

ABERGAVENNY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 12 February 2014 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Abergavenny.

Present: Cllr Mrs S Woodhouse (Mayor)

Cllrs C Woodhouse, Mrs M Harris, M Hickman, Mrs M Powell, M Chiplin (For part of the meeting), Miss M Toombs, D Edwards, P Jordan, Ms S Dodd, J L Prosser, P Wadsworth and N Tatam

In attendance: The Town Clerk, Ms K Skellon (Press), Inspector Giles and PCSO Moyses, and a member of TIC staff .

The Mayor welcomed Inspector Giles and PCSO Moyses who had attended to update members on Crime Trends and other matters. In future they would attend quarterly, although they would be prepared to attend if something of concern arises.

There has been an upward trend in crime figures overall, but a reduction in some areas. Crime in the Town Centre wards had increased a little, mainly with anti social behaviour. Burglary had dropped a little. The overall statistic is that there have been 1226 crimes compared with 1170 the previous year. There have been some significant successes in dealing with persistent shoplifters.

The OWL scheme was recommended to members as a good way of keeping in touch and being made aware of issues. 12 new cadets had been engaged in the County and 4 of them will come to Abergavenny when trained.

Members raised some concerns with the officers about parking and driving abuses in the town.

The Police would ask CCTV operators to look out for any of this if they have time to do so.

The Mayor thanked the officers for attending and they left at this point.

1502. Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R Harries and R Harris.

1503. Declarations of interest would be made as and when necessary.

1504. The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8 January 2014 were received and adopted as a correct record.

1505. Matters arising. A query was raised why the cost of dog bin clearance had gone up by more than the 14% quoted by the contractor. This was because we also installed additional bins at the beginning of last year.

The Clerk acknowledged that he had not followed up the request to Ms Boothroyd to attend to talk about Tudor Street Day Centre. He would do so again.

1506. The Following minutes were received and adopted as correct records:

- a) Planning Committee on 8 January 2014.
- b) Projects Committee held on 20 January 2014.
- c) Finance Committee held on 5 February 2014.

1507. Matters arising.

a) It was noted that the Gavenny Gate Planning Application had been deferred for a redesign of the affordable housing.

b) It was noted that the Business Improvement District Bid had been successful.

c) i) The recommended grants to Black Mountain Jazz (£2500), Toy Fair (£850), ADTA (£3000) were agreed and the agreement in principle to Friends of Castle Meadows was also agreed.

It was also agreed to not reclaim VAT on goods ordered by grant recipients.

c) ii) County Services Support

The Clerk outlined discussions that he had undertaken with BBNP and Monmouthshire CC Officers to try to establish facts to assist members to reach decisions on funding of County Services for the coming year.

It was agreed that a manual street sweeper should be funded for the coming year by adding £14000 to the existing £11000 for a Litter Picker, with the Litter Picking being taken up by Keep Abergavenny Tidy Volunteers.

It was agreed that no additional funding should be made to the Museums Service to extend opening hours as the Council is only looking at retaining existing services, not extending them.

As regards the Tourist Information Centre, The Clerk had met the officers that afternoon and the figures now available were much more accurate. The costs of maintaining a TIC in the Tithe Barn would be some £39000 for staff and services, with the possibility of some income from sale of souvenirs and commission on bookings. This was less certain as the change of venue would impact on that.

A detailed discussion ensued in which it became clear that members were supportive of retaining a TIC Service in Abergavenny but were not prepared to consider support at the levels outlined in the Clerk's report. It was noted that we should not be "taking on" services but considering "support".

Concern was expressed about transfer of staff and the commitment that would bring, but it was made clear that was not necessary if support was to be given rather than taking on the service. Reference was made to the County Leader's statements about not closing any services and the impact that could have.

(Cllr Chiplin arrived at this point)

It was suggested that we need to fix a budget which contains some uncertainty so that we are in a position to cover what the County drops.

It was noted that many organisations in town have their own websites and the TIC is in a position to link things together. Organisations could apply to us for capital which might enable us to fill the shortfall. It was proposed and seconded that a precept of £232207 be made including £24000 for street sweeping (£14000) and TIC (£10000)

Cllr Tatam requested a recorded vote and an amendment that a precept of £262207 be made. This was seconded by Cllr Toombs.

