.

Fairtrade: Councillor Mrs Dewhurst reminded the Council that the week of 25th February until 8 March was Fairtrade week and a coffee morning will be held at the Priory on 8 February 2008

111. To resolve to appoint a Deputy Mace Bearer:

Members were advised that a series of working parties had been held and a report had been made back to the Finance Committee. It has been further discussed and a decision made to recommend to Full Council the appointment of a Deputy Mace bearer. A new uniform would be required at a cost of approx £1,000 with a remuneration of 50% of the present Macebearers allowance. It was requested that a press release should go out as soon as possible to advertise the post.

Proposed by: Councillor Hacket Pain

Seconded by: Councillor Mrs White

Unanimous

112. To consider appointing 3 members to a panel to appoint Deputy Mace Bearer:

Members were in agreement that it would be preferable to appoint mayors past or present to the panel. On being put to the vote Councillors Bond, Councillor Mrs Chivers and Councillor Mrs White were selected.

Proposed by: Councillor Hacket Pain

Seconded by: Councillor Mrs White

Unanimous

113. To resolve continued withdrawal from the CCTV System

Councillor Hacket Pain reported that he had attended a recent meeting held to discuss the future of the scheme. It has been requested that all Town Council representatives go back to their council's for confirmation of participation in the scheme. Members discussed the importance of ensuring that there is clear evidence that this is value for money as the finances are coming from the public purse.

Councillor Hacket Pain had asked why this Town Council had been excluded from meetings that had been held in the autumn. The officer responsible denied that there had been any exclusion and he stated that non attendance was due to the Council's inefficiency and probably that of the Town Clerk. This is not an acceptable attitude from an officer from another authority; there should be an element of trust which Councillor Hacket pain does not believe there is.

At the previous meeting it was agreed that if Monmouth Town Council does not join then there would not be any exclusion from the development group. This is the group responsible for the strategic decisions but the council would be excluded from the user group meetings.

There have been some changes but the main one has been that since Sept 2007 a dedicated CCTV officer has been appointed. The new agreement will see MCC propose a new formula for costing. Last year the cost was £11,500.00 with the proposed new scheme it could be charged at £15,000.00 to £16,000.00. Councillor Hacket Pain had been provided with a copy of the budget for the system and advised members that there has been a significant rise in this years budget and that questions needed to be asked to justify this. One of the previous concerns of members was in relation to the agreement not including the Police as a party to the agreement and under the new agreement the Police will still not be bound into the scheme.

A decision has to be made by 14 February, and if the Council does opt back in then there is a requirement to pay any back payments by March.

When put to the vote members were in agreement to remain withdrawn from the scheme.

Proposed by: Councillor Hacket Pain

Seconded by: Councillor D Stevens

For: 10

Against: 0

Abstentions: 2

The Mayor Councillor Christopher registered his disgust at comments that the officer had made against our Council and the Town Clerk. He requested support in aid of writing a letter asking the officer to substantiate his allegations.

- 114. To resolve to appoint two members to CCTV Development Group**
 Councillor N Hacket Pain and Councillor T Christopher were appointed.
Proposed by: Councillor Hacket Pain **Seconded by:** Councillor Mrs White
Unanimous
- 115. To confirm HMS Monmouth parade and consider finance for civic hospitality:**
 HMS Monmouth has requested permission to exercise its right to march as part of the Ship's programme for a forthcoming visit to Wales. The ship is due to dock in Cardiff on Thursday 13 March, and there is a programme of events to which members will be invited. It is proposed that the parade through Monmouth town centre will take place on the 15th March. The ceremony will coincide with the last market at Shire Hall before closure on the following Thursday. The parade will form up at Castle Square where there will an inspection of the troops. This will be followed by a reception, details of which have not yet been confirmed. The Clerk advised members that there is an outstanding amount in the Civic Hospitality budget in the sum of £1568.00. It was agreed unanimously that this amount could be allocated for expenditure for hosting the event.
Proposed by: Councillor Bond **Seconded by:** Councillor Fletcher
Unanimous
- 116. To consider F&P recommendation to accept a policy on unacceptable behaviour:**
 Deferred to next meeting to be held on 17 March 2008
- 117. To review members representation on outside bodies**
 Deferred to next meeting to be held on 17 March 2008
- 118. To accept changes to committee membership:**
 The Clerk had circulated an amended list of committee membership to reflect recent changes. It was agreed unanimously to accept the revised list.
 Councillor Mrs Were noted that the Community Committee numbers are low and asked if any member would like to be included in the membership. No member agreed.
- 120. Any other business:**
 Councillor Fletcher asked what the view of the Town Council is regarding the ongoing problem of obstructions on the pavements in town. There was some discussion regarding enforcement and it was agreed that this item would be put on the agenda of the next Town Council meeting.
- 121. To Agree meeting dates:**
 Agreed. The next Town Council Meeting will be 17 March 2008 at 7.00pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10 pm

Signature: _____

Date: _____