

ABERGAVENTNY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 8th March 2017 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Abergavenny.

Present: Cllr C Woodhouse (Mayor)

Cllrs S Horrell, S Woodhouse, D Edwards, J L Prosser, R P Jordan, N Tatam, Cllrs M Hickman, R Harris, M Powell, D Simcock

In attendance: Town Clerk - Jacqueline Humphries, the Press, Mike Moran MCC –Summer Play Provision.

The Mayor welcomed all present.

1946. Apologies were received from Cllrs M Harris, T Thomas and M Toombs.

1947. Declarations of interest will be declared as and when.

1948. Mike Moran from MCC gave a presentation on the Summer Play Provision for Abergavenny 2017. Open access play sessions will run for 19 days over the summer, main priority areas include: - Disabled children, children from rural areas and low income families. (Identified by free school mean provision). Cards will be issued to allow children to join the activities at Deri View School and allow access to the leisure centre (to include swimming). All children will be issue with the same type of card therefore no stigma can be attached to any child. The scheme is again looking for £8000 from the Council that will help cover costs. The money will specifically be used to issue the cards, buy specialist equipment for disabled children and pay for specialist play workers (Torfaen Play Scheme). Full day provision will cost £16 for 9am – 3pm or £19 for 8am – 5pm. The money will allow cards to be loaded with a specific amount of credited activities; credits not used in the summer can then be carried over to October, Christmas or Easter next year. Councillors enquired if Mike was asking any other organisation for funding, Mike confirmed that Families First funding had been confirmed.

Councillors advised that it may be prudent to approach the North Monmouth Liaison committee or some of the local community councils for extra funding.

All councillors agreed that the scheme is excellent for Abergavenny and approved the continuation of the £8000 towards the scheme. Agreed.

Mike Moran left the meeting

1949. To receive and if appropriate to adopt the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 8th February 2017.

Some amendments made – approved.

1950. Matter Arising

Cllr Edwards noted that all the electronic notice boards had now passed planning but there is need to remove a dustbin and some planters to allow more space.

Councillor discussed the need to appoint a champion to ensure the notice boards run smoothly.

1951. To receive and if appropriate to adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday 8th February 2017

Amendment made - Approved

1952. Matters Arising

The Chapel Road Application has been withdrawn.

1953. Finance Report.

a) To authorise payments

Payments were then authorised for the following transactions:-

23/02/2017	G M James	G M James Salary	£210.57
23/02/2017	J Humphries	J Humphries Salary	£1,162.05
23/02/2017	HMRC	Tax & National Insurance Payment	£294.78
22/02/2017	MCC	Contribution for Public Conveniences	£69,600.00
22/02/2017	Cllr C Woodhouse/	Welsh guards Association meeting	£24.50
01/02/2017	One Voice Wales /	One Voice Wales Membership	£1,483
08/03/2017	Ricoh	Photocopier	£86.18
08/03/2017	Abergavenny Chronicle/	Code of Conduct Notice	£96.00
08/03/2017	SLCC/ Society Of Local Council Clerks	Conference	£82.80
08/03/2017	One Voice Wales	Finance Training (Pontypool)	£70.00
08/03/2017	Cable News /	Library Papers	£43.60
08/03/2017	Wales in Bloom /	Abergavenny Town Entry Fees 2017	£145.00
08/03/2017	Merlin Waste /	Empty dog waste bins	£406.80
08/03/2017	Tithe Barn /	4th Quarter Community Toilet Scheme	£250.00
08/03/2017	Kings Arms Hotel /	4th Quarter Community Toilet Scheme	£250.00
08/03/2017	Jem's Catering /	Hockey & Bowls clubs reception	£200.00
08/03/2017	Viking /	Office Supplies	£44.89
08/03/2017	MCC	Hire of Cherry Picker erecting Christmas Lights	£168.00
08/03/2017	Cllr N Tatam /	Expenses April 16 - March 17	£146.65
08/03/2017	Cllr C Woodhouse/	Reimburse goods Mayors Parlour	£17.30
08/03/2017	J Humphries/	Travel Expenses/ reimbursement Parlour	£14.23
08/03/2017	NR & CA Bailey /	Replenish Mayors Parlour Civic Receptions	£130.25

