

Minutes of the ZOOM meeting of Montgomery Town Council held on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 7.15 pm.

**This meeting was recorded.**

Present: Cllr's H Andrew (Chairman) J Kibble (Deputy Chairman)  
M Mills, L Weaver, C Thomas, C Weston, W Beaven, O Lewis, G Stephenson.  
R Harper

**MINUTE 145 - Apologies**

Cllr D Jones – Work commitments

**MINUTE 146 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Weston – Community News Team

**MEMBERS of the public were invited to speak.**

**MINUTE 147 - CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. Cllr Andrew advised there would be a 10minute break at approximately 20.30 hours
2. Meeting was expected to finish at 22.15 hours
3. Relevant documents have been received could members be concise and to the point in discussions.
4. Local Resolution meeting will be Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February members were asked to respect the outcome.
5. Allotment item will be discussed if time allows, but if necessary, this item will be moved to February's meeting.

**MINUTE 148 – MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS**

26<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021

RESOLVED to approve both sets of minutes,

**MINUTE 149 – INFORMATION FROM THOE MINUTES**

- 137 - Communications have not been made re tree by the Post Office  
Town Clerk advised a neighbour close to the Post Office had agreed to place this tree outside of their property
- Issues regarding Broadband have still to be addressed.
- 106 – The Brades. Town Clerk requested to chase this again. New contact information will be provided by Cllr Kibble

**MINUTE 150 – REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

- Cllr Hayes – Owing to the Covid situation the County Council had reverted to business continuity, all except essential and covid related services are on hold. This could be why The Brades meetings have been suspended for the time being.
- Currently in-depth discussion is taking place on the County Council budget, Powys are in the top third of percentage increases for County Councils from Welsh Government.
- It is likely there will be an increase in Council Tax
- Cabinet member responsible for planning has been asked to introduce a protocol that includes material changes in planning applications are notified to consultees to allow them to update their comments.
- Cllr Hayes wrote an article in the Crier regarding unaccompanied child migrants and whether Powys would offer to house some of them. A Wales wide approach is being taken and Powys will be part of that.
- It is possible that Neuadd Maldwyn could be used as an extra care facility in the future offering many facilities if planning is agreed.

**MINUTE 151 – HIGHWAYS**

- Surface is breaking up on Station Road
- Caerhowel Bridge is being used as a dumping ground.
- Various drains are blocked in Montgomery
- A grit box has been provided for Mortimer Road

**MINUTE 152 – FINANCE**

All councillors had been provided with a list of invoices for payment.

BACS	R H Bunner – kitchen door lock	5.96
	Stannah Lifts – Maintenance	188.32
	PPL/PRS – Licence	111.72
	Andrew Evans – Hedge Cutting	192.00
	Gaskells – Waste	28.55
	Hafren Cleaning Services	621.00
	HMRC – Tax	43.40
	Audit Wales – Completion of Audit	357.75
	Salaries	684.10
	G17 – Firmware update	35.00
	G Smith – Expenses	132.30
	One Voice Wales – Training	60.00
	Craven Design – Angels	91.00
Cheques	300056 - D Stephens – Recycling	500.00
	300055 – Remembrance Wreaths	34.00
	Powys CC Business Rates	974.00
D/D	EDF – Electricity	4.49
	EDF – Electricity	34.93
	EDF - Electricity	77.00
	EDF - Electricity	35.00

TC

DM	Dr Weston – Promotional & specialist services	62.35	
<p><b>RESOLVED</b> to approve invoices for payment  <b>Approve Internal Auditor 2021 -2022</b>                  Resolved to approve JDH Business to undertake the Internal Audit 2020-2021</p>			
<p><b>MINUTE 153 – TOWN HALL</b></p>			TC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower floor of Town Hall was extremely wet and slippery, condensation on windows could be affecting sills. Suggested that heating should be working on a low heat setting to prevent damp. Also suggested pipes should be lagged.</li> <li>• Town Clerk was asked to obtain costs for a mat for the doorway.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>AGREED</b></p>			
<p><b>MINUTE 154 – TOURISM</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A report will be shared at the next meeting on the Building Bridges Hungarian project.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Letter re playgrounds –</b></p>			MM LW
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh Government guidelines have been followed and signs are quite clear. Several people have been using Tan y Mur playground in particular.</li> <li>• Playgrounds are reviewed regularly under the guidelines</li> <li>• Following a safety inspection, it was considered unsafe to tie swings up, following this conversation it was proposed to remove one swing on each playground.</li> <li>• It was suggested the signage be changed, instead of one child make it one household on the equipment at any time. This signage will be circulated for approval</li> </ul>			
<p><b>AGREED.</b></p>			TC
<p><b>Trees Town Hill</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed to contact Powis Estates to request permission to replace old and fallen trees with new trees and also if they would assist with structures to support them. Assistance from their forestry team would also be required.</li> <li>• Copies of the proposal will be sent to interested parties who help to maintain this area.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>RESOLVED</b> to accept the proposal</p>			AGENDA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An observation was made re fencing and ongoing costs.</li> <li>• A former member of this council had requested that an oak tree she had grown from an acorn could be planted on Whitegate Pool.</li> <li>• Proposed that a suitable place for this would be considered and agreed in February’s meeting.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>AGREED</b></p>			

## **MINUTE 155 - PLANNING**

Ref: 20/2122/HH Consent for a conservatory at Midland Bank House. The committee has no objections to this proposal and is pleased to see the use of sympathetic materials NB there is also a Listed Building Consent requirement for this work, for which the comments are the same

**AGREED**

Ref: 21/0054/TPO Removal of a tree which is the subject of a tree preservation order at Caerhowel Hall.

