

Monmouth Town Council

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Held on 1st September 2008 at 7.00pm

St James Hall, Wyesham, Monmouth

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Sarah Robson Town Clerk and Mrs Jane Lloyd Clerical Assistant

Doctor Payne made it clear at the start of his presentation that the views that he expressed were his own.

He told members that Monnow Vale had received quite a mixed press but he believed that this was still an exciting project. He felt that when the facility had opened people's expectations were high and that the services on offer would be the same as the Old Monmouth Hospital on Hereford Road. The opening unfortunately coincided with the new contract for GPs 'Out of Hours' services and he emphasised that this was a much needed change to doctor's contracts which would mean them no longer working excessively long hours.

Monnow Vale provides intermediate care for people with chronic illnesses and also aims to bring Health and Social Care together.

Dr Payne expressed disappointment at how slowly the process of integration had taken place. There were initially some difficulties with staff recruitment and training, also with the transfer of records onto an electronic database which had now been completed. There is evidence of more cohesion with Social Services with continuing assessments and each patient is looked at individually. The process of checking financial information to assess is very time consuming. There is a deficiency of beds for those patients suffering from confusion and dementia and there needs to be a better and quicker assessment of patients in the future.

It is anticipated that a long awaited pilot scheme will soon start with local GP's spending one day a week in Monnow Vale running surgeries, patient reviews and conducting the clinics. A huge amount of work is required in putting together care packages for the patients.

Dr Payne expressed his full support for the Day Services Centre and felt it was a shame that the woodworking centre is closing. He stated that he would like to see the services offered being more inclusive which would mean a change of criteria for patients.

He said that the challenge to the Partnership Board would be bridging the gap between health and social care and to assist with some projects between Monnow Vale and Bridges becoming more integrated.

Councillor Mrs Chivers stated that she did not agree with Dr Payne's view that things haven't changed much, particularly in regard to the provision of 'out of hours' care.

Dr Payne explained that Monnow Vale was never designed as a replacement for the old Hospital. He stated that not many medical emergencies take place in Monmouth and that the nurses that are on duty in Monnow Vale have a priority to deal with the nineteen people on the ward. Ongoing training is taking place but there is more need for prioritising nursing services towards those patients with acute chronic medical conditions.

Councillor Christopher brought discussions to a close by suggesting that the Community Affairs Committee take this further and stated that the Council owed it to the people of Monmouth to review the potential loss of services at Monnow Vale.

Dr Payne concluded by reminding members that the 'out of hours' issue is a separate one and needs to be considered outside the question of the Monnow Vale project.

50. To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda:

None received

51. To receive questions from members of the public:

None received

52. To receive apologies for absence:

Councillor Ms C Edwards, Councillor J Fletcher, Councillor R Hayward and Councillor Mrs S White

53. To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 21st July 2008 and the pink paper minutes dated 21st July 2008:

The minutes of 21st July 2008 were confirmed correct and signed.

Proposed: Councillor Bond	Seconded: Councillor Hackett Pain
For: 10	Against: 0
	Abstentions: 2

The Pink Paper minutes of 21st July 2008 were confirmed correct and signed.

Proposed: Councillor Mrs Dewhurst	Seconded: Councillor Mrs Smith
For: 9	Against: 0
	Abstentions: 3

54. To receive Town Clerk's report (for information only):

1. European Heritage Weekend will be taking place this year on Saturday and Sunday 13th/14th September. There are twelve properties included in the programme and most of them will be open both days between 2.00 and 5.00pm. This is part of the nationwide 'Open Doors' scheme which aims to open up buildings of architectural, cultural and local interest that are not normally open to the public. One new addition this year will be the Masonic Hall but this will only be available for entrance on the Sunday. A programme is available for anybody who is interested giving details of the event.
2. This coming Saturday starting at 11.00 am the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers will be exercising their right to the Freedom of Monmouth with a parade through town. It will culminate with HRH the Duke of Gloucester presenting medals to those members of the regiment who were on an operational tour of Iraq last year. Following this will be the official opening of the Garden of Remembrance at the Castle with a service of dedication followed by the unveiling of a Welsh slate plaque at the entrance.

This is an innovative project that CADW has been working closely with the Reserve Forces & Cadets Association as a permanent reminder of those reserve units stationed in the Principality.

3. A memo was circulated last week inviting members to claim for telephone expenses. This is a small re-imburement that has been authorised in the sum of £25.00 per quarter for those members who use their private telephones to conduct council business. There is also provision as agreed with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services for the claiming of travel expenses that have been incurred. This does not include travel within Monmouth and its environs, and will only be paid if the member has been authorised by Council to conduct its business. The Local Authorities (Allowances for Members of Community Councils) (Wales) Regulations Act 2003 also makes provision for other allowances under certain circumstances, for instance an attendance or financial loss allowance. Please let me know if you wish to receive further details about any of these allowances.

