

MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday 5 December 2016 at 7.00pm
The Shire Hall, Monmouth

Present: Chairman: Cllr C Munslow

Cllr G Bright	Cllr J Hall
Cllr S Chivers	Cllr R Roden
Cllr A Dewhurst	Cllr A Were
Cllr M Feakins	Cllr S White
Cllr J Gunter	Cllr S Wilson

In attendance: Mrs S James (Town Clerk) and Mrs J Lloyd Administration Assistant.

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

None received.

2. To receive apologies for absence.

Cllr R Bradley, S Davis, Cllr J Fletcher and Cllr C Hayward.

3. To suspend Standing Orders for a presentation by:

MCC officers Richard Simmonds and Tracey Thomas to update and share with the council the exploration of 6 service areas being set up in a new delivery option due to budget pressure on the local authority (MCC).

It was proposed to suspend Standing Orders

Proposed: Cllr Munslow seconded: Cllr Hall

All in favour
Motion carried.

MCC is finding itself in a place of being unsustainable in the running of services after trying every effort to keep going. From next year, MCC will not be able to sustain services in the present format, and over the next four years will be losing a further four million pounds. This will affect Tourism and Leisure, countryside services including Heritage sites, Culture, Youth Services, and Management and marketing of Monmouthshire's visitor attractions. Museums will transfer later.

MCC have been working with specialists over the past twelve months and have learnt from the mistakes of other areas throughout the United Kingdom, they have engaged with staff and the unions and have visited Community and Town Councils.

Benefits of the new module:

- To increase flexibility in responding to needs and change.
- Freedom to market and trade its services i.e. training,
- Improved services through innovation and a culture of enterprise,
- Increase use of technology and self-service making it easier for residents to access services and obtain information and advice,
- Access to funding and tax efficiencies currently outside the scope of the Council.

The four options MCC have are:

1. Do nothing at all. –
Not an option
2. Transform the services in house.
Potential but funding would decrease in the future.
3. Move services into an Alternative Delivery model (ADM).
This could be set up having full charitable status giving grant relief, could trade services.
4. Outsource the services to a third party.

(Option 3 was given preference to put more resources into.)

This went to members on the 5 October 2016 and now the business case is being written up for the Welsh Government. When released in January it will be sent out to all Community and Town Councils with the Business case being presented in March 2017. The implementation of the new model/s will be April 2017 going live in September 2017.

Further information can be found at:

<http://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ielistdocuments.aspx?cld=144&mld=949&Ver=4>

Questions raised:

Question: Will the crucial decision be before or after next year's elections

Answer: Before the elections, as they have worked with members over the last two years and it would set back if after the election with new members.

Question: Eighteen months ago, there was an in-depth report on the Museums in the County to date there has been no feedback.

Answer: A decision will be made on 8 December at the MCC Cabinet meeting with an ongoing strategy, they understood there will be redesign and redevelopment of services over a five-year plan across Monmouthshire.

Question: Not understanding business side of this but will Town Councils be asked for money in the future?

Answer: No not asking for money in the future, but working with Town Councils as partners, and welcome as a partner very mindful that the services are Community based. The whole idea of the new organisation is to make sure the services are benefited and grow and making people more self-sufficient.

Ms Tracey Thomas will be taking back to MCC information regarding bus parking of none tourist buses in the bus bay Monmouth and feedback regrading Museums as the Town Council had received no information regarding this.

4. To re-instate Standing Orders.

It was proposed to re-instate Standing Orders.

Proposed: Cllr Munslow seconded: Cllr White

All in favour
Motion carried.

5. To consider and agree any budgetary issues arising from MCC presentation.

Cllr Dewhurst asked if the ADM (option 3) can apply for funding.

It was proposed to suspend standing orders to allow Ms Thomas to answer

Proposed: Cllr Munslow seconded: Cllr Hall

All in favour
Motion carried.

Ms Tracey Thomas Answer: yes, but must be a charitable trust.

Cllr Bright: With more shops closing in the high street how do you see the County council raising money.

Answer: Members will be making that decision next week.

Item 7 was brought forward to permit Members of the public to speak.

Mr Simmonds: Raised concerns of MCC new proposals for the staff in the Museum to work on their own. There is a valuable collection in the Museum and shop lifting will be a problem. Previously if there was a problem they could go to the One Stop Shop for help but this has now moved. It was reported that the Museum staff were told by one representative not to worry as 'If it is impossible to sell it they won't bother to steal it' and there is no reason why a woman cannot stay at the counter all morning on her own.

Mr Simmonds claimed that behind the building drugs are being dealt. he has spoken to the schools and the Police, it was reported that Police have a problem with sick leave and cannot cover the whole of Monmouth. Another issue is Managers of shops in the Town park in the street all day because they know they won't receive a ticket. Mr Simmonds is just asking MCC to look after the ladies at the Museum.

(Ms Thomas said she would report back to MCC.)

