

Monmouth Town Council

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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Held on 12 May 2008 at 7.00pm

At Monmouth Priory, Priory Street, Monmouth

PRESENT: Chairman The Mayor Councillor T Christopher
Councillor R Bond, Councillor G Bright, Councillor Mrs S Chivers,
Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst, Councillor Ms C Edwards, Councillor J Fletcher,
Councillor Mrs J Hall, Councillor N Hacket Pain, Councillor R Hayward,
Councillor M Jones, Councillor L Robson, Councillor Mrs B Smith, Councillor Mrs A Were
and Councillor Mrs S White

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Sarah Robson Town Clerk

1. To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda

None received

2. To elect the Mayor for the coming year

There was one candidate nominated for the position of Mayor, Councillor Terry Christopher. When put to the vote with a show of hands it was confirmed that Councillor Christopher should continue his term of office for another year

Proposed by: Councillor Hayward

Seconded by: Councillor Mrs Dewhurst

For: 12

Against: 1

Abstentions: 1

3. Mayor installation and election of the Deputy Mayor

There was one candidate nominated for the position of Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs Ann Were. When put to the vote with a show of hands it was confirmed that Councillor Mrs Were become the Deputy Mayor for the coming year

Proposed by: Councillor Christopher

Seconded by: Councillor Mrs Chivers

Unanimous

The outgoing Deputy Mayor Mr David Stevens presented Councillor Mrs Were with the chain and Councillors Christopher, Mrs Were, the Clerk and the Mace Bearer left the room to adjourn upstairs for photographs.

Councillor Christopher in his acceptance address said that in the past year he had a busy, interesting and fulfilling time. This was due to all round team work. He then went on to thank members of the Town Council for their support, the Town Clerk and the Mace Bearers for their help and support at civic events. He went on to thank the outgoing Deputy Mayor, Mr David Stevens for his encouragement and assistance during the last year. The Mayor also highlighted the contribution that Mr Stevens had made to the previous council, where he had acted as chairs of both the Finance and Policy and Environmental committees. The Mayor then announced that he had earlier that evening presented cheques to the Shire Hall Stewards, St Marys Church Spire Appeal and Overmonnow Special Needs Unit, the charities that he had supported over the last year.

In conclusion the Mayor went on to state that in the coming year he would commit himself to the best of his abilities to the Town Council and the people of Monmouth.

4. To name the Mayor's Chaplain

Canon Richard Pain of St Mary's Priory Church was named by the Mayor as his Chaplain for the year and he was invited to lead the meeting in prayer.

The Mayor's Chaplain to lead the meeting in prayer

5. To confirm the date for the Civic Service: Sunday 8th June 2008

Councillor Christopher confirmed that arrangements were in hand for the Civic Service to take place in St Mary's Church on Sunday 8th June at 3.00pm with a reception afterwards in the Priory. Invitations would follow.

Proposed by: Councillor Bond

Seconded by: Councillor Fletcher

For: 13

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1

7.25 pm: At this point of the meeting Councillor Robson arrived and apologised for being late.

6. To receive apologies for absence

Councillor Ms J Williams

Councillor Christopher asked that each of the members take a turn in giving a brief introduction and a summary of which ward they represent and what committees they stood on.

7. To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 17th March & 21st April 2008

The minutes were confirmed as correct and signed

Proposed by: Councillor Hacket Pain

Seconded by: Councillor Fletcher

For: 10

Against: 0

Abstentions: 5

8. To receive the Town Clerk's report

'There are several housekeeping issues that maybe helpful to new members.

Every member of the Council will receive agendas and minutes from all of the committees even if you are not a member of all of the committees. This is to ensure that each member is kept up to date and to ensure an opportunity to take part in debates relating to any issues that are happening in their particular ward, or maybe a topic of particular interest. As all meetings are public meetings even if you are not a member of a committee you can of course still attend, it is at the discretion of the Chairmen as to whether or not you will be invited to take part in the discussions taking place. If you are not a member of that committee you do not have a voting right. If however you wish to be co-opted onto a committee because an item of particular interest is being discussed and you wish to be included with full voting rights then you can ask the Chairman to be co-opted onto that committee at the commencement of that meeting.

Papers for the Finance Committee are printed on blue paper and any item printed on pink paper is confidential and is therefore not in the public domain and is for members attention only.

A full copy of the Town Councils procedures and guidelines, called Standing Orders are available and any member wishing to have a copy please let me know. There are also a whole range of other books and information in the office which I will be happy to let anyone take a look at.

The website will be updated shortly so please can any new members provide a passport style photo so that these can be included with the existing ones. If any existing member wishes to update their picture can you please let me have the new picture as soon as possible.

The office is open Monday – Friday 9.30 to 12.00 noon and outside those hours messages can be left on the answer phone or sent by e mail.’

9. To receive correspondence that the Mayor wishes to place before the Council

The correspondence list was noted and the Mayor asked members to contact the Clerk if they wished to receive any copies of correspondence.

