

MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday 4th August 2014 at 7.00pm
The Shire Hall, Monmouth

Present: **Chairman:** The Mayor Cllr J Gunter

Cllr R Bradley	(RB)	Cllr J Hall	(JH)
Cllr G Bright	(GB)	Cllr C Munslow	(CM)
Cllr S Chivers	(SC)	Cllr G Pritchard	(GP)
Cllr T Christopher	(TJC)	Cllr A Were	(AW)
Cllr A Dewhurst	(AD)	Cllr S White	(SW)
		Cllr S J Wilson	(SJW)

In Attendance: Mrs S James, Town Clerk

Police Inspector Roland Giles, Monmouthshire lead for the NATO summit, briefed the Town Council about the NATO summit due to take place in Newport 4th-5th September, and the likely implications for Monmouthshire.

Police Inspector Giles informed members that the NATO summit was taking place at the Celtic Manor Resort in Newport, 4-5th September, with 28 NATO countries to be represented by Heads of Government, Foreign Secretaries and Defence Secretaries. Over 30 ISAF and partner countries would also be represented, approximately 150 people would be protected by armed guard 24/7, and 5-10,000 support staff and 1,500 world media representatives were also expected.

This is to be the biggest security operation undertaken by Gwent/South Wales police, potentially biggest ever in the UK, with all Gwent police leave cancelled, and an extra 11,000 officers to be potentially drafted in. The operation is to be funded by central government.

Gwent police aims include creating a safe and secure environment, maximising safety and security of those attending, minimising harm or disruption to public not engaged in the event, and ensuring continued capacity to respond to any non-associated emergencies.

Impacts of the summit are expected as : an opportunity to showcase Monmouthshire to the rest of the world, potential increased traffic and possible protests.

Inspector Giles advised that communities should be aware of potential impact on roads and journeys, especially on the M4 in the Newport area and around Cardiff. Disruption will be limited as much as possible and advises consideration should be made in advance, especially regarding arrangements for employees travelling to work, business deliveries, hospital appointments etc that may be affected. Disruption may be unavoidably caused by protests in the area, and premises may be searched for security.

He advised that up to date and further information could be accessed through local officers, email, 101 calls, and the internet.

The Mayor then invited questions from members.

Cllr White asked about access to information for those unable to access the internet, especially elderly people and possible access issues with hospital appointments.

Inspector Giles responded that further levels of engagement were in place, for instance NHS services would have been briefed, and it was anticipated arrangements made accordingly, perhaps changing appointments. Community groups would also be contacted and leaflets available in an effort to inform all it may impact upon. Farms in the Celtic Manor Resort area had also been contacted and advised about potential protests.

Cllr Bright asked regarding hospital and emergency cover in the event of an incident.

Inspector Giles confirmed that high level briefings were already in place and extra hospital facilities available as necessary on site.

Cllr Munslow asked if any delegates would be visiting other parts of Monmouthshire.

Inspector Giles responded that “working banquets” would take place at various venues around Cardiff, but other visits were not planned.

The Mayor thanked Police Inspector Giles for attending and informing Council.

The meeting began with the Mayor welcoming Cllr Chris Munslow to his first Full council member since co-option.

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

No declarations made.

2. To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies received from Cllr S Davis, Cllr J Fletcher, Cllr R Hayward, and Cllr A Owen

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

No questions received.

4. To confirm and sign the minutes of the extra meeting held on Monday 21st July 2014.

It was proposed to accept and sign the minutes as an accurate record.

Proposed: Cllr J Hall, Seconded: Cllr T Christopher

Agreed unanimously

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

Correspondence lists, including late correspondence were previously distributed to members.

The Clerk asked members to note correspondence 23d, OVW Bulletin about the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill, and the Reforming Local Government White Paper, which would be discussed as an agenda item on a future Finance and Policy Committee meeting.

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

Members were reminded of the promised MCC public consultation drop in session regarding plans for the new Comprehensive School and swimming pool, Thursday, 7th August, 5.30 to 7pm at the old school gym, directly behind the leisure centre.

It was also noted that the Band of the Royal Marines will be playing at the Blake Theatre on Friday 10th October. Tickets will be available from the museum at £15 each.

7. To answer questions from Councillors.

(Standing Orders 9: A member may ask the Mayor, the chairmen of Council Committees or the Clerk any question concerning the business of the Council, provided notice is submitted to The Clerk in writing two working days prior to the meeting, and the response will be printed within the minutes of the meeting. Every question shall be put and answered without discussion. Answers to verbal questions put to the Mayor, Chairmen of committees or the Town Clerk may be deferred until no later than the next meeting. No supplementary questions will be allowed.)

No questions received

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

a Planning Committee

SJW: The skate park and Gateway Project applications had recently been recommended for approval by the committee. Also the proposed Wonastow Road development had been re-submitted, and new plans for Monmouth Comprehensive School would both A be looked at by committee in the near future.

b Environmental Affairs Committee

TJC: complaint by a visitor to the town about the area around the Gatehouse and the provision of further cycle racks near the Oldway Centre had recently been considered by Committee. Two Christmas trees for the town, and the addition of a further dog waste bin to the emptying schedule had also been agreed.

