

MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Shire Hall
Agincourt Square
Monmouth
NP25 3DY



Tel: 01600 715662

Email: townclerk@monmouth.gov.uk

www.monmouth.gov.uk

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday 8th December 2014 at 7.00pm
The Shire Hall, Monmouth

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

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

In Attendance: Mrs S James Town Clerk and Mrs J Lloyd Admin Officer.

Chief Inspector Mick Moyles, LPU Commander Monmouthshire introduction to members and to seek out local concerns.

The Town Clerk announced the apologies from Inspector Mick Moyles, as he will move to another post directly after Christmas he thought it best for the new Commander to be given the opportunity to speak to the Council in the New Year.

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

None received.

2. To receive apologies for absence

Cllr S Davis and Cllr J Fletcher.

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

Ms C Sullivan Branch Manager, and Mr R Moverley Deputy Manager at Monmouth Waitrose, came along to the meeting to inform members of the changes to charges at the Waitrose car park to commence that day.

Some members expressed their dis-satisfaction that this item was not on the agenda and should not have been raised under questions from the public.

Mr Moverley then raised the question to members that, having been given an update on changes to parking charges, are members happy with what they have heard?

The change of charges are as follows:

The first hour will be free although a pay and display ticket will be required.

The second hour will cost £1, refunded when a minimum of £10 spent in store.

Two Hour maximum stay with no return for the following 2 hours.

Blue badge holders will have 2 hours free parking.

Charges will apply from 10.00am – 5.00pm Monday to Saturday.

Some Councillors were not happy with any charges however Cllr Wilson said he was happy with the changes as he realised that Waitrose had gone through the proper process and Councillors had had the opportunity to object at that point. He also understood the reasons for applying charges to the car park. Cllr Hayward agreed with Councillor Wilson and thanked the Waitrose Managers for coming along to the meeting to explain, and for reacting to the public's comments so quickly.

Cllr White appreciated them coming along to the meeting saying she had heard in the past comments from people who boasted that they never shopped in Waitrose but took advantage of free parking.

Councillors Questions:

Question: Are the prices in place for Christmas only?

Answer: No this is permanent.

Question: Are the changes due to the drop in trade since car park charges?

Answer: No the purpose was to assist customers.

Question: Not sure why the old system had to change as it must be a cheaper option and are the 4 free spaces still available for the Doctors surgery?

Answer: The old system would be the cheaper option but the box kept being vandalised and drivers drive through the barrier on a regular basis, with staff manning the barrier often being abused by customers.

The first hour free parking enables visitors to the Doctors Surgery parking without charge.

Ms Caroline Sullivan apologised if they had hadn't followed the protocol of the meeting and would willingly attend another meeting but this was the first time they had attended a Town Council meeting.

4. To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 27th October 2014

The minutes were confirmed as a true record and signed with the following amendment:
Page 1 Change of date.

Proposed: Cllr Hayward Seconded: Cllr Hall **All in favour**

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

Cllr Hall requested Number 19, update to Mr A Tuggey regarding Agincourt 600 – 2015.

Cllr Chivers requested number 17, Neighbourhood Watch information regarding burglary in Osbaston and dog thieves in the area.

The Town Clerk brought to the attention of the Council the Precept submission request to be submitted by 21 January 2015, with the Tax base for Monmouth Community for 2015/2016 being £4,965.57

The Town Clerk also read to the Committee an e-mail from Abergavenny Town Council to neighbouring Town Councils to ask about their intentions of contributing to MCC. Responses received indicated that Caldicot TC are to contribute £15,000 and Chepstow TC£33,000.

Cllr Pritchard raised the point that there will be an increase in number of properties in Monmouth by about 6.5% (liable for Council tax) which should be considered when assessing the budget later on the agenda.

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

Community Decoration of Christmas tree, 7th December 2014

The previous day's Community decorating of the Christmas tree in Monnow Street went well for the first time this event has happened, and a few adjustments could be made from experience for next year if it is to be repeated. Suggestions included asking the Santa Fun Run organisers if the event could follow on from the race in the morning.

Meetings & Office closure: The Finance & Policy meeting of 22nd December is now cancelled, although the Planning Committee will still meet at 6pm.

The Clerk's Office will close to the public at 12 noon on Tuesday 23rd December and re-open at 10am on Monday 5th January. This extended period of Christmas closure is due to the whole Shire Hall building being closed over this Christmas period.

Christmas Candlelit event: As many volunteers to assist as possible are needed.

Christmas meal: Remember to let the office know by this Friday (with your menu choices) if you wish to attend the Christmas meal on Thursday 18th December.

