

MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

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**DRAFT Minutes of the
Meeting of Full Council
held on Monday 26th July 2021 at 7.00pm
via BT Telephone Conference Call**

Present: Cllr C Blair (*late arrival*) Cllr E Bryn (*left early*)
Cllr T Christopher (**Mayor**) Cllr A Dewhurst (**Deputy Mayor**)
Cllr M Feakins Cllr K Jackson-Graham (*late arrival*)
Cllr S Jones Cllr A Legg
Cllr J Lucas (*left early*) Cllr R Roden
Cllr R Smith Cllr J Treharne (*left early*)
Cllr S White

**P Morgan (Town Clerk & RFO)
C Williams (Administration Officer)**

**M Edgson (Monmouthshire County Citizens Advice)
Mr R Hoggins (Monmouthshire County Council)
Sgt S Atkinson (Gwent Police)**

6 Members of the press and public

051/FC/22	To receive apologies for absence. Apologies for non-attendance were received from Cllrs K Breeze, J Gunter and R Jupp. Apologies for late attendance were received from Cllrs C Blair and K Jackson-Graham.
051/FC/23	To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda. No declarations of interest were received.
051/FC/24	Public Participation To receive questions from members of the public for a maximum of 10 minutes. (During this time of remote meetings any members of public who wish to speak/ask a question must email their request in by the Friday prior to the meeting.) <i>It was resolved to suspend Standing Orders to enable public input at the meeting.</i> A member of the public spoke in respect of the situation in Monnow Street. She acknowledged the reasons for the changed environment in Monnow Street (due to Covid-19 challenges). However, she detailed the difficulties faced by pedestrians and motorists in the town centre (particularly the elderly and disabled). She specifically mentioned the congestion caused by flower box siting, additional street seating areas, the loading bay outside the Iceland store and bus stop opposite the bay. There was also concern about whether emergency vehicles could make

	<p>their way through pinch points.</p> <p>The member of the public posed 3 main questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Are the changes actually part of a trial on area layout? b. Will there be further consultation on the layout? c. If the current layout is rejected by the public, will it be changed/reverted back? <p>The member of the public agreed to the Chair's request of seeking answers these to questions as part of the Monnow Street agenda item.</p>
051/FC/25	<p>Citizens Advice Briefing</p> <p>To welcome a representative from Citizen's Advice and to receive a briefing.</p> <p>The Chief Executive of Monmouthshire County Citizens Advice (CA), Mal Edgson, thanked the Town for its invaluable support. He then went on to provide a brief overview of recent organisation activity.</p> <p>He stated that the pandemic had meant an extraordinary 12 to 18 months for all and that CA had moved quickly to undertaking predominantly telephone consultations. A limited number of face-to-face consultations had still been undertaken in that period for those individuals who could not effectively access telephone consultations. They had also started providing email advice and support. To facilitate telephone interaction a free phone number had been introduced and processes put in place to divert calls to other geographic areas if an advisor was not available in Monmouth.</p> <p>In the 12 months to 12th June 2021:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. 1,592 people had been helped in Monmouthshire with over 5,000 issues. b. 188 people helped were from the Monmouth ward. c. 245 cases and nearly 700 issues were dealt with from Monmouth. <p>The predominant issue dealt with in Monmouth was problem debt. In the rest of Monmouthshire the main issue was welfare benefits. The Drybridge Ward was identified as the area with the highest prevalence of problem debt issues. Employment law issues (including those relating to pay and redundancy) were also becoming more common.</p> <p>During lockdown the furlough scheme, holds placed on allowance reviews, measures to curtail rent arrears action and payment holidays were thought to have reduced the number of such cases involving these matters. These were starting to come through.</p> <p>It was reiterated that Town Council funding had been crucial in maintaining operations and in allowing other funding to be sought. A 6-month contract for a full-time member of staff had been made possible and it was hoped that Department of Work and Pensions funding would be gained for another 6-month contract.</p> <p>Cllrs thanked CA on behalf of the people of Monmouth for all their hard work and asked for this to be passed on to staff. They also stated that the information provided was very useful. Mr Edgson agreed to discuss appropriate information reporting timeframes with the Town Clerk & RFO.</p>

