

Monmouth Town Council

Market Hall
Priory Street
Monmouth NP25 3XA

Tel: 01600 715662
Email: townclerk@monmouth.gov.uk
www.monmouth.gov.uk



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday 23rd November 2009 at 7.00pm
at Bridges Community Centre, Monmouth

PRESENT: Chairman the Mayor Councillor Mrs A Were
Councillor G Bright, Councillor Mrs S Chivers, Councillor T Christopher,
Councillor Mrs A Dewhurst, Councillor J Fletcher, Councillor Mrs J Gunter,
Councillor J Hackett Pain, Councillor Mrs J Hall, Councillor R Hayward,
Councillor M Jones, Councillor C Munslow, Councillor L Robson, Councillor Mrs B Smith
and Councillor Mrs S White

There was a presentation at the commencement of the meeting from Mrs Jenny Lewis, MCC's Area Manager for North Monmouthshire and Inspector Mike Boycott regarding the work of the Community Safety Action Team (CSAT). It was reported that agreement had been given to co-opt a member of the Town Council as there is recognition that most of the crime within the locality is centred in and around Monmouth. The team tries to deal with solving problems that effect peoples' lives. The group is not just a talking shop but is actively seeking to find partnership solutions to problems, working together to make a difference. Inspector Boycott advised members that the police don't have the resources to be able to detect and deter crime on their own and that a multi agency approach is essential. The first job of CSAT is to see whether or not a problem actual exists and is not just a perceived problem and this is where the necessity of gathering evidence is so crucial. Once data has been gathered it must be analysed and action agreed, finally an assessment must be made to consider the effectiveness of any action. Mrs Lewis made several references to success stories such as Overmonnow School and St Mary's churchyard. She confirmed that she welcomed the introduction of a Town Councillor with the skills and resources that the member could bring.

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

None received

85. To receive apologies for absence

Councillor R Bond

86. To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 12th October 2009 & 9th November 2009

The minutes of 12th October were approved and signed as a true record.

Proposed: Councillor Fletcher
For: 14 **Against:** 0

Seconded: Councillor Mrs Dewhurst
Abstention: 1

The minutes of 9th November were approved and signed as a true record

Proposed: Councillor Hayward
For: 12 **Against:** 0

Seconded: Councillor Mrs Hall
Abstention: 3

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

- The Shire Hall Stewards have introduced a new scheme for fundraising. It's called the 100 Club and will rely on individuals committing to paying a regular amount either from a bank account with a standing order arrangement or a cash advance for an annual payment. For every £5.00 donated participants will receive one entry into a monthly draw. Half of the income will go to the Shire Hall fund and half will be distributed as prize money. At the start of the scheme only one prize will be awarded but as more people join the scheme there will also be second and third prizes given. The draw will take place on the first Wednesday of each month. The money will go towards the target contribution that the Shire Hall stewards have committed for the renovation and can only be achieved with the help of the local community.
- The office will close over the Christmas holidays from noon on 24th December and will re-open on Monday 4th January.
- Confirmation has now been received from the External Auditor that there has been a satisfactory Annual Return for 2008/2009. It has been reported that on the basis of the review the information contained was in accordance with the Auditor General for Wales's requirements. There are no matters that have come to the Auditor's attention giving cause for concern and they confirm that the relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have been met. In accordance with the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2005 a notice of conclusion of audit and right to inspect the Annual Return will be posted onto the Town Council's notice board in order to exercise electors' rights to inspect the return.

88. To receive correspondence that the Mayor wishes to place before the Council (for information only)

The Mayor informed members of two forthcoming events and asked that if they wished to attend could they please inform the Clerk so that places could be booked

1. **MCC:** Invitation to presentation regarding review of Principal Local Government Authority Areas at County Hall on Monday 30th November commencing at 6.00pm.
2. **WAG:** Invitation to attend meeting to review WAG's Welsh Language strategy on 12th January at SWALEC Stadium at 7.00pm

