

ABERGAVENNY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 9 July 2014 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Abergavenny.

Present: The Mayor, Cllr M Hickman.

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

In attendance: Mr S Penn (Press) and The Town Clerk's Assistant.

1584. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr M Chiplin and Ms M Toombs.

1585. Declarations of interest to be made as and when necessary.

1586. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 11 June 2014 were received and adopted as a correct record subject to amending a minor typographical error (Item 1574 to/too).

1587. Matters arising.

Cllr Edwards questioned the position in relation to the Tudor Street Day Centre. Several Members reported they had attended one of the Open Days and stated the situation seems to be improving with the Centre engaging well with the local community. Whilst there are some remaining concerns these are being addressed. It was interesting to note parents are happy with how things are progressing. It was suggested the Council wish them well and keep a watching brief.

Cllr R Harris reported he had yet to get to Mardy Park. The Mayor had visited recently and reported there are plans to insert mezzanine flooring and offices. Cllr Prosser had also visited noting the use of an "idea tree" as a method of gathering suggestions for the centre.

Prior to submitting her report Cllr Dodd warned it may not be completely up-to-date as the centre manager has been on holiday.

Cllr Dodd reported that despite an email from Kelly Beirne stating the TIC is open Sundays this is not the case. Additional staff need to be employed before this can be achieved, however these vacancies have yet to be advertised and given the time necessary to complete the recruitment process, and to reach agreement with the Tithe Barn, it is felt unlikely the TIC will be able to open Sundays for quite some time.

Cllr Dodd also reported the TIC would like to organise (and fund) an official launch on the 29th July in order to promote the new location and make people aware of who they are, as well as to recognise the service of the retired staff. The Tithe Barn Board however has questioned the appropriateness of such a launch stating the centre had now been opened for three months. Cllr Dodd reported the TIC has in fact only been in its new location for six weeks and proposed the Council write to The Board to support of the launch and show how important it is. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Edwards and duly carried. Cllr Prosser offered support and will chase up the removal of old signs. Cllr Edwards noted the Council is trying to promote Abergavenny as a tourist town and suggested the Council write to Kellie Beirne to express its displeasure with the present situation. Cllr Jordan proposed MCC be asked to arrange for a member of its staff (from the Tourism Department) to work Sundays at the TIC until a permanent staff member had been secured. This was seconded by Cllr Dodd and duly carried (*Cllr S Woodhouse declared an interest in this matter and abstained from voting*).

Cllr S Woodhouse reported she had declined a meeting with MCC (Will McLean) due to holidays. She is currently awaiting an alternative date.

Cllr S Woodhouse noted the internal audit information was not on the agenda for the last Finance Meeting and asked for it to be placed on the next.

It was agreed The Mayor and Cllr Edwards will liaise and agree a date for The Town Clerk's appraisal.

1588. The following minutes were received and adopted as a correct record:

- a) Planning Committee on 11 June 2014 subject to removing Cllr Powell's name from the list of those present. Cllr Harris asked if in future his declaration of interest could be recorded and it is noted he took no part in proceedings.
- b) Finance Committee on 2 July 2014. The minutes were adopted as a correct record subject to the day being amended to Wednesday and it is recorded that the grant guidance form is to be circulated.

1589. Matters arising.

1. The following recommendations of the Finance Committee were reported:

(a) Grant Application from Acorn Voluntary Management Committee: several questions remain unanswered for example where will other funding be secured; have they considered using other kitchens. Concerns were also voiced as to the viability of the scheme. Cllr S Woodhouse proposed the applicant be invited to the next Finance Meeting. This was seconded by The Mayor and duly agreed.

(b) It was suggested grant guidance forms be reviewed to reflect the view that the maximum grant (£5,000) may no longer be sustainable. This will be placed on the agenda for the next Finance Meeting.

(c) It was recommended the A4B application is supported in line with the grant given last year. Cllr S Woodhouse proposed £500 be awarded. This was seconded by Cllr Edwards and duly agreed (*Cllrs Wadsworth and Dodd declared an interest and abstained from voting*).

