

Minutes of the ZOOM meeting of Montgomery Town Council held on Thursday 25th March 2021 at 7.15 pm.

This meeting was recorded.

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

MINUTE 186 - Apologies

Cllr L Weaver – Family Commitment
Cllr C Weston -Work Commitment
Cll D Jones – Work Commitment

MINUTE 187 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr C Thomas – One Voice Wales

MEMBERS of the public were invited to speak.

MINUTE 188 - CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Cllr Andrew advised there would be a 5minute break at approximately 20.30 hours
2. Meeting was expected to finish at 22.15 hours

MINUTE 189 – MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS

Minutes - 25th March 2021

RESOLVED to approve minutes,

MINUTE 190 – INFORMATION FROM THOSE MINUTES

- Cllr Lewis had provided an apology letter for the allotment holders as agreed in February meeting. This letter will be copied to Cllr Jones and approval will be gained at April meeting.
- A question was raised with regard to the Town Clerk's appraisal, this will be finalized in April.
- Replacement of trees on Town Hill has not as yet been resolved. Awaiting confirmation from Powis Estates

JK

MINUTE 191 – REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

- Regarding planning application 0332 land at Hendomen, this has been called in by Cllr Hayes as legally it has to be treated as a new application as it has new conditions.
- Negotiations are taking place to unblock the Right of Way from Station Road towards Hendomen Sarkly to remove an obstruction.

- Cllr Hayes has started discussion with Highways regarding implications with planning application for new affordable housing on Forden Road. It was an expectation when the land was developed that the dangerous junction of Forden Road and New Road would be considered.
- The issue of drainage on New Road is also being addressed.
- Although it has not been confirmed the water main on Pool Road may be replaced in 2022, if this goes ahead it will cause considerable disruption for a short time.
- Cllr Hayes had written an article for the Crier last year about a policy that apparently had been adopted by Powys CC regarding not offering hospitality to unaccompanied child migrants. Following a number of discussions, he can now confirm that Wales has a collaborative approach towards this.
- Letter re Montgomeryshire Community Awards has been forwarded to the Town Clerk.

MINUTE 192 – HIGHWAYS

- A question was raised regarding the lack of a litter bin on Church Bank, it may be useful to have a bin in this location. Contact Powys CC.
- Tan y Mur has finally been resurfaced to a high standard. Residents are very grateful.
- Hedge on Princes Street is growing over the pavement.

TC

TC

MINUTE 193 – FINANCE

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

BACS	HMRC – Tax & NI	145.92
	G Smith – Exp	15.30
	One Voice Wales – Subs	240.00
	SLCC – Training	36.00
	SLCC – Membership	130.00
	Gaskells Waste	28.19
	Eric Neville – Toilet Rolls	32.32
	G17- Website	458.00
	Hafren Dyfrdwy – Water	138.88
	Dr C Weston – Publicity	487.50
	Salary	857.90
Chq	G Stephenson – IRP	60.00
	R Harper – IRP	60.00
	R Lewis – IRP	60.00
D/D	EDF - Electricity	77.00
	EDF - Electricity	35.00
	Powys CC – Business Rates	974.00

RESOLVED to approve invoices for payment

- Draft minutes of Finance Meeting had been made available for all councillors. No comments

- SLCC Membership payment - APPROVED
- One Voice Wales Membership - APPROVED

MINUTE 194 – TOWN HALL

- Town Hall draft minutes had been forwarded to councillors.
- **Market Group** – The group had undertaken some research and a Charter Market is allowed in the area of Broad Street both sides and across the top. Powys CC would have to issue a traffic order on council’s behalf.
- **Q1.** Does the council wish to close the street, part year, all year?
- **Q2.** Does council wish to use all of the street or only part of the street?
- Destination Montgomery has agreed to pay the Development Officer sixty hours in total to promote the market and Town Hall. This should be considered when opening the discussion.
- One idea the group envisaged was only opening part of the street during the Summer months and taking the market inside for Winter months. Traders would be given a specific plot.
- Another idea was only use Spar side of the street as there was a natural bay by the Notice Board and this would not interfere with residential properties.
- Does council wish to exercise their rights under the Charter to hold a market outside.
- **Proposal-** In the Summer months a market is held outside and the Town Hall is closed to market traders during this time. AGREED
- Summer months will be Easter (Thursday before Good Friday) to end of September.
- Any signage must consider disabled members of the public.
- Discussions took place regarding which part of the street to use.
No decision made at this time.
- Further investigation will take place with Highways regarding signage and payment, plus how long to install signage.
- Plans will be put in place for a May Bank Holiday start to the above proposals. This will depend on negotiations with Powys CC and Covid 19.
- Support for traders will also need consideration. Tables, Covers etc. The coming year will be a trial.
- Any new traders will need to book with Town Clerk and Town Clerk will collect fees as usual.
- Fees will remain the same.
- Traders will be expected to remove their own rubbish.
- A new market agreement will be drawn up.
- **Post Covid arrangements-** Plans must be considered for re-opening Town Hall regarding cleaning etc. A COSH cupboard for chemicals should be purchased prior to opening.
- Cllr Harper will remove any paint and transport it to Potters.
- Cllr Mills will undertake a business plan which will include employment of a Town Operative.
- Cllr Kibble suggested white paint for the window sills rather than cream