All payments were approved by council.

b) Month 11 budget reports were presented by the Council Clerk explained that bank reconciliation was still in preparation, up to date figures would be send out next week.

c) The Council discussed and then officially approved a waiver of its financial regulations with reference - payment to Pomegranate Creative in August 16 due to the exceptional circumstances.

d) Councillor S Woodhouse explained that this process had actually taken place in May 2016, but unfortunately the clerk at that time due to illness failed to complete the minutes. To ensure compliance with regulations there was a need for the Town Council to therefore reaffirm its existing Financial Regulations and Standing Orders – subject to a more comprehensive review being completed in 17/18 following the guidance from One Voice Wales.

Cllr Prosser proposed that money should be made available to help the Five Year Plan; this was seconded by Cllr R Harris. All Agreed, Money has been set aside within the budget for this next year.

The Council therefore voted and agreed to reaffirm its Financial Regulations and Standing Orders – approved.

1954. Asset Register

The Council discussed the current asset register and noted there were no new additions this year. Councillors agreed it may be worth asking the museum curator to have a look at some of the councils' assets to assess their value and worth to the local community. Town Council need to check that all assets currently held by the museum are on either their or our Asset Register.

The current asset register was approved.

1955. Internal Auditor – Officially Appoint and approve internal auditor.

The Council discussed the current internal auditor – information was provided by the clerk and head of the finance committee Cllr S woodhouse on his suitability and the very high standard of his work. After discussions Councillors agreed to renew the contact with the internal auditor for another year. Official documentation will be sent to the auditor for signing.

1956. Grants for consideration

a) Abergavenny Eisteddfod

Cllr Douglas Edwards stated that a monument has been designed to be erected in Castle Meadows as a lasting legacy to the Eisteddfod held in the town last year. A matching stone will also be produced to be erected at Swan Meadows. Funding has been sort and approved from MCC and the Friends of Castle Meadows and a local church fund. This application is for £2000 towards these permanent stones.

The Mayor at this point declared that even though Cllr Edwards had an interest in the project he did not have to declare an interest or leave the room as it was a community scheme.

Councillors agreed that a lasting legacy to the Eisteddfod would be fitting.

Councillor S Woodhouse proposed a motion that the Council approve the grant out of this year project fund. Councillor Prosser seconded the proposal – All agreed – Passed.

b) Museum

A grant application from the museum was received for the intention to carry out a feasibility study (total cost £10,000) to enable the museum to construct an area where more outdoor exhibitions, events etc. could be held, the application is for £1,000 towards the costs.

Councillors discussed the application and its link to the ‘Spreading the Word’ part of the 5 Year plan. All Councillors agreed that extra space for events would be a good move for the museum and the town as a whole.

Councillor S Woodhouse proposed that the grant should be passed and allotted out of this year’s budget. Councillor Jordan seconded the proposal. All agreed – passed.

c) Friends of Castle Meadows

A grant has been received for £707 to enable the purchasing and planting of new flowers and plants this year. Grant needed urgently as they would like to start planting by the end of March.

Cllrs asked if precautions had been taken to ensure plants could not be stolen as they have in previous years. Cllr Edwards informed all that new measures were in place to prevent this happening again.

Cllr R Harris informed all that he had a number of Oak saplings that he could donate to the project if needed.

Cllr S Woodhouse proposed that the grant should be passed, Councillor Hickman seconded the motion. All approved – passed.

1957. Care in the Community – Councillor Douglas Edwards

Councillor D Edwards declared an interest which was personal but not prejudicial and R Harris declared an interest.