2. Cllr S Woodhouse suggested it may be useful for all Councillors to be invited to finance, particularly as in future, money may need to be used in different ways to support essential services. Cllr Prosser suggested Projects and Finance be amalgamated, whilst other Members recalled this had been tried unsuccessfully last year. Discussions ensued with Cllr Harris noting if all Members were on the Finance Committee there would have to be a minimum of five members present for the meeting to remain quorate. Cllr Edwards emphasised the reason for a small compact finance meeting with keen/enthusiastic people with financial knowledge was to ensure applications were treated efficiently and urged Members to seriously consider before increasing its size. Cllr Tatam noted (*having checked Standing Orders*) Members of the Finance Committee would not be able to call for a recorded vote and therefore he was not in favour. Cllr C Woodhouse reported if Members attended Finance they would be better informed to make decisions. The Mayor noted this suggestion would enable controversial matters to be dealt with more effectively. Following Cllr Prosser's previous suggestion Cllr C Woodhouse formally proposed Projects and Finance be merged. This was seconded by Cllr Dodd. As an amendment to the original proposal Cllr Jordan proposed the Council retain the status quo. This was seconded by Cllr Tatam. A vote was taken with 8 for and 5 votes against. It was therefore agreed to retain the status quo.

3. Due to time restraints the Finance Committee took the decision to place an advert in the Abergavenny Chronicle for the Band Concerts. Cllr Powell suggested this should apply for the whole set of concerts. This was seconded by Cllr Woodhouse and duly agreed. It was suggested the white boards at the entrance to the town could also be utilised to promote the concerts.

It was reported MCC are deep cleaning the Market Hall on the 13th July therefore an alternative venue will be required for the Newport Borough Band Concert should it rain. Enquiries are currently being made with Cibi Walk to determine whether it could be used, noting arrangements will then have to be put in place to redirect people from the Market Hall in these circumstances.

4. The July Projects meeting scheduled for the 17th July has been cancelled due to its clash with MCC's Eisteddfod Meeting.

5. It was noted attendance at the last band concert had been poor, possibly due to the variety of attractions being provided in Bailey Park. It was therefore suggested in future bands should not clash with cycling events. Cllr Prosser pointed out however that concerts could enhance the cycling event provided they were placed in the right place. It was suggested this matter be discussed by the Events Committee in a meeting early next year. This was proposed by Cllr Edwards, seconded by Cllr C Woodhouse and duly agreed.

1590. Finance Report.

a) The following payments were approved:

Lisa Tippings (Eisteddfod Judge)	65.00
Albany Jones (Eisteddfod Judge)	65.00
Ricoh UK (Photocopying rental)	40.76
Jems Catering (two buffets)	125.00
The Circus People Ltd (Carnival performers)	585.00
Ricoh UK (photocopying charges)	44.48
HMRC Tax and NI	568.98
G M James salary	176.72
That`s Lovely That (Window prize)	250.00
Goodies (Window prize)	150.00
Cuddle and Cwtch (Window prize)	100.00
Abergavenny Borough Band (Concert)	300.00
S B Bees (Internal Audit fee)	1150.00
Peter Johnson Entertainment (Carnival)	1045.00
Rhymney Coronets (Carnival)	200.00
P Johns (Expenses)	66.60
Cablenews	129.00
Honeycomb Print services (Civic Sunday Booklets)	85.00
L Hywel (to replace previous chq made out to "That's Lovely That")	250.00
Jivoholics (Band Concert)	300.00
Fusion (Carnival)	250.00

b) Month 3 Finance Report was received and approved. It was noted travelling expenses were entered under office expenses and suggested the Clerk look into creating a separate heading. It was also suggested an entry for 4300 (Carnival) was under the wrong heading and should be amended.

c) Cllr C Woodhouse questioned the amount spent on newspapers and asked the Clerk to enquire which newspapers are read and which are not. It was suggested the Council consider annual subscriptions which may prove more cost efficient. Cllr Jordan proposed enquiries are made with the library as to which papers are needed. This was seconded by Cllr Edwards and duly agreed.

1591. Correspondence. The following items were received:

1. Ombudsman Report. Noted.
2. Commonwealth Flag. Cllr Tatam expressed reservations as to the origins of this however it was noted it was sent from OVW. It was suggested the Council may wish to raise a flag on the town hall on the 9th March 2015.
3. Monmouthshire Volunteer Achievement Awards Nomination Form: Forward nominations to Clerk.
4. GAVO Funding Bulletin: Noted.

5. The Clerk Magazine. Noted.
6. One Voice Wales Chief Executives Report /Nomination Form for Chair of Monmouth & Newport Area committee – AGM 10th July: Noted.

