

## **ABERGAVENTNY TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 8 October 2014 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Abergavenny.**

Present: Cllr M J Hickman JP, Mayor,

Cllrs Mrs M Powell, D Edwards, R P Jordan Ms S Dodd, J L Prosser, P Wadsworth and N Tatam.

In attendance: The Town Clerk, Mr S Penn and Ms K Skellon (Press) , Mr M Prys Williams for the first item and Mr S Horrell.

The Mayor welcomed Mr Prys Williams who had asked to address the Council.

He explained that he had come to talk about the War Memorial. It had last been cleaned in 2005 and that had been funded by the Town Council and County Council. In 1921 5 towns had subscribed to it and it is now clear that Monmouthshire CC are responsible for it. It is insured by them.

The memorial is leaning and he is seeking grant money to have the lean corrected and to have the memorial cleaned again. The Government has set aside a large sum for renovation of memorials , which is one potential source. The application for grant money is being made through the Civic Society.

Cllr Edwards noted that as it is an asset on the MCC Register, they should be prepared to make a contribution. Cllr Prosser as Armed Forces Champion for Monmouthshire supported Mr Prys Williams` work and said he was compiling a list of the memorials in Monmouthshire. He felt the Town Council should also support this work

The estimated cost is in the region of £15,000.

The Mayor wished Mr Prys Williams well and said the Council offers its support for the project.

Mr Prys Williams left the meeting at this point.

1608. Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs C Woodhouse, Mrs S Woodhouse, R Harris, Mrs M Harris, Miss M Toombs.

1609. Declarations of interest would be made as and when necessary.

1610. The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10 September 2014 were received and adopted as a correct record.

1611. Matters arising.

The Clerk had not yet followed up the acquisition of a Commonwealth Flag.

It is understood that the parking restrictions outside Boots will be in place any day now.

It was noted that the burnt-out shop has been sold to a local person so it was hoped this would mean some improvement soon.

Cllr Dodd noted that another TIC meeting would take place next Wednesday.

1612. The following minutes were received and adopted as a correct record:

a) Planning Committee held on 10 September.

b) Projects Committee held on 18 September. Members were encouraged that the Carnival appears to have more support from a new team.

c) Town Clerk Advisory Committee held on 29 September. It was agreed to adopt the recommendation concerning the payments to the Mace-Bearer and Deputy.

d) Artefacts Committee held on 29 September. The meeting has started things moving and another meeting will be needed soon to follow up.

#### 1613. Finance Report

a) The following payments were authorised:

St John Cymru Wales (Carnival)	376.32
Jems Catering (Friends Buffet)	50.00
Ricoh Uk Photocopying	56.41
Acorn Centre grant	1500.00
G M James salary	227.24
HMRC Tax and NI	670.18
M Hickman (Civic Functions)	36.00
Mazars LLP External Audit	780.00
Cablenews	103.20
St Michael's Centre Towns Alive Meeting	45.00
One Voice Wales training course (Clerk)	25.00
P Johns expenses	101.74
Frances Baines (Mural)	5650.00
NR and CA Bailey (Civic functions)	30.46
Merlin Waste (Dog Bins)	298.32

b) The Month 6 Financial Reports were received. The Clerk noted that Finance Committee had not met this month so some of the detailed issues for discussion were still outstanding and would be considered at next month's meeting.

Cllr Edwards asked Finance Committee to consider whether the Council should be developing an investment policy.

#### 1614. Correspondence.

The following items were considered:

1. Food Festival Letter. Received

2. Shelter Letter. Received

3. Audit Letter. Received

4. Notice of a meeting with the Police Commissioner on 6 November at Tredomen was received. It

was agreed that the Mayor or Deputy Mayor should accompany the Clerk to the meeting..

5. A note on dealing with members` interests was received from One Voice Wales. After some debate the Clerk was asked to check with the Monitoring Officer for his views and in particular what constituted a member`s interest which would need to be made public.