Mr David Farnsworth: If the County intend to set up a charitable campaign or Trading campaign in what way do the people we elect still control those companies?

Answer: The 'Teckal Company', (a company set up by the Local Authority with full governance and ownership).

The Company set up by the Local Authority will have full governance. There will be a board of trustees with posts being open to Town and County Councillors and members of the public. The Local Authority will have one or two more members allowed for each of the elements but they will not be there in the interest of the County Council. They will be there in the interest of the trading arm. (Trading Arm: Set up to enable income generation through trading of services with a Board of Trustees)

Mr Farnsworth: Will they be accountable to the electorate?

Answer: It was thought some of them will be but as 2 parts of the organisation won't be part of the authority they are accountable to the trustees.

Cllr Were: The other two trading arms (Charitable Arm: either a Trust or Limited Company by Guarantee with Board of Trustees)

won't accountable to the electorate but will they receive part of the precept budget.

Answer: They are not funded by the Local Authority.

Cllr Dewhurst: Asked if the Lone working decision is going to be made on Thursday.

Answer: Doesn't know but will be a five-year process. It won't happen immediately if that means once they redesign Museum services, exhibitions being displayed as they currently are, it will happen.

It was proposed to re-instate Standing Orders.

Proposed: Cllr Munslow seconded: Cllr Roden

All in favour
Motion carried.

6. To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 24th October 2016.

It was proposed that the minutes are a true record and signed.

Proposed: Cllr Munslow seconded: Cllr Roden

All in favour
Motion carried.

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

None received.

8. To receive the Office report (for information only).

Use of the additional office space on the top floor of Shire Hall has now been delayed until January. Little progress has been made with the phone connection through MCC.

Following this evenings Planning meeting and presentation regarding a proposal to relocate the Chippenham Playground, an extra Full Council meeting will be held at 7pm on Tuesday 3rd January to make a final decision of support regarding use of the 106 monies, by which time all members should have received a copy of Mike Moran's report.

The Christmas event is being held this Thursday at 5.30pm and the Christmas tree decoration next Saturday between 2 and 3.30. More volunteers are needed to help at both – please see Jane Lloyd/Anthea Dewhurst.

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

Cllr Munslow read a letter from Captain Tilden of HMS Monmouth.

The Town Clerk brought to the attention of members the new training list for 2017.

Cllr Munslow asked for the reply to Cllr Fletcher request to the MCC regarding pothole repairs.

10. 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.)

None received.

11. To note the reports, including Annual Committee reports, and minutes of the council's committees and outside bodies:

- a Planning Committee:** As per minutes.
- b Environmental Affairs Committee:** As per minutes. Cllr White added that the Drybridge play area was reopened by the Mayor.
- c Community Affairs Committee:** Cllr Dewhurst thanked Cllr Gunter for taking the meeting in her absence. Draft budget will go forward to the next Finance & Policy meeting. And a further request for volunteers for Thursday 8th December event and Saturday 10 December tree decoration event.
- d Finance & Policy Committee:** As per minutes.
- e Monmouth Partnership Forum:** No meeting
- f Central Monmouthshire Area Committee:** Next meeting to be held on 21 December at Usk. MCC Paul Keeble will be asked about Agincourt Square and an update on the Portal Road.

It was proposed that Standing Orders be stood down to permit Mr David Farnsworth to speak regarding the Place Plan.

Proposed: Cllr Munslow seconded: Cllr Hall
For: 7 against: 2 abstention: 2

Motion carried.

g Place Plan (two sets of minutes circulated): Mr Farnsworth

Mr Farnsworth gave an update on recent meetings as he is anxious that Councillors know what the group is doing.

Many issues have been discussed including future housing and early next year will be involved with MCC future Local Development Plan.

Had a meeting with MCC regarding the Wellbeing project, and what it means. The Group will be writing to MCC officers with the kind of things they could incorporate.

The Group have been working with County members and Officers regarding Agincourt Square. County Officers have been very helpful and positive discussing drop off points, parking and design.

Cattle market site to be improved with the planting of trees and new signage. The Group has been talking with the organisers of the Festival as they do not want to plant trees in the wrong place. This could be completed by the end of the winter.

Looking at coach parking in Monmouth which they believe is a big issue in the Town.

The Museum: MCC will be deciding on the 7 December 2016. After this the Group want to meet with MCC Officers to find out what the details are and will report back to the Town Council.

The Group collects information, works out options and opens dialogue with people. They can't make decision about policy and funding.

Two projects where funding may be required are the Cattle market site with the planting of trees and sorting the area. The cost of this could be up to £5,000. The Group may come back to the Town Council to see if they would consider contributions as MCC may not have funds for this project?

Another project is Agincourt Square, this maybe in the order of £250,000, (MCC funding available for the project over 2 years), this would be to totally re vamp the Square with traffic and management control.