Following a recent NMLC meeting Cllr Edwards became aware that Abergavenny Community Enterprise (ACE) had a possibility of running out of money. (They were the successor to the Communities First Scheme). They have managed to continue for a number of years on a purely voluntary basis carrying out excellent work within the local community. In Cllr Edwards’ opinion the aims of ACE together with their sister organisation Abergavenny Community Trust (ACT) is identical: - Care in the Community, creating a sustainable and resilient town, to encourage early intervention, to promote community engagement, both organisations are an integral part of the Whole Place Plan. They represent the whole town, North & South. Both organisations will be holding a meeting to identify areas where they can support each other.

ACE currently open 3 days a week with running costs of £15000 with over 3800 people attending last year, there are over ten agencies using their facilities – including PACE, Gingerbread and the CAB.

ACT open 7 days has 3 employees with attendees between 1400-2500 per month. Both organisation do excellent work including Fairtrade teas, community kitchen and Friday coffee mornings to name just a few.

Councillor Edwards proposed that the Town Council should support a revenue injection to each organisation of £15000, with the amount to be paid on the 1st April 2017. The amount to be an annual payment, subject to a review by the town council prior to budget setting each year, the review to decide on the actual amount paid or not paid. The payments to be known as Community Care. This was seconded by Cllr Tatam.

Councillors questions included: -

Could they use Mardy Park as a base? - No very important to be based at Park Street School. How are they currently funded? – Grant but only £1800 left in the account.

Councillor Harris stated that the organisation was currently applying for a new grant, many people do benefit from the service. The organisation cannot get long term commitments from anyone, money is very short and needs to be addressed urgently or they will need to shut down, they would be grateful for any money on offer - they are currently in talks with MCC. Councillors agreed that both organisations do a good job and they have kept spirits high throughout challenging times, very impressed by the work that they do, but £30,000 is a large sum of money for the council to commit and maybe it should be left to the next council to consider.

All Councillors felt that before any decisions could be made more information would be needed to be presented by the organisations including up to date financial facts and figures, job descriptions etc.

Councillor Harris agreed that we could need to talk to Norma Watkins and Ashley Morgan who could provide us with the information needed.

Councillor Jordan proposed an amendment to the original proposition – ‘On the basis that they are not being funded by a third party to provide the organisations with an opportunity to report to the finance committee who will then consider town council action going forward. Possibly providing a £2000 short term funding solution.’ This was seconded by Councillor Prosser. This substantive proposition was then put to council vote - 11 councillors agreed with 2 abstaining. Motion passed.

1958. IT Report – J Humphries - Consider and approve

An IT report was presented by the clerk, recommends keeping the status quo at present, due to the development of the hub the future is uncertain at present. Recommends buying an external hard drive back up. – All agreed this would be a good idea though a double back up would be required,

Councillor Edwards asked if we could purchase a mobile phone for the clerk for the Councillors to ring should they have an emergency, on a pay as you go basis.

Clerk agreed to this

1959. Reports

1960. Team Abergavenny – Councillors Horrell & Tatam

At the last Team Abergavenny meeting discussions were held on the cycle bridge over the river Usk at Llanfoist – most thought this was a white elephant.

Future role of the groups also discussed, agreements were made that a change in the role would be needed but there is still a role for the group.

1961. CCTV – No Update

1962. Toilets – Councillor Prosser.

Had a meeting with one potential supplier (who already covers most of Powys) to discuss options going forward – options include refurbishments or having brand new facilities built at a cost of £66,000 2 toilets per location or £80,00 three toilets per location. Maintenance and cleaning contracts currently stand at £25,500. Contractor has recommended demolishing 2 of the blocks, White horse Lane and the bus station. A charge of 20 pence would be introduced

to use the toilets to hopefully offset some of the on-going costs. Current staff employed to clean the toilets are being kept aware of the situation and will be protected. The current MCC policy is to retain services, until a decision is made, but they are under very strict financial pressure.