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

Citizens Advise Bureau: An invitation to Councillors to attend the AGM which will be held on Thursday 11th September 6.30 pm at Bridges Community Centre.

One Voice Wales: An invitation to Councillors to attend the National Energy and Efficiency workshop to be held on Monday 8th September 2008.

Members to let the Clerk know if they wish to attend.

56. Matters raised by members:

Nothing received in writing

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

a. Planning: As per Minutes.

Concerns were raised regarding the railings at Monnow Bridge which the committee understood should be half railings and half wall but looked as if they were being installed as only railings without the wall at the base.

Other enforcement concerns throughout the town are works in Drybridge Street and building works in Church Street all of which are being looked into by the relevant local authority department.

Next meeting due to be held on 15th September 2008 at 6.00pm

b. Environmental Affairs: As per Minutes

Two meetings have been held during August, the meeting of the 19th August specifically discussed the contract for the maintenance of the floral decorations within the town. Three tenders were received for the contract and one offer to water on a free of charge basis. This was discussed by the Committee who felt if this offer of watering only was accepted then the Committee would have to re tender as the other tenders had included watering in their bids, as requested.

Councillor Mrs Were thanked all that had tendered but offered special thanks to Mrs Vivien Mitchell who had looked after the displays on an interim basis until the tender was agreed.

The committee had also been made aware that there have been comments on the lack of colour in the planters this year which they accept. The planting project is a new scheme based on Henry V theme and it is hoped to continue the planting to complete the project which is to be based on sustainability principles.

Next year it is hoped to consider adding more colour. There have also been further problems with damage to the displays, theft of plants and also a mealy bug infection.

The second meeting was held on 26th August and the Committee agreed to consider funding improvements at Drybridge Park including replacing the bark and the forty year old swings.

A letter was received highlighting concerns on the recycling of cardboard within the town and the collection of compostable waste with garden and food waste being collected together. After contacting Wormtech who collect the waste, it had been explained that they have an in vessel form of composting and can therefore mix both components together creating a good quality compost. Worm tech has now started to separate cardboard as it is better to recycle this separately; previously it was not viable to do so.

A visit to the facility will be arranged for the future to see the operation.

The committee agreed to replace the cycle rack behind the Attik with a better quality and Sustrans will be consulted for the best design to use.

The Committee agreed to continue to fund the mowing between the two bridges and is considering the possibility of extending this to the dual carriageway.

The Committee also set up a working group to consider the purchase of additional Christmas lights, unfortunately there is not a lot of money available within the budget but it will look at decorations which will have the maximum impact on the town.

Next meeting due to be held on Monday 6th October at 6.30 pm

c. Community Affairs: As per Minutes.

At the meeting held on 28th July questions were collated to ask Dr Payne regarding Monnow Vale, these questions have not been raised at this meeting as they go into great detail. The results from this will be reported at a public meeting to be arranged.

There was information from County Councillor Mrs Hackett Pain regarding Woodland View playground in Wyesham and she has agreed to attend the next meeting.

An invitation was extended to the members of public attending this Town Council meeting to come to the next committee meeting to discuss this further.

The committee have had input to a poster that the Community Health Board has put together which will be circulated to surgeries explaining how to use the 'out of hours' surgeries.

Mr Mike Moran from MCC will attend the October meeting to give a report on this years Summer Play scheme and how money from the Town Council has been spent.

A Press Release was issued to make sure that people of Monmouth knew about the Community Grant Scheme; the closing date for the first part of the allocation is the 12th September, the second part will be held in January.

The Committee continues to find out the effect of the closure of the Job centre by doing more research into this and trying to improve matters.

There is continued involvement with People First who are trying to clarify the situation of Day Services at Monnow Vale and publicity from both local papers has been helpful. A number of County Councillors including Mr Peter Fox (Leader) are now ensuring that consultation is being properly carried out.

The Committee have replied to the publicity regarding the re-instatement of an out of hours pharmacy service by Boots and it is hoped that this is a long term solution and not an experiment.

Next meeting due to be held on Monday 15th September at 7.00 pm

d. Finance & Policy: As per Minutes

At the meeting held on 18th August general housekeeping matters were dealt with along with a review of standing orders, which is due every eighteen months. It was felt that since the last review which had sizeable changes, probably only one item needed reviewing, that of non attendance of members at committee meetings. The Committee has asked the Clerk to contact other Councils to see what their policy is on this subject.

CCTV: A letter has been written to traders and retailers in town asking if they wish to come before the working group of the Town Council to put their views forward, at the moment there hasn't been an overwhelming response to this. The working group will pay a visit to the Control Centre at Caerphilly to see the changes made as intimated by Mr Chris Norman at a recent meeting.