Newsletters update: Newsletters are in the process of being delivered to all residents in Monmouth with the December issue of The Voice. Questionnaire response boxes are situated at The Shire Hall, the EE shop, and Bridges.

Procedures: If any member has a concern with the agenda and protocol, please see the Town Clerk in the office to discuss.

On past occasions, it has been apparent that Councillors have asked members of the public to address Council under the 'Questions from the public' agenda item with a view to promote discussion, the Clerk having even been asked in the past how this can be turned into a question to begin debate. This has been accepted in the past but after this meetings comments, this needs to be discussed by the Working Group to specify exactly for future reference.

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.)

Cllr Munslow asked Cllr Hayward as a County Councillor, for an update on the 17 burglaries in the last 4 weeks in the area.

Cllr Hayward stated that the police have reacted well,-there is more vigilance by the Police via police cars driving round and foot patrols, unlike MCC who have not been so helpful by having 35 street lights on for a limited period only as previously. Cllr Hayward has asked more than one person at MCC to reconsider this for a short time but to date has not had a reply.

Cllr Hall added that she would personally write to MCC requesting the lights to be kept on. In recent incidents when the Police have been called to something suspicious they have attended within a couple of minutes and have asked if anyone sees anything suspicious at all to please call 101.

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

a Planning Committee: As per minutes.

Cllr Wilson reported that the application for Hadnock Road had been refused by this committee; the Committee are still waiting for the new Monmouth Comprehensive School and Swimming pool applications.

b Environmental Affairs Committee: As per minutes.

Items discussed were

- Positioning of a defibrillator in telephone kiosk at Shire Hall and to discuss with Shire Hall the use of the MCC one at Shire Hall for this.
- Letter received from Monmouth Rowing Club re signage, with letter to be written to MCC to see if they will include additional signage when they install their signs for the car park by the Rowing Club.
- Repairing of raised beds and costs.

- c Community Affairs Committee:** Cllr Dewhurst reported,
- Mr Nick Penny gave a presentation to the Committee regarding developing a buskers code with MCC, buskers, shop keepers and local councils.
 - Ms B Bolt, Primary Care Director from Aneurin Bevan Health Board, reported that she wanted to make sure people get the best value from the primary care services in Monmouth, with eye care making progress.
 - 17 December the awards evening that went well with presentations from the award winners.
 - Tree decorating event went well and Thursday 11 December event to be supported by Councillors and Rotary members.
 - Candlelit procession will be on Thursday 11 December.
- d Finance & Policy Committee:** As per minutes.
Cllr Hayward reported most of the meeting was discussing the Budget and CCTV. (Agenda items 10,11 & 12 on this agenda)
- e CSATS:** Cllr Hall reported from the meeting held on 3rd November 2014.
- It was reported that graffiti removal costs £120 per day for the Probation Service, so the decision was made to book for a day to see how it works out. Request information on areas that need to be cleaned.
 - Overmonnow and Osbaston have been targeted recently in the early evening. CSAT's will put an item in the local paper or The Voice re locking door and windows and not keeping car keys near the front door.
 - There will be another permanent marking session set up for bikes in January after the Christmas period. Possibly on the Old Bridge.
 - CCTV has been very successful. Small scuffles identified and dealt with well before they became a problem. The 'Storenet' system led to the visual face recognition of a thief who was then arrested.
- f Monmouth Partnership Forum:** Cllr Owen reported from the AGM held on Wednesday 12 November.
Due to 'Place Planning' and the Forum being funded by MCC, along with MCC Debbie McCarty stepping down after 12 years as secretary, a decision will be made at the next meeting to see how the Forum continues.
- g Vision Monmouth:**
No meeting.
- h Central Monmouthshire Area Committee:**
No meeting.
- i Others:**
Civic Society: Cllr Hall reported Mr Charles Boase asked the Chairman if the Society would write to the Town Council asking if it would be possible for the fair to use the Cattle Market car park for three days in May 2015. The Chairman of the Civic Society agreed to write a letter suggesting the matter.
- Chamber of Commerce:**
- Cllr Hall reported that there are to be interpretation panels around the Town illustrating the mercantile history of Monmouth produced by Platform One and 100% funded by the Regional Development Plan.
 - There is to be free parking for the 3 Saturdays before Christmas.
 - There is soon to be a decision concerning A Boards by the Welsh Cabinet.
 - Macdonald's are now looking at a site further down the dual carriageway (A40)

- It was reported that Monmouth Comprehensive School playground is sited on the worst section of the A40 for Nitrous Oxide.
- £6,500.00 is required for the restoration of the pillars in the Nelson Garden.
- The Queens Head proposed car park went to Cabinet for a decision by April to start. Money already in place.
- The new Rockfield Road car park will be free.

