

Monmouth Town Council

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Held on 2nd February 2009 at 7.00pm in Market Hall, Priory Street, Monmouth

PRESENT: Chairman the Mayor Councillor T Christopher
Councillor R Bond, Councillor Mrs S Chivers, Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst,
Councillor N Hacket Pain, Councillor R Hayward, Councillor Mrs J Hall,
Councillor Mrs B Smith and Councillor Mrs A Were

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Sarah Robson Town Clerk
There were a number of members of the public present

Mr Rob Campbell of the Nelson Garden Committee gave a brief presentation on plans for the future of the garden. Members were told that the lease only had just over two years to run but that there was no reason to believe that this should not be renewed. The garden is a place of historic importance, there is a lot of work to be done and at present it is not open to the public. There have been fundraising efforts which have helped but grants must be sought to improve the infrastructure and make the garden more accessible with a better approach and access for the disabled. It was agreed by members that this should be deferred to the Environment Committee as an agenda item for further discussion.

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

None received

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

Mr Brian Ramsay spoke on behalf of traders and members of the Chamber of Trade and Commerce to request that the decision regarding the future of the CCTV be deferred to offer an opportunity for a public meeting for further consultation. This move was not supported by members and it was agreed that there had been a wide consultation providing ample opportunity that had already taken place over several months and that the Council would be considering the resolution on the agenda this evening as tabled.

Mr Roy Nicholas spoke in support of David Davies MP efforts to overturn moves by the WAG to make changes to legislation in relation to broadening the statutory powers in the use of the Welsh language.

115. To receive apologies for absence:

Councillor G Bright, Councillor J Fletcher, Councillor M Jones, Councillor L Robson and Councillor Mrs S White.

116. To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 5th January 2009 and the Pink Paper minutes of the meeting held on 5th January 2009:

The minutes were confirmed correct and signed

Proposed: Councillor Hayward

Seconded: Councillor Mrs Hall

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstention: 1

Standing Orders were suspended to bring forward agenda item 123.

Proposed: Councillor Bond
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Mrs Dewhurst

123. To resolve to approve the recommendations from the F&P committee regarding the CCTV system in Monmouth

The report from the working group had been circulated to all members for consideration in advance of the meeting. A brief summary of findings was given so that the members of the public would understand the basis of the recommendation. Several members spoke in support of the continued withdrawal on the grounds that police information had revealed that crime had fallen in Monmouth during the period of non – operation of the cameras. Members of the public were reminded that the amount that the Town Council was being asked to pay represented a higher contribution than the monies that are being earmarked each year for the Shire Hall renovations. The working group looked carefully at three significant areas, need, demand and whose responsibility the system was. It had appeared from the lack of response to the consultation that there was no tangible demand from traders within the town. Members were reminded that the system belonged to Monmouthshire County Council and as such it was their responsibility. Upon being put to the vote to accept the recommendations the members were unanimous in their acceptance of the following recommendations. (see annexed report)

- 1) The Town Council should uphold its former decision to withdraw from the CCTV User Group run by MCC and that it should not currently commit any future funds to this project in its current form.
- 2) As the current project is vested in MCC, the Town Council should only view any possible future involvement in such a project with MCC as a sponsor (or part sponsor) rather than as a partner, and any funds sought by MCC for the project should be considered by the Town Council on this basis.
- 3) The Town Council should remain mindful of a possible future need for CCTV in Monmouth and that its future involvement, whether jointly with MCC or as a local scheme run by the Town Council, should be reconsidered under the following conditions:
 - a) There is evidence of an improved commitment to the scheme by the Police through contributions in terms of both manpower and finance,
 - b) There is a more pro-active attitude towards the project from its main beneficiaries, particularly local traders and shopkeepers, and
 - c) Crime levels within the Town rise to justify such an investment.

2. ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATION

Whilst undertaking research for this report, it became apparent that the only significant crime cluster in Monmouth was in the area of Carbonne Close/Troy Way/Buchanan Close. The Working Group felt that this lay outside their remit but would wish to propose that this be highlighted to both the local Police and MCC and that they should jointly be encouraged to work through CSAT to expunge the problem.

Proposed by: Councillor Hacket Pain
Unanimous

Seconded by: Councillor Mrs Smith

Standing orders were reinstated

Proposed by: Councillor Hayward
Unanimous

Seconded by: Councillor Hacket Pain

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

1. Monmouthshire County Council is holding a public meeting to consider how it is going to raise and spend its budget in 2009/2010. Each year the Council has to review its capital and revenue budget requirements for the provision of all its services. This process has now started in relation to the year commencing 1st April 2009. This will lead to decisions on the level of Council Tax for that year and the extent of development of services. Business ratepayers are invited to attend the meeting to discuss the service developments and budgets before the plans are finalised. It will be held in Bridges Community Centre on Tuesday 3rd February at 6.00pm.
2. The regalia has recently been taken to Fattorini's in Birmingham for a valuation and at present is undervalued for the purpose of insurance. There will be an agenda item on the next F&P meeting to consider increasing the insurance cover.
3. Monmouthshire County Council is asking older people who live in the County to get in touch and tell them what life is really like. Members of the Adult Select Committee are launching a fact-finding exercise and want to hear real life stories. The Committee is looking at the services available to older people and wants to suggest improvements based on real experiences. The purpose of the review is to find out what residents think and what is important to them. The County wants to work with other agencies and partners to try and provide a better service to the people of Monmouthshire. It recognises the need to get a good understanding of the services available to older people, and maybe more importantly, services lacking. There will be arranged informal meetings, visiting village halls, day centres and residential homes to hear people's views. The first meeting will be held on Tuesday 24th February, 10am - 11.30pm at Chepstow Senior Citizens Centre, Corneilles Square, Chepstow
4. Monmouthshire schools will close for half term on Friday 13th February for one week. There is a programme of events that will be taking place in town based at the Leisure Centre and copies are available for anyone wishing further information. There are a range of activities including swimming, trampoline lessons, water polo as well as other games related sessions in the main hall.