051/FC/26	<p>Monnow Street (EB)</p> <p>To welcome Roger Hoggins from MCC and Police Sgt Samuel Atkinson to discuss:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The current lack of signage and the parking issues on Monnow Street b. The proposal that Highways, Civil Enforcement, Health and Safety, Chamber of Commerce and Town Councillors meet to discuss this matter in Monnow Street as soon as possible. <p>Firstly, Mr Hoggins responded to the earlier set questions. The work undertaken in Monnow Street was part of a trial funded by a Welsh Government Active Travel grant and consultation/surveys on the subject of the design of Monnow Street were to be undertaken which would inform future street design decisions.</p> <p>In conjunction with Sgt Atkinson of Gwent Police the situation in Monnow Street was further discussed with Cllrs. The main issues addressed were parking on Monnow Street, the widened pavements and the need for clearer road markings. The police have one constable and 4 CSOs (2 of which are new in post) in Monmouth. The Police only deal with parking issues when they constitute a danger to the public or are considered wilful obstruction. Other parking offences are the remit of civilian parking enforcement. It was suggested that the Town Council could fund additional parking enforcement personnel. It was reported that this could cause problems when these resources are occasionally allocated elsewhere but Mr Hoggins agreed to look into the feasibility of this suggestion.</p> <p><i>20:04 Cllr K Jackson-Graham joined the meeting</i> <i>20:07 Cllr C Blair joined the meeting</i></p> <p>It was resolved to arrange a meeting as soon as possible with Highways, Civil Enforcement, Health and Safety, Chamber of Commerce and Town Councillors to discuss the lack of signage and parking issues in Monnow Street.</p> <p>Mr Hoggins informed that signage and marking deficiencies may be addressed somewhat by work to be undertaken. Road marking work would be carried out this week or next if staffing and weather conditions are favourable. It was asked by Cllrs whether a checked junction box could be painted on the road above the main pinch point area at the top of town (to allow vehicles coming up the street to turn right unimpeded by cars waiting to go down the street). Mr Hoggins stated that he would look into the possibility of this work being included.</p> <p>Some of the metal plates on the floor that had been utilised in the new temporary layout were reported as having protruding corners. Mr Hoggins agreed to arrange a meeting to assess these potential trip hazards.</p> <p>It was noted by Cllrs that car park signage needed improving and possible additional car park areas should be provided. Mr Hoggins confirmed that he believed there were some discussions still being had about potential additional parking areas.</p> <p><i>It was resolved to reinstate Standing Orders at the meeting.</i></p> <p><i>Cllr Bryn left the meeting.</i></p>
051/FC/27	<p>Minutes for Approval</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To approve Full Council Minutes for the remote meetings held on 21st June

	<p>2021 and 28th June 2021.</p> <p>It was resolved to agree the Full Council minutes for the remote meetings held on 21st June 2021 and 28th June 2021 as a correct record with the amendment that the wording “Annual Meeting” be removed from the first page of the 21st June 2021 minutes.</p> <p>b. To approve Extraordinary Full Council Minutes for the remote meeting held on 13th July 2021.</p> <p>It was resolved to agree the Extraordinary Full Council Minutes for the remote meeting held on 13th July 2021 as a correct record.</p> <p>c. To approve Finance & Policy Minutes for the meeting held on 2nd March 2020.</p> <p>It was resolved to agree the Finance & Policy Minutes for the meeting held on 2nd March 2020 as a correct record.</p>
051/FC/28	<p>Committee Minutes</p> <p>To note the minutes of committee meetings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. People and Places held on 12th July 2021. b. Planning held on 22nd June 2021 and 6th July 2021. <p>It was resolved to note the People and Places minutes from the remote meeting held on 12th July 2021 and the Planning meetings held on 22nd June 2021 and 6th July 2021 as a correct record.</p>
051/FC/29	<p>Finance</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Payments To approve the invoices for payment and cashbook payments list from 28th June 2021 to date and any late payments. It was resolved to approve the invoices for payment, cashbook payments list from 28th June 2021 to date and late payments. b. Budgets To note the MTC budget reports to date. It was resolved to approve the MTC budget reports to date. c. Bank Reconciliations To consider and approve the bank reconciliations for all cashbooks for 30th June 2021. It was resolved to approve the bank reconciliations for all cashbooks for 30th June 2021. d. VAT Return To consider and approve the VAT Return for 1st Quarter 1st April to 30th June 2021.