#### 1615 Reports

a) Town Team Notes from 1 October were considered. It was noted that the Gwent Theatre is under threat and members were asking what the Town Council ca do about it. There was discussion on this issue and it as agreed that we should ask Gwent Theatre to attend a Projects Committee meeting with the Whole Place Officer. Cllr Edwards would try to make contact with them and Cllr Powell would speak to Ian Saunders about the matter.

b) Monmouthshire Clerks Meeting.

Cllr Prosser will ask Debbie McCarty what is happening about all the concerns raised at the meeting. Some of them are shared by County Councillors. Cllr Edwards will take the report to Cllr Blakeborough, Chair of the Democratic Services Committee if the Clerk can send it to him electronically.

c) CCTV Meeting.

Cllr Wadsworth reported that the system is working well in Abergavenny. The budget for next year is the current big issue

#### 1616. Agenda Items.

a) Vacancies.

The Clerk reported that the Castle Ward vacancy had not caused a petition for an election within the due time, and on Friday we will know if the Priory vacancy will have a petition or not. If members agree, he will prepare a Press article to publicise the vacancies and to ask anyone interested in becoming a Councillor to respond to him by a specific date which would allow the candidates to be interviewed by Council at their next meeting. If the second vacancy does not have an election, this course of action was agreed. If it does, the invitation to apply will only apply to the one vacancy. Members agreed that this course of action was acceptable.

#### 1617. Questions to County Councillors.

Cllr Wadsworth asked County Councillors present how they had viewed the session at the Leisure Centre on Monday when the Public had been invited to express views about the budget situation. He expressed a personal view that the salaries bill for the County is the main area to be considered when making cuts. County members said that this had already been cut drastically in the last three years, and although it may be capable of further reductions, it is less than adjoining Councils. Cllr Edwards noted that the Town Council may have to take on more areas and that £1per annum on the Council tax per household would raise £4500 towards service costs. Cllr Jordan felt it was difficult for members of the public to come up with savings ideas as they did not have enough detail available to them. Cllr Prosser said it was an opportunity to engage and the debate had started.

#### 1618. Members Reports

Cllr Tatam had attended the Mayor`s reception for Friends Groups, MCC Roadshow, Town Team, One Voice Wales AGM and the MCC Budget session. He referred to information from the One Voice Wales meeting concerning devolution of services being carried out in Cornwall. A system in

England provided listed assets for Councils and if they proposed to sell them off local groups could intervene to try to retain them within six months. Some Cornish Towns had raised their precepts by 80% to take on services.

Cllr Wadsworth had attended the CSAT Meeting, Governors and the MCC Budget meeting.

Cllr Prosser had attended the Friends Reception, a Canal reception for French visitors, the Mayor's Coffee morning, Business against Crime Meeting, which was very heartening as positive cooperation between shop-keepers and the police was improving. PCSO Amanda Yung could do a presentation to Council in due course.

Cllr Dodd had attended the Friends Reception, ADTA Meeting, (Their AGM is on 28 October and anyone who wishes to go should let them know for catering reasons), an Open Evening at KHS where she had met the new Head and the Events Committee.

Cllr Jordan had attended the MCC Budget meeting and KHS Governors.

Cllr Edards had attended the MCC Budget meeting, the Friends Reception and the Bryn y Cwm Area Committee as well as a Police Surgery

Cllr Powell had attended the Wales in Bloom Award where we received an award, Clytha Park for the Mayor to a Growing Spaces Day, Mayor's Coffee morning, a meeting with Inspector Sarah Taylor and other Community Chairs/Mayors and a Business against Crime meeting.

The Mayor had attended 20 engagements including the Friends reception, Canal visit, Opening the Pigs Models, Food Festival, Cordell Country evening, Filipino reception, 3Rd Mons Talk, Hand-over of the mural, Christmas Cards at St Mary's.

1618. Cllr Dodd will attend the BID Group on behalf of the Council. The Clerk will brief her on the situation so far.

1619. The Clerk was requested to clarify the duties of the Council-sponsored Road Sweeper to be submitted to Finance for consideration.

The meeting ended at 8:35pm