1963. Questions from Town Councillors to County Councillors on local issues.
No questions

1964. Members Reports

Cllr Tatam – Team Abergavenny, 5 year Plan Enhance our Environment, Healthmatic meeting at County Hall, One voice wales larger Council Committee meeting, Community Kitchen opening, Deri view School open morning, Fairtrade Birthday tea.

Cllr Simcock - Deri view School open morning, Fairtrade Birthday tea, launch of Community Kitchen, 5 Year Plan.

Cllr Thomas - 13 Feb - attended Town Team re Usk Bridge development at Llanfoist Community Speed Watch Park Avenue with PCSO Yung, official opening of Information board by Becky James, visited 'Gateway Church' with PCSO Yung, ACE AGM, Five Year Plan - 'Spreading the Word' , Meeting with Abergavenny RFC and PCSO Yung re graffiti and ASB in Bailey Park, Opening of community kitchen at Park Street Community Centre, Fair Trade Tea Party.

Cllr Prosser – Launch of Community Kitchen, Agri-Urban farm visits - good contacts made with potential future potential for markets in Abergavenny, meeting on 20th March to discuss further. Good development plans for the visit in September from our European Visitors, will distribute full schedule nearer the date.

Cllr Dodd – TIC meeting, Bowls and Hockey Club reception.

Cllr Jordan – Fairtrade Birthday tea, Bowls and Hockey Club reception.

Councillor S Woodhouse – Welsh Guards AGM, Seed Sunday at Park street community centre, 5 Year Plan ‘Enabling Communities’, Gavenny Ladies Guild Annual lunch, Launch of Digital Information Boards, 5 Year Plan ‘Enabling Businesses to Thrive’, ‘Spreading the Word’, Pantomime, Launch of Prince Williams Skill Force Project, Open Morning Deri View School, Bowls & Hockey Club Reception, Fairtrade Birthday tea, Jane Foulser Gala Dinner.

Cllr Edwards – North Monmouthshire Liaison Committee meeting, Healthmatic meeting County Hall, Fairtrade Birthday Tea, Melville Theatre meeting

Cllr Horrell – Fairtrade Birthday Tea, Team Abergavenny, Alzheimer’s Association.

Cllr Hickman - Launch of Digital Information Boards

Cllr Powell – A4B Meeting, Digital Notice Board unveiling, Bowls and Hockey Club reception, Jane Foulser Gala dinner.

Cllr R Harris – Launch of Digital Notice Boards.

Mayor Chris Woodhouse – Welsh Guards AGM, Seed Sunday at Park street community centre, 5 Year Plan ‘Enabling Communities’, Gavenny Ladies Guild Annual lunch, Launch of Digital Information Boards, 5 Year Plan ‘Enhance the Environment’, ‘Enabling Businesses to Thrive’, ‘Spreading the Word’, Pantomime, Launch of Prince Williams Skill Force Project, TIC meeting, Open Morning Deri View School, Bowls & Hockey Club Reception, Fairtrade Birthday tea, Jane Foulser Gala Dinner.

The Mayor informed all or upcoming events – Mons day Parade (Robes to be worn) 6th May 3pm St Marys service then down to cenotaph, old councillor still in office but new councillor need to be invited to attend.

Bill Fousler - funeral – Friday 17th 10.30 medals to be worn

Freida Chip - funeral Friday 17th 1pm.

1965. Any other business agreed by the Mayor to be urgent and of which he has received notice before the meeting.

Lighting the beacon to commemorate the Battle of Britain

ATC have been invited to register to light t a Beacon as a national tribute on 11th November 2018 – we have to register by the end of March to go on the official list. Councillor Prosser sated that the Beacon on the Blorenge will have to be re-energised.

All councillors agreed this is a very good idea and voted to approve the action. Clerk to register our Beacon.

Abergavenny in Bloom – Colour Choices

Councillor did not have any particular colour scheme in mind and left the decision to the clerk.

The meeting ended at 9.00pm