Charter Liaison Group: Cllr Hall reported from the meeting held on 27 November 2014.

A report from Cornwall was discussed and various agreements or alterations were noted by the Group. Five weeks from that date the Charter would be sent to each of the Town, Parish and Committees for verification before being sent to all Town Clerks.

Cllr Hall suggested a small working group be set up by this Council to research/analyse this document before we agree it.

Cllr White: reported that a meeting had taken place with Cllr Christopher, Cllr Hall and Cllr Munslow, the Rowing Club and Rotary Club.

Both the Rowing Club and Rotary wish to explore, in partnership with MTC the possibility of an all-weather surface access to Monmouth Rowing Club field adjacent to the Town Field. This would give better access for Rotary to build their bonfire for the annual 5th November event- which year made £3,400 was made for charity. St David's Dragon boats also use the field around the 5th and 6th September each year and the Rotary Raft Race attract about 100 rafts from all over the country annually.

They are asking permission to make a wider access across the Town Field, using the same materials that are there now, to maintain the quality of The Town Field.

If agreed, Cllr White suggested that the Cllrs that attended this meeting continue to work in partnership with the Rotary Club and Monmouth Rowing Club to negotiate and take this project forward.

Newsletter: Cllr Pritchard reported that the second edition of the Newsletter had gone out via 'The Voice' magazine.

One Voice Wales: Cllr Dewhurst reported from the meeting attended on the 22 November 2014. Main items discussed were:

Report by the Chief Executive who had just returned from a meeting with the Minister. He stated the lobbying role of OVW is a big responsibility and Community Councils should take this seriously.

It was suggested that Community/Town Councils look at their training budgets to encourage Town Clerks to do more training and encourage Local Councils to take on more responsibilities.

Where possible, a time plan can be put together then when money is more available advantage can be made of this.

Case studies of positive work the Council has completed can be submitted study by January. This will go straight to the Minister and if backed by evidence, then this would go a long way to taking Local Councils seriously at national government level.

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

Members	Full Council	Planning	Community	Planning	F&P	Planning	Environment
2014/2015	27.10.14	27.10.14	03.11.14	10.11.14	10.11.14	24.11.14	01.12.14
Cllr R Bradley	1	1	1	1		1	
Cllr G Bright	Apology		1				1
Cllr S Chivers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cllr T Christopher	1		1		1		1
Mr S Davis	1	1				1	
Cllr A Dewhurst	1	1	1	Apology	1	1	Apology
Cllr J Fletcher	1	1	Apology	1	1	1	1
Cllr J Gunter	1	1	1	1	1	1	Apology
Cllr J Hall	1	1		1	1	1	
Cllr R Hayward	1	1		1	1	1	Apology
Cllr C Munslow	1	1	1	1	1	1	Apology
Cllr A Owen	1						1
Cllr G Pritchard	1		1		1		
Cllrs A Were	1		1		1	1	
Cllr S White	1		1				1
Cllr S Wilson	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total In Attendance	15	10	11	8	11	10+1	7
Members on Committee	16	10	12	10	11	10	12

KEY

	Non Committee Member
	Non Committee Member attendance
	Absent

Proposed: Cllr White

seconded: Cllr Hall

All in Favour.

10. To confirm recommendation of Finance & Policy Committee (10/11/14) to continue membership of the CCTV Partnership for the third year of the agreement in 2015-16, committing to a full debate of the issue with public involvement next year.

Cllr Hayward reminded Councillors that this membership was entered into under a Memorandum of Understanding for 3 years, and following this time, an annual review would be made by Full Council. It was apparent at the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on 10 November 2014, that not all members were happy with the current system.

Cllr Hayward recommended staying with the partnership for a further year.

It was proposed to confirm recommendation of Finance & Policy Committee (10/11/14) to continue membership of the CCTV Partnership for the third year of the agreement in 2015-16, committing to a full debate of the issue with public involvement next year.

Proposed: Cllr Hayward
For: 9

against: 5

seconded: Cllr White
Abstention: 0

Motion carried

11. To confirm recommendation of Finance & Policy Committee (10/11/14) for a total council budget of £236,382 for 2015-16.

Cllr Hayward reported that the budgets from each committee are similar to last years, the main concerns being staying within the CCTV partnership, and MCC asking the Town Council to support them with services in the Town. It was confirmed that the Council already support Agincourt Street toilets. After discussion and consideration of information and costs from MCC, a decision had been made to support street sweeping in Monmouth to the cost of £25,000 with confirmation of a level of control by MTC.