Councillor Hacket Pain drew members attention to the last meetings approved minutes and the reference to Mr Chris Normans presentation to the F& P Committee, 'County Council would not be asking the Town Council to make retrospective payments towards CCTV', however he reported that the Town Council recently received a letter from MCC demanding eleven and a half thousand pounds for retrospective payment of CCTV, this is still to be resolved.

Shire Hall: Once the lottery funding was in place the Town Council wrote to MCC asking for a meeting of the project board as the Town Council wished to know exactly what the itinerary and schedule for payment to contractors would be. This was considered to be a fair request as on a pro rata basis it is the largest contributor to the Shire Hall project. No response was received to this letter; however, at the beginning of August a letter was received from Mr Greenslade (MCC). It asked the Town Council to make available all of the funds that have been pledged plus the guarantee for the shortfall from the Shire Hall Stewards by March of next year. The Town Council believe this is an unfair demand, it considers that as a Council it should not pay all the money up front while the County Council will not be paying its bulk of the monies until 2010.

Proposed: Councillor Bright
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Bond

e. Shire Hall Renovation Project:

Councillor Hacket Pain wanted to draw the Council's attention to the Health & Safety issues raised by Councillor Bright regarding delivery of porta cabins on site; concerns have been expressed to MCC.

The Shire Hall Stewards are going to follow the lead of the Town Council regarding financial matters.

f. Monmouth Partnership Forum: As per Minutes

The next meeting has been deferred to Wednesday 1st October 2008

g. Others:

Attik: Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst wanted to remind people that the next fund raising event is due to be held on the 4th October when the Town Council is putting a team together to abseil the tower at St Mary's Church.

58. To receive recommendation from F&P Committee to amend the Administrative Assistant's Job Description:

Members agreed to accept the recommendation of the F&P Committee to amend the Administrative Assistant's Job Description.

Proposed: Councillor Hacket Pain **Seconded:** Councillor Bond
Unanimous

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

Councillor Robson offered his apologies to the Council and residents of Wyesham; he advised that he has been trying to balance work, Monmouth Town Council and Monmouth Town Football Club. He has decided to resign from the Finance & Policy Committee but will continue his membership on the Environmental Affairs Committee.

60. To discuss invitation for Mayor to attend a joint twinning event in Waldbronn:

The Clerk read out a letter from the Waldbronn Twinning Association inviting the Mayor to attend an event taking place over the weekend of 24/25th October. The prestigious event will be taking place when the town of Waldbronn will receive an award from the European Parliament for its efforts and achievements with its twinning associations.

After discussion a decision was made to put a resolution onto the next Town Council agenda proposing that the Mayor attends the weekend in Waldbronn and that a small gift be purchased to the maximum of £100. It was also considered appropriate that the cost of travel and subsistence allowance should be paid in line with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services guidelines.

The Mayor informed members that the Clerk had made enquiries in relation to insurance for the regalia and that Zurich Insurance had confirmed that no special conditions would be imposed and that there would be no additional premium charged.

Proposed: Councillor Christopher **Seconded:** Councillor Robson
For: 11 **Against:** 0 **Abstentions:** 1

61. To resolve to continue commitment to Monmouth Fairtrade Charter

The Fairtrade status of Monmouth has to be reviewed annually and Councillor Mrs Dewhurst advised that the whole process begins with the support of the Town Council.

Monmouth was declared the first town in the County to become Fairtrade and since then Wales has become the first Country to become Fairtrade.

Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst proposed the following

‘Monmouth Town Council recommits itself to support Fairtrade and tea and coffee served at its meetings or to its visitors, will be Fairtrade.

Proposed: Councillor Mrs Dewhurst **Seconded:** Councillor Mrs Smith
For: 11 **Against:** 0 **Abstentions:** 1

62. Any other business:

Councillor Jones wanted to propose the idea of a Christmas card design competition involving primary schools within Monmouth, the proceeds would go to a charity or the Mayors Charities.

Councillor Jones also wanted to raise the concerns of residents on the Rockfield estate regarding low flying aircraft; this is causing distress to children and animals.

It was suggested that these items would be put on the next Community Affairs agenda

Councillor Mrs Smith admitted having difficulty with the words of the Welsh National Anthem and has been approached by someone who has offered to give lessons; Councillor Mrs Smith has extended this offer to other Councillors who are interested.

Councillor Christopher brought to the attention of the committee that MCC has received a letter from the head architect at CADW with concerns of potential damage to the Rolls statue from the contractor’s area. As it was retained outside the compound area at public request any decision to reverse this could cause public disquiet however now CADW has formally drawn the matter to their attention there will be serious criticism if nothing is done. There are also concerns of vandalism as well as damage from the contractors unloading from the road.

Councillors asked if a clear material could be used to encase the statue at the front.

63. To agree meeting dates:

Next meeting will be held on 13th October 2008 at Osbaston Church in Wales School

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.15 pm

Signature: _____

Date: _____