

ABERGAVENTNY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10 December 2014 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Abergavenny.

Present: Cllr M Hickman, JP, (Mayor)

Cllrs C Woodhouse, R Harris, Mrs M Harris, Mrs M Powell, S Horrell, Miss M Toombs, D Edwards, Mrs S Woodhouse, R P Jordan, Ms S Dodd, J L Prosser, P Wadsworth, P Woodley, and N Tatam.

In attendance: The Town Clerk and Mr S Penn, Press.

Before the meeting started The Mayor invited members to stand in silence for a minute to mark the death of Mr Laurie Jones, a former Councillor and a very active person in the Community.

1633. There were no apologies for absence.

1634. Declarations of interest would be made as and when necessary.

1635. The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12 November 2014 were received and adopted as a correct record subject to minute 1627.4 to read “to partially replace” instead of “in addition to”.

1636. Matters arising.

Cllr Harris noted that Action 50-+ were grateful for the grant, and would invite members to join them when the equipment had been purchased.

Cllr Wadsworth noted that the information about the Sweeper/Litter Picker had not been received and it was agreed to agenda it for the next meeting.

Cllr Prosser had consulted Friends of Bailey Park about Bailey Park being designated a Centenary Field and as they had agreed, he had submitted it for approval.

1637. The following minutes were received and adopted as a correct record.

a) Planning Committee held on 12 November 2014

It was noted that the enforcement action against the illuminated signs in Cross Street was ongoing.

The proposed illuminated signs in King Street for Domino Pizza would be permitted as there were already others in the area and it is not in the Conservation Area.

b) Projects Committee held on 27 November 2014.

c) Finance Committee held on 3 December 2014

Cllr Mrs Woodhouse proposed that as there had not been sufficient information available to come to

a decision on the budget, another meeting should be called late in January to try to make firm decisions. In the meantime it had been agreed to recommend that an increase of £5 on a Band D property should be provisionally made.

Cllr Edwards had been unable to attend the Finance Meeting but expressed his disappointment with the outcome. He had hoped that a more significant increase would have been made to protect services. He wanted a longer term view to be taken. He proposed an Amendment that the Council should increase the Band D level by £10 this year and £10 next year in readiness for the additional local need.

A number of members spoke on this matter, the majority view being that we should continue to be prudent and await the outcome of County Council deliberations. A piecemeal approach is not helpful, and a more coherent stance should be taken.

Cllr C Woodhouse repeated his suggestion that we should ask the County Chief Executive and Finance Cabinet Member to attend a meeting to discuss the County's position. We need to understand so that we can tell the electorate what is happening.

Cllr Woodley referred to the County holding public assets which might usefully be transferred to the Town Council

It was also suggested that the County should increase its Council Tax levy by the maximum of 5% rather than 3.95% to bring in more income.

Cllr Tatam asked for a recorded vote. Cllr Edwards' amendment was voted on first, that the Precept be increased by £10 this year and next year for a Band D property. This was seconded by Cllr Tatam. Cllrs Edwards, Tatam and Toombs voted for the amendment and Cllrs C Woodhouse, R Harris, M Harris, M Powell, S Horrell, S Woodhouse, P Jordan, S Dodd, J L Prosser, P Wadsworth, P Woodley and The Mayor voted against it.

Cllr S Woodhouse's proposition was put to the meeting, seconded by Cllr Dodd, that the position should be reviewed at a special meeting after 22 January 2015. Those in favour were Cllrs S Woodhouse, S Dodd, J L Prosser, P Wadsworth, P Woodley, C Woodhouse, R Harris, M Harris, M Powell, S Horrell, and the Mayor.

Cllr Tatam voted against the proposition and Cllrs Edwards and Toombs abstained.

Cllr Mrs Woodhouse also raised the question of whether the funds for the Eisteddfod should come from reserves or from the precept. It was agreed to defer that until the late January meeting as well.