MCC have said that there will be more cuts for the next 4 years and will be looking for more help from town council's year on year. In recognition of this, the Finance & Policy Committee have allowed a sum of money for an extra member of staff to cover the extra work load anticipated from taking on more services.

The Clerk then broadly explained the recommended budgets, including changes to previous years that had previously been proposed and agreed for recommendation by the Finance & Policy Committee. All members had received further copies of the proposed budgets before the meeting.

Finance & Policy Committee:

Administration budget: £140,682 (which included increases of £12,500 extra admin costs, £2,500 specialist advice services, £25,000 contribution to MCC for Monmouth street sweeping, £2,500 additional MCC estimated costs for running Agincourt St toilets)

Civic Affairs budget: £11,200 (which included increases of £2,500 for Civic expenses for anticipated RMRE(M) Freedom Parade, and slightly higher Mace Bearer costs)

Community Affairs Committee: £36,900 (which included increases in smaller grant schemes by £500, and the inclusion of newsletter production/distribution costs £1,100)

Environmental Affairs Committee: £47,600 (which is slightly lower than last year with a reduction in Match Scheme funding)

The total budget proposed was £236,382

Cllr Pritchard pointed out that the precept may be put up by 26% accordingly, but it should also be noted that there has been no inflationary increase made over the last 4 years, housing in Monmouth has increased by 6%, and there has been no increase for previous year.

He estimated that a typical Band D property MTC precept figure go up from about £50 to £60.

It was proposed to confirm recommendation of Finance & Policy Committee (10/11/14) for a total council budget of £236,382 for 2015-16.

Proposed: Cllr Wilson seconded: Cllr Hayward
For: 12 against: 2

Motion carried

12. To confirm recommendation of Finance & Policy Committee (10/11/14) that the precept request for 2015-16 should fully fund the budget of £236,382

Cllr Hayward explained there were 3 ways to fund the agreed budget.-

1. By requesting more than the required budget (£236,382), to fund budget and increase reserves.
2. Request the same precept as the budget amount, with reserves remaining stationary.
3. Request less than the agreed budget and funding the difference from reserves (which are already near the lower end of the recommended level).

The Finance & Policy Committee recommendation was to fund the budget entirely by a precept request of £236,382

It was proposed to confirm the recommendation of Finance & Policy Committee (10/11/14) that the precept request for 2015-16 should fully fund the budget of £236,382

Proposed: Cllr Hayward seconded: Cllr Pritchard All in favour **Motion carried**

13. To consider approval and funding to hold regular public consultations/meetings in Monmouth Priory. (TJC)

Cllr Christopher reported that the last public meeting held at the Priory was very successful. Different groups hire the Priory on Saturday mornings, and the idea is for the Town Council to join in by holding regular public meetings. There would be no charge as an event is already taking place and MTC would be part of that event.

Previous public consultation meetings have been held, but it was felt that mid week at 6.00pm was an inconvenient time for the public to attend and this was the main reason they were not successful.

Councillors felt that although these had not worked in the past as well as hoped the Town Council should keep trying, and that Saturday is a more convenient time, with Monmouth a better location.

Following a short discussion about procedure, the debate and resolutions continued as:

It was proposed to amend the resolution into 2 parts.

Proposed: Cllr T Christopher, Seconded: Cllr A Dewhurst

For: 11 against: 3 abstention: 0 Motion carried

Part 1: It was proposed to hold public consultations at the Priory for a trial period of 6 months.

Proposed: Cllr Christopher seconded: Cllr Dewhurst

For: 11 against: 3 abstention: 0 Motion carried

Part 2: It was proposed that the responsibility of organising the meetings will be that of the Public Consultation Group (TJC, GP, AD.) and internally report back to Full Council meeting.

Proposed: Cllr Christopher seconded: Cllr White

For: 11 against: 3 abstention: 0 Motion carried

14. To consider and agree membership renewal of SLCC at £187

Cllr Hayward informed the Council that this membership was invaluable to the Town Clerk

It was proposed to agree membership renewal of SLCC at £187

Proposed: Cllr Hayward seconded: Pritchard All in favour **Motion carried**

15. To approve the accounts for payment between 5/11/14 and 2/12/14

This item brought forward from the Finance & Policy meeting which has been cancelled on 5th January 2015.

The list of payments was previously distributed to members.

It was proposed to approve the accounts for payment between 5/11/14 and 2/12/14

Proposed: Cllr Pritchard seconded: Cllr Hall All in favour **Motion carried**

16. Items for discussion for future meetings.

None received.

17. To confirm meeting dates.

Cllr Chivers ask for a meeting of the Standing Orders Group to take place.

Next meeting to be held on Monday 19th January 2014
at 7.00pm Shire Hall, Monmouth.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.30