10. To consider and approve reports and minutes of the council’s committees

a Planning Committee. As per minutes

Councillor Mrs Chivers reported that the recent meeting had considered the routine applications and that the two main ongoing matters of note were the Croft y Bwla development and the old Monnow Bridge. Members of the committee had asked that a letter be sent to MCC requesting that it agrees to undertake an independent assessment of the flood risk. The issue of the old bridge is in relation to the wall that is adjacent to a property situated there.

b Environmental Affairs Committee. As per minutes

Councillor Mrs Dewhurst gave a report for this committee in the absence of Mrs Mitchell, the former chair. Councillor Mrs Dewhurst acknowledged the work carried out by Mrs Mitchell and commended the effective work that had been carried out in the previous year, particularly in relation to local area projects. It was noted that progress had been seen with improvements to strategic and sustainable planning of this committee. Other matters discussed at the last meeting included the financial support of a ‘Blue Plaque’ guide which had been brought about as a result of a joint initiative with the Civic Society. The committee had also discussed the proposed new contract with Monmouthshire Community Recycling and implications of the planned changes. There had also been a discussion regarding the installation of a new cycle rack outside the Oldway Centre in Monnow Street.

c Community Affairs Committee. As per minutes

The committee last met on 31st March and it was agreed to earmark £473.00 towards a feasibility study for a Shop mobility scheme. Also the committee discussed the presentation of the Civic Awards at Bridges. It was also noted that frequent press releases from the committee had provided regular updates about what work was being undertaken. Councillor Mrs Dewhurst reminded members that the experiment to withdraw Sunday Pharmacy cover was now underway and that feedback from members of the public was vital if this pilot scheme was to be stopped.

d Finance & Policy Committee. As per minutes

Councillor Hayward reported that one of the main functions of this committee is to ensure the Council’s financial compliance to the regulations and procedures that are in place. One of its roles is to monitor the expenses and to recommend to Council a budget. The committee deals with housekeeping issues and suggests changes to policies and procedures. At the last meeting members were given an opportunity to discuss the fencing that had been erected around the Shire Hall and following this a Full Council meeting was organised to discuss fully the options available in relation to the removal of the fence.

Proposed by: Councillor Mrs White

Seconded by: Councillor Hacket Pain

Unanimous

e Monmouth Partnership Forum

Councillor Mrs Smith reported that the forum is for members of the County Council, Town Council and actions groups to meet together and discuss local issues. At the last meeting a variety of topics were discussed, Shop mobility, transition towns and climate change. It was reported that the Green Light Group’s project to replace plastic bags with an environmentally friendly jute alternative was well in hand, and also there was a pensioners group set up to consider intergenerational issues and in particular war time memorabilia, coins etc which it is hoped will be available to make a collection to take into schools.

f Others

N/A

11. To appoint members to committees

The Clerk advised that several amendments had been received since the list was originally circulated and that an updated list would be available for distribution shortly. The members agreed to accept the appointment of committees.

Proposed by: Councillor Bond

Seconded by: Councillor Hayward

Unanimous

12. To resolve to adopt the revised Code of Conduct in line with the 'Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) Order 2008 –SI 2008 No. 788'

The Clerk advised that the overview of the revised Code of Conduct that had been circulated outlining the general conditions, personal interests and disclosure of such, prejudicial interests and participation in the business of the Authority. A full copy of the Statutory Instrument is available in the office for anyone to refer to. If members agreed to adopt this then there is a legal requirement to advertise this with a notice in the press. The Clerk confirmed that it was understood that the Monitoring Officer at MCC would make arrangements for this to be done in due course.

Proposed by: Councillor Hayward

Seconded by: Councillor Mrs Dewhurst

Unanimous

13. To ratify the decision made at the meeting of April 21st and confirm expenditure up to a maximum of £2000.00 for the cleaning of the cobbled area outside the Shire Hall and to request immediate removal of the fence from the cobbled area

Councillor Hayward explained that at the previous meeting members had requested that the fence be removed and that arrangements should be made to clean the cobbled area outside the Shire Hall. It was envisaged that the average weekly costs would be in the region of £200.00 but this would vary. Members were reminded that the decision by the HLF should be known on 24th June and that if the award was made work should commence in early July. At this time permanent hoarding would be erected and the responsibility of the area would be with the Authority and the Contractors. The members agreed unanimously that the resolution should be passed and arrangements should go ahead as planned.

Proposed by: Councillor Hackett Pain

Seconded by: Councillor Hayward

Unanimous

14. To confirm appointment of Deputy Mace Bearer

Members were reminded that a working party had been set up to consider the possibility of recruiting a Deputy Mace Bearer. A process was agreed and recommendations were made to Council who confirmed that a panel of former Mayors should be charged with making a shortlist and selecting an appropriate candidate. The post was advertised and following the successful interview the panel proposed that Mr Mike Brown should be appointed. The members were advised that Mr Brown clearly demonstrated his involvement with community activities and that in all respects the panel found him a suitable applicant and had no hesitation to recommend his appointment to Full Council.

The members agreed unanimously to appoint Mr Brown who confirmed that he was delighted to accept this honour.

Proposed by: Councillor Bright

Seconded by: Councillor Mrs Were

Unanimous

15. To confirm induction training for members at a maximum cost of £125.00 per council at Chepstow Drill Hall on Saturday 17th May 2008

The Clerk had received the names of four members wishing to attend the induction training. It was agreed to confirm the expenditure from the training budget.

Proposed by: Councillor Robson

Seconded by: Councillor Mrs White

Unanimous

16. To confirm meeting dates

Members agreed to confirm meeting dates with one change to the schedule. The Clerk recommended that the Finance & Policy meeting on Monday 19th May should commence at 7.30pm and not 7.00 as listed to ensure that the Planning Committee meeting at 6.00pm should have sufficient time to consider all of the plans.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.05 pm