

ABERGAVENNY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 9 December 2015 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Abergavenny.

Present: Cllr Mrs M Powell (Mayor)

Cllrs R Harris, Mrs M Harris, M J Hickman, Miss M Toombs, Ms S Dodd, J L Prosser, D Simcock and N Tatam

In Attendance: Mr D Haswell and Mr P Brown for the first part of the meeting and the Town Clerk

The Mayor welcomed Mr Haswell and Mr Brown to the meeting and invited them to make their presentation. Mr Haswell noted that the budget for the proposed road scheme had been increased significantly from £0.5M to £1.05M, and this made quite a difference to what could be achieved in terms of quality. Additional priorities could be identified to make the best of the scheme.

He noted that the proposed scheme had advanced significantly since the original proposal and he had been made aware only this evening of further improvements to the scheme. He and Mr Brown applauded those improvements but still felt that more should be done. He referred to the need for a detailed schedule of works to avoid excessive additional costs in the course of the contract, and emphasised how important it is to get the scheme right before the contract is signed.

He and Mr Brown then referred to 4 activity zones each with different problems. The proposal for St Johns Square had been significantly improved since the first scheme draft but there were still a few questions to answer. They queried whether Nevill Street and High Street should be reconstructed as if they are vehicular streets when really they are largely pedestrian areas, and they expressed concern that the area of Lion Street and Frogmore Street included in the scheme needed clarity as to how the mix of vehicles and pedestrians would be achieved. They emphasised the need for more detail to clarify exactly what is to happen. They would prefer if tarmac of any colour is to be used that it is broken up and not continuous. Street furniture still needs to be specified and a competent landscape architect needs to be engaged to deal with that. They noted that £30,000 was to be allocated to the Town Team and suggested that this could be used to pay for such services.

At the end of the presentation the Mayor thanked the two gentlemen for making their presentation. There was to be a meeting at 10am on Thursday which would discuss much of this detail, and the Council would express its views once questions had been asked there. They left the meeting at this point

1766. Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs S Woodhouse, C Woodhouse, S Horrell, P Jordan, M Beecham and D Edwards.

1767. Declarations of interest will be made as and when necessary. The Town Clerk drew members' attention to the new procedure for completing a form to indicate interests arising during the meeting. After some discussion it was agreed to see if he could get some advice on how much detail is needed to be recorded.

1768. The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 11 November 2015 were received and adopted as a correct record.

1769. There were no matters arising.

1770. The Minutes of the following Committees were received and adopted as a correct record:

a) Planning Committee held on 9 November. It was noted that the BBNP application for watercourse work at Dummar Farm had been withdrawn. Cllr Prosser had met with a resident affected by the application for flats on Hereford Rd and he would arrange for those concerns to be voiced at the County Planning Committee on 5 January.

b) Projects Committee held on 25 November 2015

Cllr Prosser queried who would be leading on the Carnival Group - that had not yet been decided.

It was agreed to reschedule Projects Meetings for February and March, bringing them forward one day in each case, subject to room availability.

It was noted that the February and March Projects Committee Dates clashed with County Council meetings. It was agreed to try to reschedule them for the previous day in each case.

c) Town Clerk's Advisory Committee held on 25 November.

A question was raised about use of the rolling display in the Town Hall window. After discussion it was agreed that the Town Clerk would report back on this.

d) Finance Committee held on 2 December. It was agreed that:

1. That a sum of £5000 be set aside for next year's Cycling Festival

2. That up to £1000 be granted to the 7 Corners Youth Festival so long as they get the remaining money by other grant applications, and subject to it being identified to be spent on specific items.

3. That 3 Concerts be held next summer, details to be resolved early in the new year. there was discussion on whether the concerts should be linked with other events to add value or whether they should stand alone.

4. No further action should be taken on the draft budget at this stage.

5. The Finance Reports for November were received and noted. The Clerk was asked to establish whether the CCTV is now operational again in the Town Centre.

6. The update on the Highway works be noted.

7. The Town Clerk explained he had overlooked a request for the usual funding for an A4B award of £500 which had been received. Members agreed to support A4B as in previous years with a grant of £500 for the award.

1771. Finance Report.

a) The following payments were authorised:

S Horrell Communications Allowance

100.00

G M James salary	206.58
R Fury Christmas Trees Payment	543.20
M Herring Christmas tree lights payment	448.80
G Harris Mace-Bearer	1040.00
HMRC Tax and NI	1141.52
M Knight honorarium	450.00
SLCC Annual Subscription	187.00
Monmouthshire CC Summer Playscheme	8000.00
Monmouthshire CC Work on Fairfield verge	60.00
Andrew Jones PAT Test Christmas Lights	422.00
Merlin Waste Dog Bins	325.44
Cablenews Library Papers	42.00
P Johns Expenses	76.52
Kings Head Hotel Christmas meal	573.75
Monmouthshire CC Credit over-payment	2144.69

b) The Month 8 Finance Reports were received and noted

1772. Reports

a) Team Abergavenny update was received and noted.

b) The Town Clerk noted that following the meeting with County Council at Usk there had been a suggestion that Community and Town Councils should act in clusters around the towns. Given that the North Monmouthshire Liaison Committee was not due to meet until late January, and as we host the next meeting, he had written to the other Clerks asking if there was any enthusiasm for an earlier meeting to discuss this option.

1773. Agenda Items

a) Public Realm Discussion.

Members considered the situation regarding the proposed street works in the Town Centre. There was support for a better layout in St John`s Square, and discussion about the tarmac finish proposed in High Street. It was agreed that issues could be raised at the Public Realm meeting on the following morning, but it was generally agreed that there should be no delay in getting the work done. The point was made that shop-keepers had not been kept informed of what was happening with the road works, and it was suggested that if they had concerns they should invite County Officers to a meeting to talk about them.

1774. Questions to County Councillors.

On the issue of what is happening about the Abergavenny Hub, it was agreed that the Mayor would ask, but the Town Clerk should also write on behalf of the Town Council.

1775. Members Reports

Cllr Mrs Harris had attended CCTV Meeting and Governors Meetings

Cllr Hickman had attended the Christmas Lights switch-on, a meeting on the Hill Development, Fair Trade Meeting where the 5 March breakfast was discussed. Members are all invited.

Cllr Toombs had attended the Abergavenny Relief in Need Charity and a Youth Council Meeting at which no young people had turned up. They would try again using a different tack.

Cllr Dodd had attended a BID de-brief. It was hoped to set up regular meetings in the new year to get things going again. She also attended the Christmas Lights

Cllr Simcock had attended the Christmas Lights, Youth Council and the Mayor's Christmas Dinner.

Cllr Tatam had attended the MCC Budget Meeting at King Henry School, One Voice Wales Training on Devolution of services, the Hill development meeting and Team Abergavenny

The Mayor had attended Monmouth Male Voice Choir at OLSM, Green Flag Award for Castle Meadows and North Street Church Tea, Gwent Music Concert at St Mary's, Christmas Lights, Abergavenny Symphony Orchestra, Borough Band Dinner, Light up a Life Service, Abergavenny Brownies Raffle, Phoenix Singers Carol Concert at Govilon, St John's Carol Service at St Mary's Church, Elvis Concert, Churches multi-faith Concert at Gateway Church, Town Council Christmas Dinner and Action 50+ Tea Party.

1776. Any Other Business

Cllr Dodd suggested that as it was barely dark at 4:30pm, it might be better to put back the lights switch-on to 5pm from 4:30pm. It was noted that Mr Matt Lane had asked to be able to provide the disco again next year.

The meeting ended at 8:33pm