	<p>It was resolved to approve the VAT Return for 1st Quarter 1st April to 30th June 2021.</p> <p>e. Receipts To note the receipts up to 16th July 2021.</p> <p>It was resolved to note the receipts up to 16th July 2021.</p>
051/FC/30	<p>Delegate Authority in Council Recess (TC)</p> <p>a. To delegate authority to the Town Clerk/RFO (or any other 2 officers as appropriate) in consultation with the Town Mayor/Deputy Mayor, to carry out any required business during the recess period. (All members will be kept informed.)</p> <p>It was resolved to approve delegated authority for the Town Clerk/RFO (or any other 2 officers as appropriate) in consultation with the Town Mayor/Deputy Mayor, to carry out any required business during the August 2021 recess period. (All members will be kept informed.)</p> <p>b. To note that existing delegated authority for expenditure will be utilised where appropriate.</p> <p>It was resolved to note that existing delegated authority for expenditure will be utilised where appropriate in the August 2021 recess period.</p> <p>c. To delegate authority to the Town Clerk and RFO (or any other 2 officers as appropriate) in conjunction with the Mayor/Deputy Mayor, as appropriate, to carry out any functions and decisions as necessary to continue with normal council functions and service provision.</p> <p>It was resolved to approve delegated authority for the Town Clerk and RFO (or any other 2 officers as appropriate) in conjunction with the Mayor/Deputy Mayor, as appropriate, to carry out any functions and decisions as necessary to continue with normal council functions and service provision during the August 2021 recess period.</p>
051/FC/31	<p>War Memorial Centenary Commemoration</p> <p>To discuss and agree a budget of up to £2,500 from General Reserves for the War Memorial Centenary Commemoration proposed to be held on Wednesday 6th October 2021. (TC)</p> <p>It was resolved to agree a budget of up to £2,500 from General Reserves for the War Memorial Centenary Commemoration proposed to be held on Wednesday 6th October 2021.</p>
051/FC/32	<p>Chamber of Commerce Networking Event</p> <p>To consider the offer from the Chamber of Commerce for Councillors to meet with local businesses as part of a networking event and to agree any actions arising from the same.</p> <p>It was resolved to delegate authority to the Town Clerk/RFO to liaise with the Monmouth Chamber of Commerce in setting up a networking event for Cllrs to meet with local businesses.</p>