89. To note the reports and minutes of the Council's committees and outside bodies:

a. Planning

As per minutes of the meetings held on 12th & 26th October 2009 & 9th November 2009
Next meeting due to be held on Monday 7th December 2009 at 6.00pm

b. Environmental Affairs

As per draft minutes of the meeting held on 16th November 2009
Next meeting due to be held on Monday 21st December 2009 at 6.30pm

c. Community Affairs

As per minutes of the meeting held on 19th October 2009

Councillor Mrs Dewhurst reported to those members of the public present, the work that the committee had been engaged in recently particularly in relation to the closure of the Jobcentre in Monmouth and the lobbying that is taking place with the Petitions Committee of the Welsh Assembly Government. Things have been moving on slowly and the committee's reports have been heard for a third time. The fight is continuing and will be ongoing. Details of the increased financial commitment to the Summer Play Activities were referred to and it was confirmed that the budget for 2009/2010 will be £5000.00. This was as a result of improved communication and a better understanding of the requirements. Plans are well under way for the organising of this year's Christmas Parade which will take place on Tuesday 15th December. This year will see Whitchurch School choir heading up a candlelit procession which will assemble at Castle Square and make its way down Monnow St to the bottom of town.

Members were reminded of the additional meeting that was held on Monday 9th November to consider MCC's draft Economic Development Strategy. The closing date for the consultation is 4th December. Concerns had been expressed by those present about how up to date the information contained in the report was especially in light of the dramatic changes in the financial economy. It was recognised that tourism is crucial to the town and that there was a need to create new jobs in this sector.

Next meeting due to be held on Monday 30th November 2009 at 7.00pm

d. Finance & Policy

As per minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November 2009

Councillor Hayward reported that the bulk of the last meeting had been taken up with discussions about setting the budget and precept. The Clerk gave a report to confirm that a satisfactory review had been undertaken of the mayor's expenses and also the mayor's charity accounts. It was reported that problems with registering for Internet Banking had been encountered due to the Clerk not being a signatory on the bank accounts. Finally members were reminded that it had been agreed to disband the 'Services' working group as the only item still under consideration was the allotments. It was agreed that this would fit within the remit of the Environment Working group and would be taken over by that committee.

Next meeting due to be held on Monday 14th December 2009 at 7.00pm

e. Shire Hall Project

Councillor Hackett Pain reported that the inaugural meeting of the Management Board had taken place and that many of the outstanding issues relating to the Town Council's requirements had been resolved. It has now been formally confirmed that the Clerk's office will be available in addition to the Mayor's Parlour which will have the bookings managed by the Clerk. It was also agreed that formal meetings would take place in the Court Room. Members were advised that there could be changes regarding the budgetary arrangements and that negotiations will take place soon about the Service Level Agreement.

Councillor Mrs Chivers reported from the Shire Hall Project Team meeting that completion of the construction works is on target for March 2010. Members were advised that the windows have been put back, the roof is on, the electrics are completed and the work in the cells has been finished. It is anticipated that the building will re-open midsummer, it is hoped that Prince Charles might be available to officially open the building but this is yet to be confirmed. The market will move back in September from its temporary location at the Cattle Market car park. Details will soon be made available of the opportunity to purchase the right to have names etched on the panels of the glass loggia.

f. Shire Hall Stewards

No Report given

g. Charles Rolls Working Group

Councillor Mrs Chivers advised that exhibits are being gathered to produce a town trail with a booklet to commemorate the life of Charles Rolls. It was reported that the event in July 2010 will attract worldwide interest. A series of events are planned including a church service at Llangattock, a reception at the Shire Hall with the unveiling of a plaque, there will also be a fly past of a Lancaster a Spitfire and a Hurricane and then a ten minute ariel display over Vauxhall Fields. Later in the evening there will be formal dinner organised at the Hendre and it is hoped that there will be a number of tickets available to the public.

h. Monmouth Partnership Forum

Councillor Mrs Smith reported that most of the previous meeting had been taken up with considering MCC's draft Economic Development Strategy. Details were given of forthcoming events:

Saturday 28th November 2.00pm will see the Mayor planting a celebratory tree at the Community Orchard

Thursday 10th December sees the Shire Hall Stewards having a fundraising evening at the Priory.




1st January will see the launch of 10:10 which will introduce Transition Monmouth's plan to reduce energy consumption by 10% in 2010. There will also be workshops taking place in local schools towards the end of January.

i. Others

No other reports given

90. To receive the Member's attendance summary of committee meetings

Members	Environment	Planning	Full Council	Community	Planning	Finance & Policy	Full Council	Community	Planning
	5th October	12th October	12th October	19 th October	26th October	2nd November	9th November	9th November	9th November
Cllr R Bond	1	1	1		Apologies	1	1	1	1
Cllr G Bright	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cllr Mrs S Chivers	1	1	1	Apologies	1	1	1	1	1
Cllr T Christopher	1	1	1	1	Apologies	1	1	1	1
Cllr Mrs A Dewhurst	1	1	1	1	Apologies	1	1	1	1
Cllr J Fletcher	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cllr Mrs J Gunter		1	1	1	Apologies		1	1	1
Cllr N Hackett Pain			1			1	Apologies		
Cllr Mrs J Hall	1	Apologies	Apologies	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cllr R Hayward	1	1	1		1	1	1		1
Cllr M Jones	1	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	1	1	1	1
Cllr C Munslow	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1
Cllr L Robson	Absent		Apologies				1	1	
Cllr Mrs B Smith	1		1	1		1	1	1	
Cllrs Mrs A Were	1		1	1		Absent	Apologies	Apologies	
Cllr Mrs S White	1		1			Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	
Total In Attendance	13	8	13	9	5	11	13	10	10
Members on Committee	14	9	16	12	10	13	16	12	10

KEY	
	Non Committee Member
	Non Committee Member attendance
	Absent

Noted

91. To confirm appointment of Town Council representative on CSAT'S
There were two nominations received – Councillor Jones and Councillor Hacket Pain. When put to the vote Councillor Jones received seven votes and Councillor Hacket Pain received eight. It was therefore confirmed that Councillor Hacket Pain would be the Town Council representative with Councillor Jones acting as the deputy in the event that Councillor Hacket Pain was unable to attend.

92. To accept the recommendation of the Finance and Policy committee regarding the budget and the precept demand for 2010/2011
Councillor Hayward explained that the Town Council has made a significant financial commitment to the refurbishment of the Shire Hall. Some of this funding has already been paid and this has seen a reduction in the amount of monies held in the Council's bank account. As a result of this the income from the interest has reduced by about £6000.00 per annum and this has had an impact on the budget that has been set for the following year. He advised that each of the committees was asked to look at making savings in order to try and keep any increase in the precept to a minimum. It was very clear to the members that the objective was not to burden local tax payers with additional cost due to any raise in the precept. It was therefore agreed to recommend to the Full Council that an increase in 2% be accepted with the budget and precept figure of £141,300.00 to be approved.

Proposed: Councillor Mrs Hall
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Hacket Pain

93. To consider and confirm recommendations to changes in the Standing Orders from the Finance and Policy committee
Councillor Hacket Pain had been tasked with making a recommendation on behalf of the Finance & Policy committee, he reminded members of the substantial changes that had been introduced following the major review five years ago. This had seen a massive re-writing of the Standing Orders. Subsequent to this a further two working groups had made some minor adjustments which has resulted in a robust framework within which the Council operates. He recommended to members that no further changes or alterations should be made at this time.

Proposed: Councillor Hacket Pain
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Mrs White

94. To confirm the review of pay and conditions of service of existing employees undertaken by the Finance & Policy Committee
Councillor Hayward advised members that the Council had already adopted the National Agreement on Salaries and Conditions of Service of Local Council Clerks in England and Wales. There was no need for any further discussion as the terms are already set out and agreed.

Proposed: Councillor Hayward
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Munslow

95. To confirm the recommendation of the Environmental Committee to voluntarily dedicate Dixton Field as a Village Green

Councillor Christopher advised members that a letter had been received from the Open Spaces Society. A recent Environment meeting had considered the request as to whether or not to voluntarily dedicate the field that the Town Council owns as a Village Green. It was agreed to recommend that this happen, however following advice it was considered that the committee did not have the authority to make decisions regarding the Council's assets. It was therefore put to members at Full Council to consider this motion. Upon putting this request a vote was taken and the motion failed.

Proposed: Councillor Fletcher

Seconded: Councillor Hayward

For: 4

Against: 9

Abstention: 2

96. To receive questions from members of the public

The Mayor advised that a number of written requests had been received mostly in connection with highways issues. She advised members that these would be passed on to the Local Authority for further action.

Mr Roy Nicholas asked the Mayor about what could be done to try and ease traffic congestion at 3.30pm exiting from the supermarket junction at the mini roundabout at Blestium Street. It was suggested that alternative transport such as cycling could be considered. The members reminded the meeting of the locations of the cycle racks around town.

The Mayor expressed the opinion that if future plans for proposed housing development go ahead that traffic was only one of the issues that would become more of a problem. Members understood that services are already stretched and that any more housing would overload the town's infrastructure, stretch medical services and school provision.

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

Event planning for Charles Rolls centenary celebrations

98. To agree meeting dates:

The meeting dates were agreed and noted

Date of next meeting – Monday 4th January 2010 at Monmouth Priory

Signed: _____

Date: _____