**No Comment**

21/0032/FUL Sewage works associated with the previous planning application at Pwll Farm. The committee would refer the planning officer to our comments on P/2017/1289 Pwll Farm Hendomen and would add their concerns that the surface run off is likely to gather and cause flooding on Sarkley Lane. For this reason, the committee would suggest that when the Planning Officer undertakes their site visit, they are accompanied by Highways and Drainage Officers to ascertain the level of risk.

21/0069/FUL two external doorways Old Gaol

21/0070/LBC Removal of existing 1918 partitions forming internal flats, provide new timber stud walls to existing flats, do refits. Old Gaol Road

The decision for these two items will be delegated to the Planning Committee.

## **MINUTE 156- POLICIES**

- Cllr Lewis commented that councillors had delegated policies to a group and one member had now resigned. Comments were made regarding administration also policies not being available.

### **Anti - Bulling & Harassment**

#### **Equality & Diversity**

1. Various issues were raised with regard to accuracy on both policies. This group were not given delegated powers they were asked to review policies which could then be approved by council.
2. Councillors needed to receive the proposed policies to consider in good time prior to the meeting.
3. The Policy group advised that policies should not be sent to all councillors until they had been reviewed.
4. Issue regarding Complaints Policy - if a complaint was made against a member of staff it would go first to that committee, they would assess it and if necessary, it would be passed to a Staffing Committee. A grievance by an employee would go to the Grievance Committee.
5. It was commented that several policies had been available on the shared drive for many months.
6. Policies had been updated in order of statutory requirements and the group had sought professional advice on many of the policies.
7. The group feel very disappointed as they have put a lot of work into updating various policies and consider soe of the work has been obstructed.

<p>8. The process needs to be considered before any more time is wasted          Agreed Cllr Harper and Cllr Beaven will join the group.  <b>Break 20.35 – 20.45</b></p> <p><b>MINUTE 157 – FOOTBALL CLUB</b></p> <p>Football Club are requesting confirmation of tenancy – AGREED          Also suggested they are sent a copy of the tenancy agreement.</p> <p><b>MINUTE 158 – GOVERNANCE PROPOSALS</b></p> <p><b>Proposal 1. Meetings to change to twice-monthly frequency, on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 7pm (No meetings in August or December)</b>          Comment advising some councillors are on several committees and consideration should be given to that.          Councillors were made aware of the extra time involved for the Town Clerk who was often working more than her paid hour          A diverse range of people potentially could join the council and more meetings and requirements could affect this.          Other ways to streamline meetings could be considered.</p> <p><b>Proposal II: Meetings to be time-limited to 1.5 hours, 7.00pm to 8.30pm</b>          At this point Cllr Lewis withdrew items 1 &amp; 2          Comments were made regarding the poor quality of Broadband affecting meetings.          A suggestion was made to time limit items on the agenda. Some issues need not be on the agenda.</p> <p><b>Proposal III: Virtual decision-making for small decisions via a shared-document, to reduce email traffic</b>          Some minor decisions could be dealt with by the Chairman and Town Clerk without waiting for a council meeting.          Create a document for trivial items allowing Councillors to tick if they agree or not. These could then be dealt with quickly at the next meeting.          This could be classed as a pre-determination. This was requested in official written form.          A number of other comments were made on this proposal and it was suggested that WGLA site may have more effective ways of dealing with issues during the pandemic.          It was suggested that these ideas could be collated and discussed at the next meeting,</p> <p><b>NO decision made</b></p> <p><b>Proposal IV: The Clerk’s Line Manager to change from the Mayor to a named Councillor nominated and voted for annually by Full Council</b>          Guidance from One Voice Wales informed that best practice would be to ensure the Town Clerk had a dedicated line manager for the duration of that council.          Council was informed that custom and practice would form part of a contract in this case.          Chairman and Town Clerk have a good relationship on a daily basis. staffing issues are different and should be dealt with by the staffing committee.          Motion was withdrawn leaving the Staffing Committee to consider this proposal.</p>	<p>TC</p>
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**Proposal V: Bank Mandate/Signatories on the Account to be amended to result in one Councillor being removed and another added each calendar year, to ensure rotation of responsibilities and for the administration of the Council's accounts to be shared**

A suggestion was made to increase signatories by at least three people meaning there would be six signatories two different signatories would be used each month. These six signatories will remain until elections 2022.

RESOLVED to accept the amendments to the proposal.

Signatories need to be available to sign and approve invoices before the end of the month.

Cllr's Kibble, Lewis and Harper.

**MINUTE 159 – TENDER FOR GRASS CUTTING**

Town Clerk had forwarded the tender to councillors for comment

Add - picnic area at Whitegate Pool

Time of year for hedge cutting, require information on weed spraying.

Request Risk Assessment and Method Statement and COSH

Allotment hedge may need to be considered in the future.

Proposal that Town Clerk amends the Tender, e mail it to Councillors for final approval and advertises at the earliest opportunity. AGREED

**MINUTE 160 - URDD NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD  
MALDWYN/MONTGOMERYSHIRE 2024**

Letter from the group requesting funding.

Reply that council support the Eisteddfod and will consider funding nearer the time.

AGREED

**MINUTE 161 – COMMUNICATIONS FROM THIS MEETING**

Broadband issues outstanding

**MINUTE 162 – CORRESPONDENCE**

None

**MINUTE 163 – ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

Complaints Committee

Allotments

TOR Assets Committee

**RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS:** Under the Public Bodies

(Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (2) to resolve that members of the public and press be requested to leave the meeting by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted

