

Monmouth Town Council

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday 3 June 2013 at 7.00pm
The Shire Hall, Monmouth

Present: Chairman: The Mayor Cllr J Hall

Cllr T Ashton	(TA)	Cllr Mrs J Gunter	(JG)
Cllr R Bradley	(RB)	Cllr R Hayward	(RH)
Cllr G Bright	(GB)	Cllr A Owen	(AO)
Cllr Mrs S Chivers	(SC)	Cllr Mrs A Were	(AW)
Cllr S Davis	(SD)	Cllr Mrs S White	(SW)
Cllr A Dewhurst	(AD)	Cllr S J Wilson	(SJW)

In Attendance: Mrs S James, Town Clerk and Mrs J Lloyd, Administration Assistant

Colin Phillips, Special Projects Manager MCC: Update on the Monnow Bridge and Gate Interpretation Plan.

Detailing of specification had been previously circulated and were again distributed to members as required

Mr Phillips confirmed the three proposals that form part of the interpretation plan:

1. To improve audio interpretation inside the gatehouse
 2. Restore the orientation board near the gate to improve understanding.
 3. The installation of road graphics indicating usage over time.
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1. Audio is still to be determined. The script is being drafted at the present time in consultation with the Civic Society and others to indicate the three stages of the Bridges history – its construction, its use after fortification, and use in relation to markets. Training to use the equipment has been delayed.
 2. The present specification of the orientation board is as circulated detail, and it has been recommended located at the back of the seating area adjacent to the bridge. Any changes to the current landscape could be accommodated as the board could also be placed upon a freestanding lectern.
 3. The original plan was for footprints within a strip of resin bound material and etched sand stone to highlight (as in Chepstow). However, at present there are difficulties with the detail for a neat finish, and it has been subsequently recommended by officers that this is footprint

aspect be withdrawn. It is intended that the script feature remains within the plan, but the footprint aspect be re-visited only when the area is due to be re-surfaced.

As a consequence of withdrawing the planned footprints in proposal 3, the estimated costs of the project are now within the existing £20,000 budget, which included £6000 support from tourism funding.

As a result of this, the £5000 contribution previously agreed from Monmouth Town Council is at this time no longer required, although it was confirmed that lighting issues and costs had not yet been established.

Councillors were then given the opportunity to ask questions.

It was confirmed that Highways have no plans to re-surface the area for the next 5-10years.

Cllr Hayward thanked Mr Phillips for attending the meeting to update the Town Council on the project. This was noted and appreciated, as proper consultation with the Town Council has not always taken place with other projects in the past.

The Chair proposed agenda item 11 be brought forward:

11. To confirm release of £5000 funding towards Monnow Bridge and Gate Interpretation Plan (funding agreed 11/3/13)

It was confirmed that funding had been previously agreed but not required at this stage.

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

None received

2. To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies received from Cllr T Christopher and Cllr J Fletcher.

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

None received

4. To confirm and sign the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on Monday 13th May 2013.

The minutes were confirmed as a true record with the spelling correction on agenda item 8 'Assets' not 'Assits'

Proposed: Cllr R Hayward
Unanimous in favour

Seconded: Cllr S Wilson

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

The Town Clerk drew to the attention of the committee correspondence received that afternoon from MCC regarding the CMC² (MCC) proposed Community Web Portal and costings, requesting a response by Friday 7 July.

Members felt this date was unachievable and should be deferred to Finance and Policy Committee for consideration and decision - the next meeting being Monday 17 June 2013. The correspondence stated that this timescale had already been agreed although this was not believed correct.

Cllr Were who attended the initial meeting understood the subject was on-going and a quick decision was not appropriate. Other schemes were also available.

No decision could be made and item to be deferred to Finance and Policy Committee.

Proposed: Cllr R Hayward
For: 12 Against: 0

Seconded: Cllr J Gunter
Abstention:1

Town Clerk to e-mail a response.

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

The resignation of Malcolm Jones had been received, and the Returning Officer informed, with a Notice of Vacancy to be produced. The notice allows 10 electors of the Drybridge ward to request that an election be held to fill the vacancy. If an election is not requested, the co-option procedure shall take place to fill the vacancy as soon as practical.

HMS Monmouth intends to exercise the Freedom of the Town and march through Monmouth on Sunday 29th September. Times and details are yet to be confirmed.

7. To answer questions from Councillors

Cllr Chivers addressed a question to County Councillors regarding the closure and relocation of the One Stop Shop to the Library, and asked for County Councillors to find answers to the following questions:

1. Where in Rolls Hall will this (OSS) be set up or is it amalgamated with everything already there
2. If it is upstairs how will a lift be installed
3. On days the library is closed does this mean the OSS will not be available to the public
4. How many job losses
5. Transport -as it is out of the way will there be adequate parking
For saving of £11,500 pa, and what will the Market Hall then be used for?

Cllr Hayward, as Chair of Finance and Policy Committee, responded:

Cllr Hayward referred to the minutes of the Strong Communities Select Committee of MCC meeting on 7th March. He thought the report regarding a possible relocation of the One Stop Shop (OSS) did not make sense. The move seemed to be combined with a move of the museum to the Shire Hall, in order that the whole building was vacated by MCC.

This was not for the benefit of the public, but simply for MCC to save money and to the detriment of town. The Market Hall is not suitable for retail use, and this would increase the parking problems in the area already apparent.

The report indicates a potential revenue benefit of £12000pa but the capital cost would be severe. Cllr Hayward did not believe it made economic sense, and was certainly not for the benefit of the people of Monmouth. He was also concerned that it appeared the Town Council or public were not to be consulted, but only MCC officers.

Cllr Hayward suggested that this should be discussed by the MCC Area Committee as of great concern to the town.

The Clerk advised that no discussion should take place and that Cllr White was unable to also respond.

(The question asked was not as that previously submitted to the Clerk by Cllr Chivers, and could only be addressed to a Chair of a Committee (or Mayor or Clerk) regarding the business of the Council, as per Standing Orders no.9)

8. To receive and consider reports and minutes of the council's committees and outside bodies:

a) **Planning Committee:** Cllr Wilson reported that there are concerns regarding the LDP. In order for the LDP to fully meet its housing requirements it is now thought it should be more flexible to accommodate an additional 900 houses in case the current one or more candidate sites falls through.

As part of this flexibility drive, previously rejected sites are being revisited; several other sites around Monmouth are part of this consideration.

Concerns over recognition of MTC recommendations and public access to, and accuracy of the MCC Planning Portal have been raised.

b) **Environmental Affairs Committee:** Reported by Cllr Dewhurst

- The committee agreed to set up a working group for Walking and Cycling.
- Enquires to be made regarding the Town Ditch as no reinstatement has been made to the ancient monument to date following work.
- Sewage between the two bridges: It was agreed to write a letter to Welsh Water to request an explanation as to why this is happening.
- A Working Group set up to consider the Town contract maintenance.
- Thanks to be given to Mr R Griffiths for all his years of perfect service for the Town Council.

Cllr Christopher, in his absence, wanted to emphasise the following point:

'On behalf of not only the Environmental Affairs Committee, but also the Town Council I would like to thank Mr Rudolph Griffiths for his dedication and loyal service over many years as the Town Council maintenance contractor.'

c) **Community Affairs Committee:** No meeting

d) **Finance & Policy Committee:** No meeting

e) **CSATS Committee:** Cllr Wilson reported that crime was down in the area, parking issues were raised again and PCSOs walking around town in pairs is an issue for the Police and will not be discussed at CSATs again.

f) **Monmouth Partnership Forum:** No meeting

g) **Vision Monmouth:** Reported by Cllr Dewhurst

- Monnow Bridge and Gate Interpretation Plan was discussed with option 3 being the most favourable.
- Gates are to be re-instated at the Slaughter Houses
- A feasibility study by an outside agency on parking is taking place.
- Allotment holders have been asked to report instances to the Police 101 number as all calls are logged, even if the Police do not attend.
- Portal Road trees, the Natural Resources Wales (formerly the Environment Agency) have requested the felled trees be replaced.

h Central Monmouthshire Area Committee: reported by Cllr Hayward

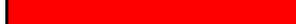
- Figure was given regarding the costs of £160,00 for the railings
- A report from Allotments was received - the allotments now been renumbered
- CCTV was down for 2 days due to water getting into the boxes.
- Cemetery update
- Future agenda items requested include A board situation, digital tourism, trees on Portal road site, and requests for updates/HSE reports on both the wall collapse at Monmouth Leisure Centre, and the fatal injury of a cyclist in Osbaston.

i Others: Cllr Ashton -members visit to the CCTV centre which provided an insight into the monitoring of cameras, and also running of the system which proved very positive.