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

A letter from Councillor Mrs Hacket Pain was read out inviting members to meet with other agencies to discuss problems that were encountered after the flooding in September. The members did not wish to take up the invitation.

The Mayor reminded members that any other items of correspondence that members wished to see could be requested from the Clerk at the end of the meeting.

119. To note the reports and minutes of the council's committees and outside bodies:

- a. Planning:** As per minutes of 5th January and 19th January 2009
Next meeting due to be held on 16th February 2009
- b. Environmental Affairs:** As per minutes of meeting held on 26th January 2009
Councillor Mrs Were reported that the committee had received a presentation regarding waste management. The main items discussed were the purchase of new litter bins, dog bins and cycle racks. It was agreed to consider setting up a working party to consider the options for new Christmas lights
Next meeting due to be held on 26th January 2009
- c. Community Affairs:** As per minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2009
Councillor Mrs Dewhurst reported that the main focus of discussion had been the Jobcentre and the impact of its closure in Monmouth. There had been a great response to the request for evidence of hardship and this would be further discussed at the forthcoming meeting.
Next meeting due to be held on 9th February 2009
- d. Finance & Policy:** As per minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2009 .
The committee had considered the routine financial matters of the council and had agreed the press release for the 2009/2010 budget.
Next meeting due to be held on 23rd February 2009.

e. Shire Hall Stewards:

Councillor Mrs Chivers reported that a recent meeting had been held at which the main topic for discussion had been the problems with erecting the scaffolding at Beaufort Court.

Standing Orders were suspended to invite Mr Williamson from Beaufort Court to speak.

Proposed by: Councillor Bond

Seconded by: Councillor Hayward

Unanimous

Members were advised that the court hearing about the scaffolding problems came before the District Judge earlier that day but had not been resolved. Both sides were given 21 days to gather evidence and the case would be deferred until a later date. Mr Williamson told members that it was hoped that negotiations between the two parties would continue and that a mutually acceptable compromise could be reached so that a further court hearing would not be necessary.

Standing Orders were re-instated

Proposed by: Councillor Mrs Were

Seconded by: Councillor Mrs Dewhurst

Unanimous

f. Monmouth Partnership Forum:

The last meeting considered the 'Overlooking the Wye' project.

g. Others:

MCC:

Councillor Hayward advised members of the issues arising at County Hall and in particular the recommendation to members at cabinet this week to accept a proposal for the new County Hall to be located in Usk. It is anticipated that this would be on the

basis of sharing the site with Usk College. The move would introduce a more flexible way of working for officers as there would be less space available in the future and that agile working would provide better access for citizens. Members were reminded that the consultation process for the Local Development Plan was still on-going. Members were encouraged to get involved with the budget setting process by attending the meeting at Bridges on 3rd Feb as part of the cut backs would involve proposals for fortnightly waste collection and the introduction of a charge for green waste.

120. To receive the member's attendance summary of committee meetings:

	Planning	Full Council	Planning	Finance & Policy	Planning	Community
	22 nd December	5th January	5 th January	12 th January	19th January	19 th January
Cllr R Bond	1	APOL	APOL	1	1	
Cllr G Bright		1		APOL		APOL
Cllr Mrs S Chivers	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cllr T Christopher	1	1	1	APOL	1	1
Cllr Mrs A Dewhurst	1	1	1	APOL	1	1
Cllr Ms C Edwards	APOL					
Cllr J Fletcher	1	1	1		1	1
Cllr N Hackett Pain		1		1		
Cllr Mrs J Hall	1	1	1		1	
Cllr R Hayward	1	1	1	1	1	
Cllr M Jones		1		APOL		APOL
Cllr L Robson		APOL				
Cllr Mrs B Smith	1	1	1		1	1
Cllrs Mrs A Were	1	1	1	APOL	1	1
Cllr Mrs S White		APOL				1
Cllr Ms J Williams		ABS				ABS
Total In Attendance	9	11	8	4	9	7
Members on Committee	10	15	9	9	9	10

It was agreed to accept the attendance summary unanimously

Proposed by: Councillor Hayward
Unanimous

Seconded by: Councillor Mrs Hall

121. To consider failure by members to attend committee meetings without prior apologies (as per Standing Order Appendix 2 paragraph 10):

The Mayor explained that again the two members who had been asked to account for non attendance at committee meetings were not present.

It was agreed to keep this item on the agenda for future meetings to monitor the situation as members are concerned that this has become a problem.

Proposed by: Councillor Hayward
Unanimous

Seconded by: Councillor Bond

122. To appoint representative to the Ryder Cup/Charles Rolls working group

It was agreed that Councillor Mrs Chivers should be the Council's representative

Proposed by: Councillor Mrs Hall
Unanimous

Seconded by: Councillor Mrs Dewhurst

124. To consider available options for filling vacancy in the Town Ward

A draft Press Release about the vacancy was circulated for consideration and approved with a deadline of Friday 6th March 2009. Members considered that the process previously used was acceptable and that following the next Full Council the members would retire to closed session to enable brief interviews to take place with prospective candidates. Following this a choice would be made. The Clerk was asked to request that any candidates provide a personal statement and curriculum vitae if appropriate.

125. To consider items of business for discussion at next meeting

Nothing declared

126. To agree meeting dates:

Date of next meeting Monday 16th March 2009

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.10pm

Date: _____ **Signature** _____