

ABERGAVENNY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 11 February 2015 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Abergavenny at 7pm.

Present: Cllr M J 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, J L Prosser, P Wadsworth, P Woodley and N Tatam

In attendance: The Town Clerk, The Mayor`s Chaplain, Mr S Penn, Press and Mr M Prys Williams for the first item.

The Mayor welcomed Mr Prys Williams and invited him to address the Council.

He explained that he had come to update members on the position with the Mons Memorial.

He was working with Cllr Prosser, the County Armed Services Champion on matters to do with the memorial. A meeting last November had agreed that an underground survey was needed to determine if there are any drainage problems under the monument, but this had not yet been done. A quote for underpinning the monument on site had been provided at £8500. The feeling is that it should not be moved from its present location except that it could be moved a few yards away from the A40 onto a new base. This would be easier and would also improve safety as it would be a little further from the A40. Quotes are awaited for cleaning, moving etc and the total cost is estimated to be in the region of £12000, for which grant funding will be sought. He noted that a parade is likely to be planned for 9 May to the memorial to mark the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Ypres which falls on the previous day. This is being considered at present. It was noted that the Mons Association meet on the Saturday before the anniversary so liaison with them is needed.

Cllr Prosser thanked Mr Prys Williams for the work he is doing.

The Council offered its full support for the proposal to clean and relocate the memorial a little further up the street.

1656. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ms S Dodd.

1657. Declarations of interest would be made as and when necessary.

1658. The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 14 January 2015 were received and adopted as a correct record.

1659. There were no matters arising.

1660. The following minutes were received and adopted as a correct record:

a) Projects Committee held on 29 January 2015. It was noted that a date for the workshop with Kellie Beirne had been suggested for 4 March. This was agreed subject to a Finance Committee being held at 6pm and the workshop starting at 6:30pm

b) Special Council held on 4 February, subject to a correction on the recorded vote to read “ Against the proposition Cllrs M Harris, R Harris and N Tatam with Cllrs D Edwards and Miss M Toombs abstaining.”

1661. Finance Report for Month 10

a) The following accounts were recommended for authorisation:

Shopmobility grant	£1000
Keep Wales Tidy grant	£50
P Woodley pro-rata allowance	£42.50
S Horrell pro-rata allowance	£42.50
Monmouthshire Summer Sports	£2500
G M James salary	£286.58
P Johns salary back-pay	£114.42
HMRC tax and NI	£688.91
Information Commissioner	£350.00
Monmouthshire CC CCTV	£3200
Jems Catering mayoral reception	£50
M Hickman civic functions	£26.86
C & C Binley dog bins/seats	£550
Cablenews papers	£70.00
Information Commissioner	£35
Merlin Waste	£372.90
Honeycomb Printing (Christmas cards)	£168.00
One Voice Wales subscription	£1396
NR & CA Bailey civic functions	£90.61
Homestart Monmouthshire grant	£736.00
Abergavenny Community Trust grant	£3000
Merlin Waste	£325.44
MCC Bailey Park Toilets	£3922.50

I Deal Design Certificates	£14.50
P Johns expenses	£48.81

The Town Clerk noted that a payment to Synergy in May 2014 had been made to cover the cost of Cllr Jordan`s flight to Germany for the twinning visit. This had been properly recorded in the Council`s accounts but had not been on the authorisation list to Council at that time. Members agreed to retrospectively authorise the payment of £130 to Synergy for the flight.

b) Month 10 budget report sheets were received. The Clerk noted that the Summer Sports invoice had been located in the wrong code. This would be corrected for the next month.

c) The agreed Council Budget had been tabled for this meeting. It took account of the decisions made on 4 February and members were invited to consider it and to let the Clerk know if they felt anything was wrong.

1662. Correspondence.

1. Letter from Gwent Police Commissioner. This was noted and in this context the latest change in local police inspector was also noted. It was agreed to write to the Commissioner expressing concern at the continued frequent changes in local inspectors.
2. Letter from Big Lottery Fund. Noted.
3. Grass Roots. Noted
4. Beaupreau Bulletin. Noted
5. Letter from Shopmobility. Noted
6. Newspaper article about Loan money available to renovate buildings in Abergavenny. It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate details to members for their information.