9. To review the Member's attendance summary of committee meetings.

Members	Full Council	Planning	Environment
2012/2013	13.05.13	20.05.13	28.05.13
Cllr T Ashton	1		
Cllr R Bradley	1	1	1
Cllr G Bright	1		1
Cllr S Chivers	1	1	Apology
Cllr T Christopher	1		1
Mr S Davis	Apology	1	Apology
Cllr A Dewhurst	1	Apology	Apology
Cllr J Fletcher	1	Apology	1
Cllr J Gunter	1	1	1
Cllr J Hall	1	Apology	1
Cllr R Hayward	1	Apology	1
Cllr M Jones	Resigned		
Cllr A Owen	1		1
Cllrs A Were	1		1
Cllr S White	1		1
Cllr S Wilson	1	1	1
Total In Attendance	14	5	11
Members on Committee	15	8	11

KEY

	Absent
	
	

10. To confirm Committee membership of Councillor S Davies

Cllr S Davis to become a member of the Planning and Environmental Affairs Committees.
Confirmed.

Proposed: Cllr Hayward Seconded: Cllr R Bradley
For: 12 Against: 0 Abstention: 1

Motion carried

11. To confirm release of £5000 funding towards Monnow Bridge and Gate Interpretation Plan (funding agreed 11/3/13)

This item discussed earlier in the meeting.

12. To confirm support for and sign “Fair Trade Beyond 2013” Declaration

Information was previously distributed to members and it was confirmed the item should read Fair Trade Beyond 2015 . Monmouth is already a Fairtrade Council, town and the Shire Hall is a Fairtrade building and it was suggested support should continue
Item confirmed and signed by the Mayor J Hall.

Proposed: Cllr A Dewhurst
For: 10 Against: 2

Seconded: Cllr S White
Abstention: 1

Motion carried

13. To confirm and accept the annual review of internal audit for year ended 31 March 2013 and the Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ending 31st March 2013.

The annual review of audit and the Internal Auditors report had been previously circulated to all members. Cllr Hayward confirmed that these were requirements as it is public money that the Council is responsible for.

Confirmed and accepted.

Proposed: Cllr R Hayward
Unanimous in favour

Seconded: Cllr S White

Motion carried

14. To consider and confirm acceptance of the Annual Return for the Year Ending 31st March 2013 sections 1, 2 and 4

The Annual Return had been previously circulated to all members. Cllr Hayward confirmed that Reserves remained at the lower end, but still within recommended levels, and that the internal auditor had agreed the annual return.

Confirmed and accepted.

Proposed: Cllr R Hayward
Unanimous in favour

Seconded: Cllr J Gunter

Motion carried

15. To confirm budget for Civic Service and Reception 9th June 2013

The Town Clerk requested provision of a budget of up to £1,500 although it was anticipated less would be required as all invited guests were unlikely to be able to attend. (Last year actual spend was £1,200).

Proposed: Cllr R Hayward
For: 12 Against: 0

Seconded: Cllr S White
Abstention: 1

Motion carried

16. Items for discussion for future meetings.

- To recognise the work of Rudolph Griffiths as the Town maintenance contractor (GB)
The Clerk confirmed this item was already on the Environmental Affairs Committee agenda.
- One Stop Shop issues (SC): Cllr Dewhurst confirmed that the matter is already being considered within the Community Affairs Committee.

17. To confirm meeting dates.

Dates Confirmed. Cllr Chivers requested members of the Protocol Group to contact her with available dates to organise a meeting.

Next Full Council meeting date: Monday 15th July 2013, 7.00pm, at the Shire Hall, Monmouth

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.10pm