051/FC/33	<p>Internal Auditor Informal Tender Process</p> <p>To note that requests for quotes have been sent out (with a return deadline of 2nd August 2021 stipulated) for the 3-year contract period of Internal Audit provision to allow subsequent Full Council appointment and to note that a formal tender process is not required for this level of expenditure.</p> <p>It was resolved to note the informal tender process action undertaken to date and quote return deadline.</p>
051/FC/34	<p>Budget Setting Timetable</p> <p>To consider the recommendation from the Finance & Policy Committee to form a Task & Finish Group to set a budget setting timetable or agree the proposed timetable prepared by the Town Clerk & RFO.</p> <p>It was stated that public consultation was key to the budget setting process and it was commented that it was envisaged that the proposed timetable could be followed with individual committee decisions drawing on public opinions where possible.</p> <p>It was resolved to agree and adopt the Town Clerk & RFO drafted budget setting timetable for the 2022/2023 budget.</p>
051/FC/35	<p>Allotments and Incredible Edible</p> <p>To discuss possible additional allotments and Incredible Edible arrangements and agree actions. (MF)</p> <p>It was noted that Cllr Feakins had previously asked other Cllrs to suggest sites for additional allotments and Incredible Edible but the only sites suggested were privately owned and were thus not realistically available. Vauxhall Fields was deemed suitable as it is predominantly flat and within walking distance from much of Monmouth.</p> <p>Issues were raised regarding the management and condition of the existing allotments at Two River Meadow. It was reported that some occupants of the allotment had not been able to tend them during lockdown. It was suggested that the Town Council might be better placed to manage the existing and any additional allotments/Incredible Edible site.</p> <p>It was then agreed to discuss any decisions in respect of this item in connection with the next item.</p> <p>Post Meeting Note: Working Groups information to be confirmed at September 2021 meeting.</p>
051/FC/36	<p>Vauxhall Fields</p> <p>To receive an update on the Vauxhall Fields and to agree any actions relating to the same. (MF)</p> <p>Cllr Feakins reiterated the perceived suitability of Vauxhall Fields for providing space for an additional 30 to 35 allotments and room for the Incredible Edible initiative.</p> <p>There was some concern that little information had been provided on this agenda item. It was stated that no additional information had been available to circulate before the meeting other than the information that no realistic alternatives to Vauxhall</p>

	<p>Fields had been put forward.</p> <p><i>Cllrs J Lucas and J Treharne left the meeting</i></p> <p>A named vote was requested.</p> <p>For – Cllrs Christopher, Feakins, Roden, Smith and White. Against – Cllrs Blair, Dewhurst, Jackson-Graham, Jones and Legg. Abstain – None.</p> <p>With 5 votes for and 5 votes against, the Mayor used his casting vote to vote for the proposal so the motion was carried:</p> <p>It was resolved that the Allotments & Incredible Edible and Vauxhall Fields Task and Finish Groups be amalgamated into one Task and Finish Group. <i>It was resolved to suspend Standing Order 3w to allow the meeting to continue after 9:00 pm.</i></p>
051/FC/37	<p>Climate Change Workshop (TC)</p> <p>a. Workshop Offer</p> <p>To consider and agree the Rotary Monmouth offer to arrange a workshop as part of the Monmouth Climate Festival to help the Council prioritise its activities towards mitigating the impact of Climate Change.</p> <p>It was resolved to accept the Rotary Monmouth offer to arrange a workshop as part of the Monmouth Climate Festival to help the Council prioritise its activities towards mitigating the impact of Climate Change.</p> <p>b. Attendance and Session Timing</p> <p>Should the above offer be accepted, to agree a date and time and specific Councillor attendance for the training session (a trainer is currently available on 21st or the 24th September 2021 in the evening or during the day).</p> <p>It was resolved to grant the Town Clerk & RFO delegated authority to contact Cllrs to ascertain the most pertinent session for the climate change workshop and make appropriate arrangements with Rotary Monmouth.</p>
051/FC/38	<p>Rowing Club Use of Town Field</p> <p>To consider and agree the Rowing Club use of the Town Field for the next 2 years:</p> <p>Autumn Head – Sunday 26th September 2021 Winter Head – Sunday 5th December 2021 Regatta – Saturday 28th/Sunday 29th May 2022 Autumn Head – Sunday 25th September 2022 Winter Head – Sunday 4th December 2022</p> <p>It was resolved to agree the Rowing Club use of the Town Field for 2021 and 2022 on the condition that they were to reinstate and repair if any damage is caused.</p>
051/FC/39	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next scheduled remote meeting will be the Full Council meeting on Monday 27th September 2021 at 7:00pm.</p>

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The meeting closed at 9:05 pm.