On being put to the vote Cllrs Tatam, Toombs and Edwards voted for the amendment and Cllrs C Woodhouse, Mrs M Harris, Mrs M Powell, M Chiplin, M Hickman, P Jordan, S Dodd, J Prosser, P Wadsworth and Mrs S Woodhouse voted against it.

The amendment was therefore lost.

The motion that a precept of £232207 be made was put to the vote and Cllrs C Woodhouse, Mrs M Harris, Mrs M Powell, M Hickman, M Chiplin, D Edwards, P Jordan, S Dodd, J Prosser, P Wadsworth and Mrs S Woodhouse voted for it. Cllr Tatam voted against it and Cllr Toombs abstained from voting.

It was therefore agreed to have a precept of £232207 for the coming year.

1508. Finance Report.

a) The following payments were authorised:

Monmouthshire CC Summer Playscheme	£8000.00
Information Commissioner	£350.00
G M James salary	£227.24
HMRC Tax and NI	£628.82
Cablenews Library Papers	£98.60
Monmouthshire CC CCTV	£3200.00
Information Commissioner (one further Councillor)	£35.00
I-Deal Design (Toy Fair)	£260.00
Monmouthshire CC (Annual Litter Picker Cost)	£11,213.97
NR & CA Bailey (Civic functions)	£127.85
Viking Payments (stationery)	£43.16
Abergavenny/Ostringen Twinning Association	£250.00
P Johns expenses	£89.82
Wales in Bloom subscription	£110.00
Abergavenny Food Festival grant	£2000.00
Merlin Waste dog bins	£298.32

b) The Monthly Budget Reports for month 10 were received and noted

1509 Correspondence.

1. Vivre a Beaupreau (Twin Town News) Noted. A query as to whether the Beaupreau Twinning visit in August is an official visit was raised. It is not official at present.
2. The Voice. Noted
3. Grass Routes RHS Community Update. Noted
4. One Voice Wales Area Committee 16 January. Noted
5. One Voice Wales Larger Local Councils Committee 22 January. Noted
6. Clerks and Councils Direct. Noted
7. Road Closure Order Llanfoist Bridge. Signage may be needed at Llanfoist to divert traffic

onto the A465 if the bridge is closed during floods at Llanellen.

8. Monmouthshire County CAB News. Noted
9. Managing our Public Highways Discussion Paper. It was agreed that the Business Club should receive this for comment.. It would also be referred to Projects for discussion.
10. Letter concerning ACE Partnership. It was agreed to nominate Cllr R Harris as representative at ACE Partnership.
11. Audit Fees for 2014. The reduction in fees was noted.

1510. Reports

- a) Abergavenny in Bloom notes were received.
- b) North Monmouthshire Liaison Committee notes were received.
- c) Great War Notes were received. It was agreed to ensure that the possibility of refurbishment and straightening of the Mons Memorial were progressed. Cllr Prosser will liaise with Mr Prys Williams about this. He also asked if anyone had any more commemorative events to publicise.
- d) Town Team notes were received and noted

1511. Agenda Items

- a) To elect a Mayor for 2014/15

Cllr Prosser proposed Cllr Martin Hickman to be Mayor for the coming year. He is a member with integrity and experience and in his last period as Mayor he had raised record sums for charity. Cllr Hickman was seconded by Cllr Wadsworth. On being put to the vote the proposal was carried with one abstention. Cllr Edwards congratulated Cllr Hickman upon his nomination.

1512. Questions to County Councillors. No questions were forthcoming but Cllr C Woodhouse complimented the County Council members present for their commitment, particularly during the difficult times being experienced now.

1513. Members reports.

Cllr Tatam had attended One Voice Wales Meetings, Brecon Beacons National Park Meetings and Town Team Meetings.

Cllr Wadsworth had attended governors meetings.

Cllr Prosser had attended Beaupreau Twinning AGM and dealt with issues in St Mary's Car Park.

Cllr Chiplin had attended Governors Meetings

Cllr Powell had attended A4B Dinner and Meeting and attended to a flooding issue at Ysybytty Fields

Cllr C Woodhouse had attended governors meeting and Consort Duries.

The Mayor had attended the A4B Dinner, Holocaust Memorial Service, Mayors Charity Coffee Morning, Rareseed Theatre, Rotary Speaks Competition, and the Beaupreau Twinning AGM.

She also made members aware of upcoming coffee mornings for Alzheimers and Breast Cancer Awareness and announced her Charity Ball on 29 March.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8:35pm.