1638. Finance Report

a) The following accounts were authorised for payment:

Rareseed Theatre	Grant	£1000
Synergy Choir	Grant	£750
Action 50+	Grant	£428
M Hickman	Councillors Communication Allowance	£100

C Woodhouse	“	“	“	£100
R Harris	“	“	“	£100
M Harris	“	“	“	£100
M Powell	“	“	“	£100
M Toombs	“	“	“	£100
D Edwards	“	“	“	£100
S Woodhouse	“	“	“	£100
S Dodd	“	“	“	£100
P Jordan	“	“	“	£100
J L Prosser	“	“	“	£100
P Wadsworth	“	“	“	£100
N Tatam	“	“	“	£100
M Knight	Honarium, Deputy Mace-Bearer			£450
G Harris	Mace-Bearer			£1040
Abergavenny Chronicle Advert				£204
G M James Salary				£202.08
R Fury	Erecting Christmas Trees			£543.20
M Herring	Lighting for Trees			£448.80
HMRC Tax and NI				£1127.38
SLCC Annual fee				£187.00
Monmouthshire CC Summer Playscheme				£8000
Llanelly Community Council 4 Dog Bins				£564.36
NR & CA Bailey Civic functions				£60.20
Cablennys Library papers				£77.60
P Johns	Expenses			£121.86
Cuddle and Cwtch float prize				£200
Abergavenny Carnival float prize				£100
Snow queen (Mrs Beavan) float prize				£50
B Sullivan (Christmas Card picture)				£20
Venue 59 Kings Head Dinner				£897.80

Councillors declared an interest in the Communication Allowances

b) The Month 8 Finance Reports were received. The Clerk noted that due to work pressures the agreed modifications had not yet been carried out, but he was seeing the Auditor this week and would put them right at that time.

1639. Correspondence. The following items were considered:

1. Monmouth/Newport One Voice Wales Agenda. Noted
2. Monmouthshire LDP Consultation. Members would respond individually if required.
3. ACE Partnership information sheet. Noted
4. Voluntary Voice. Noted
5. Community grant for Synergy. Noted
6. Members Interests correspondence. Noted
7. Trees in Wales's Towns and Cities Report
8. The Precept multiplier this year would be £4767.73, which is slightly less than last year.

1640. Reports – Town Team Reports

In the context of preparations for the Eisteddfod, a question was raised about whether we should invite someone from the Eisteddfod to meet the Town Council to explain how it would affect the town. This was agreed.

It was noted that Cllr Horrell had volunteered to be the Council's second representative on the Town Team. The Clerk would continue as Secretary for the time and could express an independent view, rather than the Council's view.

1641. Agenda Items

a) CSAT. Cllr Wadsworth asked members to let him have any matters for CSAT as they would be meeting quarterly from now on. He would ensure that matters were raised. He already noted the need to increase the presence of police at the no waiting area outside Boots.

1642. Questions for County Councillors.

Cllr C Woodhouse asked what was happening to various assets in Abergavenny – the Pensioners' Hall and the ex TIC building were two in particular. He was informed that the Pensioners Hall had not been returned to MCC yet as the lease ended at the end of the financial year. The TIC Building was out to tender for lease. Cllr Woodley declared an interest in this building and said that he had expressed an interest in the building but had received nothing yet. It was noted that if a building is out to tender it should have a sign saying so.

Cllr Edwards noted that there had been a constructive meeting earlier that afternoon with County Officers and local County Members to discuss the One Stop Shop and library issues. He felt it had been a constructive meeting.

1643. Members` Reports

Cllr Tatam had attended Mardy Park and Town Team Meetings.

Cllr Wadsworth had attended Governors Meetings at Cantref School and the Christingle Service.

Cllr Prosser noted the Budget Consultation meeting with MCC on 5 January.

Cllr Dodd had attended the BID Group and distributed the draft business plan for information. It was agreed they should be asked to talk to the Projects Committee in February.

Cllr Jordan had attended the lights switch-on.

Cllr Mrs Woodhouse had attended Tourism Ambassador Training.

Cllr Edwards had attended the Council Dinner, Mardy Park (although he would also like to visit on a normal day), and he noted the crossing in Merthyr Rd was now fully operational.

Cllr Toombs had attended the dinner

Cllr Mrs Harris had attended Mardy Park and the dinner.

Cllr R Harris had attended the dinner

Cllr C Woodhouse had attended school governors and the planning site meeting

The Mayor had attended a number of events including 4 Theatre performances, Road Traffic Accident Service, Rareseed Theatre, Boxing, Various raffles, Rugby White Ribbon event, Brownies and a 100th Birthday Party.

Cllr Edwards wished the Mayor and Mayoress a very Happy Christmas on behalf of the Council.

The meeting ended at 8:15pm