As a County and Town Group the thought is MCC may not have the funding available, it may be a question of asking the Town Council if they think it would be feasible or possible to supplement the money. If the Town Council could it would provide a higher quality scheme.

It was proposed to reinstate standing orders.

Proposed: Cllr Munslow seconded: Cllr White

**All in favour
Motion carried.**

h Others: None received.

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

It was proposed too agree the member's attendance summary.

Proposed: Cllr Gunter seconded: Cllr Feakins

**All in favour
Motion carried.**

13. To note the Mayors engagements 2016/2017.

Noted.

14. To confirm and adopt the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) Order 2008 as revised by Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016.

All members to sign to agree compliance with the adopted code.

Town Clerk explained that members had to sign the code of conduct when becoming a Councillor and this is an update.

It was proposed to confirm and adopt the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) Order 2008 as revised by Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016.

Proposed: Cllr Munslow seconded: Cllr Gunter

**All in favour
Motion carried.**

It was proposed to bring forward agenda item 16

Proposed: Cllr Were seconded: Cllr Roden

**All in favour
Motion carried.**

16. To consider and agree that no meeting of the Council or any of its Committees shall commence before 6.00pm. (SC)

It was raised by Cllr Chivers that Councillors are there to serve the public and some planning meetings can be contentious but it isn't fair to Councillors or members of the public if they are unable to attend meetings because of work commitments.

Points raised were:

- Many people work shift patterns.
- If it is a serious application members of the public make time to attend the meetings.
- MCC planning meetings are at a more awkward time of 2.00pm and people still manage to attend.
- When a meeting starts at 5.00pm it is difficult getting through rush hour traffic.
- It was raised that if people now working more shift patterns why do we still have rush hour?
- Child care could be an issue.
- To encourage people from business onto the Council, then meetings should start after 6.00pm.
- Town Clerk highlighted if an extraordinary meeting was required then it may have to be arranged for other days in the week.

It was proposed that no meeting would start before 6.00pm

Proposed: Cllr Gunter seconded: Cllr Feakins
For: 9 against: 2 abstention: 0

Motion carried.

15. To confirm and approve review of Standing orders as per Finance & Policy meeting dated 7th November 2016. (review details circulated)

After discussion, it was proposed

To include Section 3 of Standing Orders, that a meeting will not continue past 9.00pm.

Proposed: Cllr Were seconded: Cllr Gunter
For: 9 against: 0 abstention: 2

Motion carried.

Changes from agenda item 16 to be included in section 3.

Cllr Dewhurst added that sections regarding the Community Affairs Committee were out of date.

The Town Clerk referred this back to the working party to be discussed.

Cllr Dewhurst also requested that the wording 'Denim' be removed.

The Town Clerk again referred this back to the Working Party to be discussed.

It was proposed to confirm the review of Standing Orders as per F&P recommendations of 7 January - November 2016.

Proposed: Cllr Feakins seconded: Cllr White
For: 10 against: 1 abstention: 0

Motion carried.

16. To consider and agree that no meeting of the Council or any of its Committees shall commence before 6.00pm. (SC)

This Item discussed before item 15.

17. To receive feedback and agree any required actions from the Cluster meeting held on Tuesday 13 September 2016. (SC and MF -deferred from last meeting)

Cllr Feakins reported that the Welsh Government is introducing new legislation called 'The Wellbeing & Generations Act'. This is to make Unitary Councils consider the wider 'wellbeing' of the Community. The Cluster meeting was about MCC working with the Act and how to best implement the process's and new modes of process thinking. It has taken 2 years to get to the assessment process, but full implications are not properly understood. Unitary Councils must in the future create a better way of working and interacting with outside groups, i.e. Charities, Football Clubs, Town Councils.

Minutes will be sent out with a following meeting in three to four months' time.

18. To consider and confirm issues for CSATS.

Items put forward for next meeting are:

- AW: Small area at the back of Chippenham Surgery requires better signage and the yellow lines re painting as people keep parking there.
(It was raised that this is an un-adopted Road and Cllr Chivers had been trying to get MCC to accept responsibility for it.
- AD: Reported the tunnel under the A40, which has a huge iron door (emergency flood channel) cylindrical pipe barred one end but to meadow side has huge metal door, children have been seen going in and out of this which could be a potential death trap. Ask CSAT's to look at as it could be Police, Highways or possibly SEWTRA matter.
- SJW CCTV update: Parking police Commissioner is looking to decriminalise parking next year so MCC are now turning towards taking over and having a Traffic Warden.

19. Items for discussion for future meetings.

To confirm all committee budgets and MTC precept

Cllr Bright wanted the breaking up of the Link road to be discussed, with concerns that the bad weather will make this worse and possibly cause closure.

(Cllr White will raise the issue with Central Monmouthshire Area Committee.)

20. To confirm the date of the next meeting.

Extra Full Council meeting anticipated 3rd January 2017, 7pm

Otherwise, Monday 16 January 2016 at 7.00pm Shire Hall, Monmouth.