1663. Reports

- a) Town Team notes had not been circulated but would be in the next day or two.
- b) North Monmouthshire Liaison Committee Minutes were received and noted. The requirement to provide a pension scheme for employees was highlighted as an issue for consideration. The Clerk would report on it to the next Finance Committee,

1664. Agenda Items

- a) Election of Mayor for 2015/16

Cllr Prosser nominated Cllr Mrs M Powell to be Mayor. He noted her experience, her community-spiritedness and the fact that she had recently been a good Chair of Monmouthshire County Council. He was sure she would dedicate herself to the office if elected. Cllr Mrs Powell indicated that she would accept the nomination. This was seconded by Cllr Horrell. There were no other nominations and on being put to the vote it was carried with one abstention.

Members congratulated Cllr Mrs Powell, particularly Cllrs Edwards and R Harris on behalf of the other parties.

Cllr Mrs Powell thanked Councillors for their confidence and promised to do her best. She felt she would find Cllr Hickman a hard act to follow.

b) Risk Assessment for 2015/16

The Clerk's report on this subject was considered. He highlighted an issue with the relative valuations shown on the asset register, the insurance policy list and the value used in the Annual Audit Return. The aim this year was to get all three to agree, and he had been checking on some values to enable this. Many items on the Asset Register were now shown as intrinsic value only.

There was some discussion on this and on the security of the Council's Assets within the building. The value placed on the Mace was questioned, and it was noted that should it be lost or destroyed it would not be possible to replace it as it is, so a value is quite a difficult thing to arrive at.

The Clerk was asked to write to MCC about the security of the building, taking into account any changes that may take place with the development of the Hub.

He was also asked to look at the Council's protocols to include one that determines the order of precedence in any parades.

The Mayor showed members a Glass Plaque that had been presented to him by the Welsh Guards to commemorate 100 years of the Regiment. This would be placed in the Parlour.

c) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are to be reviewed annually. The Clerk invited members to consider any issues arising so that they can be formally considered at the May Council Meeting.

1665. Questions to County Councillors.

Cllr Woodley asked if there was any truth in the rumour that the Police Station may be closed. County members were not aware of this. In fact the Commissioner is actively encouraging opening police stations.

Cllr Woodhouse noted that the work to limit joy-riders in Fairfield Car Park had not progressed. He was told that it is still intended to complete it. Also, Police are talking to the young drivers in the car park. Cllr Mrs Powell expressed the view that barriers are not enough as it would be possible to get in and out over the verges and pavement in places.

1666. Members Reports

Cllr Tatam had attended the Holocaust service, the Ariel Launch and One Voice Wales area meeting.

He told members that until recently Newport Council had given its Community Councils £130,000 per annum. He also informed members that a Welsh Government sponsored energy survey is being carried out on the Market Hall/Town Hall.

Cllr Prosser noted that it was time that the Ostringen delegation came over to Abergavenny and he understood they are keen to visit during the Food Festival. He suggested that an invitation should go from the Mayor for them to do so this year. This was agreed.

Cllr Jordan noted that the new Synergy-trained singers were giving a free concert on 21 February at Llanfoist and invited members to attend.

Cllr Mrs Woodhouse had attended a TIC familiarisation course, the Mayor's Concert, the Holocaust Service

Cllr Edwards had attended the Mayor's Concert

Cllt Toombs had attended the North Monmouthshire Liaison Committee meeting

Clr Horrell had attended the Mayor's Concert and a Town Team meeting.

Cllr Mrs Powell had attended the Holocaust Service, A4B Committee and the Welsh Guards reception.

Cllr C Woodhouse had attended the same events as Cllr Mrs Woodhouse and a school governors meeting.

The Mayor had attended a Wye Valley Tourism event, Ken Lewis' Funeral, the Charity Concert, opening of Domino's Pizza, The Crafty Women event and the Welsh Guards reception.

1667. Any Other Business

a) Cllr Mrs Powell told the Clerk a Dog Bin at Mill Lane had been bent over when a wall collapsed. He would attend to it.

b) Cllr Mrs Woodhouse had entered some information onto the Council Events page. If anyone had other items to include, can they let her know.

c) The Mayor reminded members of the Honours Reception tomorrow night.

The Meeting ended at 8pm.