The Chair appealed for a Deputy Committee Chair to step forward.

c Community Affairs Committee

AD: A £500 donation had been made towards the production of a new Monmouth Town Guide by the Committee. Planning for the Christmas event had begun, and newsletter delivery, although complete coverage in all areas had not been achieved, provided positive feedback to members from the public whilst delivering. All members who had helped th make the carnival such a success were thanked.

d Finance & Policy Committee.

No report, as per minutes.

e CSATS

SJW: 4 complaints were to be passed onto the next meeting, SJW unable to attend most recent meeting.

f Monmouth Partnership Forum

No report, as per minutes

g Vision Monmouth

SW: no meeting, difficulties arranging a date for all parties.

h Central Monmouthshire Area Committee

No meeting

i Others

Monmouth Civic Society

JH: Open Doors Project, 6-7th September well underway, allowing public access to 16 buildings in Monmouth.

Protocol working group

SC:A report on the history of Maces and the role of Mace Bearers by JH was agreed to be submitted for publication in the Beacon, with a request for any further interest for trainees. It was agreed an MTC policy for complaints was required.

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

Members	Planning	Full Council	Community	Planning	F&P	Extra Full Council	Planning	Environment
2014/2015	23.06.14	23.06.14	30.06.14	07.07.14	07.07.14	21.07.14	21.07.14	28.07.14
Cllr R Bradley	1	1	Apology	1		1	1	1
Cllr G Bright		1	1			1	1	1
Cllr S Chivers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cllr T Christopher	Apology	1	1	Apology	1	1	1	1
Mr S Davis	Apology	Apology		1		1	1	
Cllr A Dewhurst	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cllr J Fletcher	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Apology
Cllr J Gunter	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cllr J Hall	1	1		1	1	1	1	
Cllr R Hayward	1	1		1	1	1	1	1
Cllr C Munslow							1	1
Cllr A Owen		1				1	1	1
Cllr G Pritchard	1	1		Apology	1	1	1	
Cllrs A Were		1	Apology		1	1	1	
Cllr S White		1	1			1	1	1
Cllr S Wilson	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total In Attendance	9	14	8	9	10	15	11+5	10+1
Members on Committee	11	15	10	11	10	15	11+1	11 + 1

KEY

	Non Committee Member
	Non Committee Member attendance
	Absent

The summary of member's attendance had been previously distributed.

It was proposed to accept the summary as accurate.

Proposed: Cllr S White, Seconded: Cllr G Pritchard

For: 11, Against: 0, Abstentions:1

Proposal agreed

10. To confirm Cllr C Munslow as member of Planning, Finance & Policy, Environmental Affairs, and Community Affairs committees

It was proposed that Cllr C Munslow be appointed to all committees

Proposed: Cllr G Bright, Seconded: Cllr J Hall

Proposal agreed unanimously

11. To confirm Cllr Pritchard as a member of Community Affairs Committee

It was proposed that Cllr G Pritchard be appointed as a member of the Community Affairs Committee.

Proposed: Cllr A Dewhurst, Seconded: Cllr J Hall

Proposal unanimously agreed

12. To consider request to support Monmouthshire Walking Festival, specifically 2nd November re-enactment of walk “Marching off to war” (further details to follow)

All members had previously received copy of an email from Mr B Ramsey detailing plans so far, for a walk to re-enact the journey taken by the RMRE as they “marched off to war” in 1914. The Clerk confirmed the date proposed had since been amended to Sunday 2nd November for safety and cost reasons.

The Council had not been asked for any financial contribution at this stage, and request for support generally for the project was sought.

It was proposed to support the Monmouthshire Walking Festival 2nd November re-enactment of walk “Marching off to war”.

Proposed: Cllr R Bradley, Seconded: Cllr G Pritchard

For: 10, Against:2

Proposal agreed

13. To confirm details and room hire costs of Public Consultation meetings 6th, 13th & 20th September 2014 (Consultation working group)

Cllr T Christopher reminded members about previous considerations regarding devolution of Services from Monmouthshire County Council, and the Public Consultation working group’s intention to hold open public meetings to follow up on responses from the questionnaire within the newsletter. This had been previously reported to council.

Dates for consultations had been finalised as 10am-1pm Sat 6th September at Bridges Community Centre, 10am -12noon Saturday 13th September at The Priory, and 10am-1pm Saturday 20th September at St James’ Community Hall, Wyesham.

Total costs of £63 were anticipated for room hire (the Priory being free as joining the Two River Meadow Coffee morning.

It was proposed that these costs be agreed and be paid from the Publicity and website budget of the Finance and Policy Committee.