1592. Reports.

a) Town Team Minutes of 18 June were received. It was noted matters were progressing albeit slowly. Cllrs Dodd reported the Ambassador Training she received was informative and beneficial. This was agreed by Cllr S Woodhouse who reported Ambassadors were asked to help out during the cycling festival.

b) Cllr S Woodhouse reported the Thrombosis and General Research Dept at Nevill Hall Hospital proposes holding some memorial lectures. They would like to invite Councillors to forward suggestions for topics now whilst they are in the planning stage. Councillors were invited to submit any ideas to Cllr S Woodhouse.

1593. Questions to County Councillors.

Cllr C Woodhouse noted the County Council's policy of sewing wild seeds on roundabouts was proving effective and looking good. He asked if MCC could look at parks and public spaces with particular reference to Bailey Park. Cllr Dodd reiterated this view stating all the bedding areas in Linda Vista look beautiful. It was questioned whether the County Council could look at addressing the difference between these parks. It was noted The Friends of Bailey Park created a sensory garden however this suffered from vandalism and bulbs planted were churned up and destroyed as a result of the wet weather experienced during the Steam Rally. Cllr Prosser applauded The Friends for the work they do, which is ongoing with finance grim. He reiterated the need for more volunteers.

1594. Members Reports.

The Mayor reported at the Rotary Handover Event he recently attended Mr Anthony Davies offered to donate a model steam engine to Bailey Park. The Mayor also reported John Griffiths and his team have worked hard to clean and upgrade Llanfoist Chapel. They are holding an Open Morning on Tuesday 22nd July (10-2pm) and hope to formulate a "Friends of the Chapel" Association to take it over. Cllr Edwards reported the work was done on a voluntary basis and the team should be commended.

Cllr Jordan reported he recently attended a Governors Meeting at King Henry VIII School which proved inquorate. He expressed frustration at the poor attendance of parent governors which meant no decisions could be made despite a very long agenda.

Cllr Edwards reported he is now Chairman of Bryn-y-Cwm Area Committee with The Mayor elected Vice Chair. He reported the School Sports are continuing (despite the scheduled strike) suggesting Councillors attend around 12 o'clock. Certificates are presented circa 1.30pm. He also stated the school's production of Phantom of the Opera was outstanding and showed considerable talent. He is hopeful Castle Meadows is to get a Green Flag Award.

Cllr Tatam reported attending a Town Team meeting, One Voice Wales, Elvis Concert and Mick Knight's celebration.

Cllr Harries attended the Civic Society's visit to Cirencester, the Mayor's Charity Concert.

Cllr Wadsworth attended three governors meetings.

Cllr Prosser reported attending a multitude of meetings – including Ad Pack, nuisance in Fairfield Car Park, Retail Business Against Crime Committee.

Cllr Dodd attended the BID workshop, Tourist Association, Festival of Cycling and proposed the Council write to congratulate Mr Bill Owen, Louise McGuinness (Adventa) and Ian Saunders (MCC). The window display competition was well supported. Carnival and Traders Race was also very well supported. She also attended the Improve your Visitor Experience (promoting food experience in

Abergavenny) and digital tourism and the Mayor's Charity Concert.

Cllr S Woodhouse reported attending the Open Day at Tudor St, Bailey Court Summer Fayre, Cycling Weekend, Armed Forces Parade, Jivoholics, Mayor's Charity Concert and Primary School Sports.

Cllr Edwards attended the seminar for BID for local traders and expressed disappointment he had missed so much due to his holidays.

Cllr Powell attended the Philippine Day, Borough Band, A4B meeting, Retail against Crime, assisted the Mayor judging the windows, deputised for the Mayor at the Abergavenny Symphony Orchestra, Cycling weekend, Elvis Concert and Shire Horse Show on behalf of the Mayor and MCC.

Cllr M Harris attended the cycling noting the view of Monmouthshire televised was outstanding and can do nothing but good for our county and reported the events in Bailey Park were wonderful. She also attended the Mayor's Concert and the Armed Forces Parade. Cllr R Harris reiterated the above.

Cllr C Woodhouse attended Governors meeting and digital communication/food fest visitor's experience.

The Mayor attended over 30 functions including the Area Dean Installation Service, Philippine Independence Day, Monmouthshire Scouts event, Welsh Dancing, Eisteddfod, Armed Forces Parade, Alzheimer's Carers Group, Pandy Show, Gwent Bach Society Concert, Mayzmusik, Rotary handover to name a few.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 8.25 pm