Proposed: Cllr T Christopher, Seconded: Cllr G Pritchard

For: 10, Against: 0, Abstentions:2

Proposal agreed

14. To discuss and consider presentation given by Welsh Audit Office at larger Councils Conference 9th July regarding transfer of community assets

All members had previously received a copy of the presentation given by Mr Alan Morris from the Wales Audit Office at the Larger Local Councils Conference 9th July 2014, entitled “The challenges of community asset transfers and devolution of services to Community and Town Councils”.

Cllr Dewhurst suggested that most members would be wary of taking on further responsibilities and that the training offered (next agenda item) was a good idea.

Cllr Were commented that in relation to this that the Future Generations Bill was likely to apply to the council in the future with potential precept of over £200,000.

Cllr Bright voiced concerns over sustainability, referring to the officer expertise available to the County Council and not to the Town Council at present.

Cllr Were responded that the training in this issue is necessary for the council to have enough understanding to consider declining further responsibility if the appropriate expertise and sustainability is not in place.

Cllr Pritchard reported that further training would assist in understanding the legal responsibilities, supporting costs, accounting, health and safety issues all needed to be considered when taking on additional responsibilities.

15. To confirm training provision for “Devolution of Services” to be provided by One Voice Wales at cost of £400 plus venue costs and refreshments (spare places to be offered to other town/parish councils)

It was proposed that the cost of training plus up to £100 for refreshments should be agreed from the training budget.

Proposed: Cllr T Christopher, Seconded: Cllr A Were

Proposal unanimously agreed.

It was confirmed that refreshments would be basic tea/coffee during the evening as per One Voice Wales request, and that any spare spaces would be offered at cost to other town/community councils.

The Clerk confirmed that venue costs would be minimised by attempting to utilise Council meeting times in the old Council Chambers not utilised.

Some discussion took place about dates available, with consideration to be given late September, dependent on trainer availability.

Cllr Dewhurst suggested that any unavoidable room hire costs could be met from refreshments £100 budget.

16. To consider request by Mr C Boase to change Monmouth Town Council Policy on recording of meetings

The Mayor confirmed that all members had received copies of correspondence from Mr Boase as a member of the press, advice received by the council from One Voice Wales; advice from the County Council Monitoring Officer and the Monitoring Officer, and an email response from Cllr Hayward that evening.

For clarification, the Clerk read aloud the current Monmouth Town Council policy on the recording of meetings, and confirmed that Mr Boase had asked for permission in May 2014 to record meetings as an aid to ensuring the proceedings were recorded accurately. This was agreed subject to the Monmouth Town Council policy.

The Monmouth Town Council Policy on the recording of Full Council and Committee meetings is as follows:

1. Meetings may be audio recorded by the official minute taker, using MTC owned digital recording equipment only, for the purpose of enabling the minute writer to check information while drafting minutes of the meeting.
2. A declaration that the meeting will be audio recorded for this purpose should be made by the Chair at the beginning of the meeting.
3. Every recording will be wiped clean as soon as the draft minutes have been prepared by the minute taker, and agreed by the Chair of the relevant meeting.
4. Recordings will only be kept if:
 - a request is made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 before the draft minutes are completed and the recording wiped,
 - or there is some genuine prospect of a legal dispute about some aspect of the meeting where the recording is likely to be needed as evidence, but not simply that a item has been controversial.

Mr Boase had requested the Council withdraw items 3 and 4 to allow the recordings to be kept and not wiped clean.

Cllr Were reported that many council's in England allow recording which was encouraged and is likely to be addressed soon in law.

Cllr Chivers felt that there should not be any objection to allowing recordings to be made and kept of meetings.

Cllr Wilson supported a proposal to change the policy which would allow members of the public to listen to proceedings if they were not able to attend.

The Clerk confirmed that Standing Orders required Council permission be given before any recording was made of a meeting. There was no proposal to amend this.

Thus,

It was proposed that Mr Boase request regarding a change to Monmouth Town Council policy on recording, to allow recordings to be kept indefinitely, be granted by removing items 3 and 4 from the existing policy.

Proposed: Cllr S Chivers, Seconded: Cllr A Were

For: 4, Against: 8

Therefore, there is no change to the existing Monmouth Town Council policy on recording of meetings.

17. To confirm generic date of Civic Service (GB)

Cllr Bright suggested that the Civic Service being held in July this year, rather than early June, due to a number of different circumstances, had appeared to ease the office workload, and it made sense to continue this.

The Clerk confirmed that arrangements, especially regarding invitations and responses, were much more satisfactory with a wider window from the election of the Mayor in mid-May.

It was confirmed that Fr David McGladdery of St Mary's Priory Church had suggested the second Sunday in July as preferential to the first.

It was proposed that the Civic Service be provisionally set for the second Sunday in July each year.

Proposed: Cllr G Bright, Seconded: Cllr S White

For: 11, Against: 0, Abstention: 1

Proposal agreed.

18. Items for discussion for future meetings.

No items noted

19. To confirm meeting dates.

Next meeting to be held on Monday 15th September 2014 at 7.00pm Shire Hall Monmouth.

The Mayor reminded members of the Candle-lit vigil to follow at The Castle war memorial.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.18pm.