RH

Break 20.30 – 20.35

MINUTE 195 – TOURISM

- No meeting

MINUTE 196 – PLANNING

20/1826/FUL amended plans for OGR building plot.

MTC have reviewed the revised plans and note a slight reduction in roof apex height and the repositioning of a window. However, neither small alteration makes any appreciable difference to the overpowering and overshadowing impact on two neighbouring properties and two flats in the Old Gaol complex. MTC maintains its objection to the loss of light and amenity of existing residents and the intrusion of incongruous design and construction materials in this confined site in a Conservation Area in close proximity to Listed structures and a Scheduled Monument.

We would also wish to support the comments of the Highways Officer regarding access for construction vehicles to this site. A recent attempt by a large vehicle to use this access road for another property resulted in considerable difficulties and damage to the Town Wall.

Council would request that the Planning Officer kindly refers to our original comments and objections which remain in their entirety.

21/0365/FUL Package sewerage plant for 4 houses at Caerhowel (old caravan site).

There is a lack of clarity in this application making it difficult to assess. Specifically, MTC would query the necessity for a soakaway with capacity to accommodate 45 residents when this is a 4-house development.

MTC note that a Right of Way passes over the proposed soakaway line and surrounding grassland and would be concerned at the state of the path and public safety, particularly as the percolation tests indicate that the porosity of the land is very far below that acceptable for a soakaway.

Main sewage exists at Caerhowel and MTC would urge that the appropriate wayleaves are obtained to access this facility rather than attempt other solutions. Connection to the main sewage system is always to be preferred where available and is in line with National planning guidelines.

MINUTE 197 – WEBSITE

- A discussion took place with regard to purchasing the domain name Visit Montgomery should it become available along with other domain names.
- It was suggested that this site may be suitable for Tourism and associated items.
- It was suggested that council should not have a co.uk but .uk or org uk.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was also suggested that other domain names should be considered. Cllr Stephenson will liaise with Mr Cusack regarding this. 	Gwil
<p>MINUTE 198– CEMETERY FEES</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues had been raised previously regarding charges laid down by Powys CC to erect a headstone and general burial fees. • Unsatisfactory responses have so far been received via e mail. • It was suggested that Cllr Beaven could provide a letter which will be sent to various recipients from council. 	WB
<p>MINUTE 199 – MONTGOMERY – POST COVID 19</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a council we need to be more pro-active in engaging with the public and people who could offer something to Montgomery residents. • There is not much employment in town and it may be a good time to consider broadening horizens and making use of unused buildings. • There is a business community of one hundred and twelve businesses many of which are sole traders. • Need to consider a community plan looking at capacity of the town including housing and business. Suggested a group of councillors could undertake this idea. • Potential looking at micro production, maybe a brief working group to look at a plan for employment. • Mid Wales Manufacturing Group is in Hendomen and maybe a good group to speak to. • People develop small businesses but are unable to manufacture in Montgomery due to lack of space. • Proposed that a working party is set up to discuss local manufacturing. This will consist of Cllr’s Stephenson J Kibble and W Beaven also Cllr Mills on a consultancy basis. <p>AGREED</p>	
<p>MINUTE 200 – VMRC</p>	
<p>Cllr Kibble had provided a summary of the previous two meetings which were forwarded to councillors.</p>	
<p>MINUTE 201 – ALLOTMENTS</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion arose regarding rent for the allotment. Last month’s meeting agreed to discuss increase in allotment rent. • Increase in allotment fees had been discussed at the Precept meeting and the expected budget increased from £160.00 in 2020/2021 to £200 for 2021/2022. • Some allotments are in need of attention and others have not been worked for some time. • Proposal - Consider a benchmark between similar councils for April meeting. 	

- Amendment – That we review but only the fees for the next financial year. AGREED
- Comments were made regarding rent increase as allotment holders had trimmed the hedge and most of the debris had been removed.
- While considering increases also consider what is provided for allotment holders.

MINUTE 202 – TOWN SURVEY

- A sum of £200 had been put aside in 2021/2022 budget
- Following on from the previous minute (199) Cllr Lewis welcomed input from councillors on the way forward.
- Cllr Kibble very much in favour of a community plan, but feels council should be creative regarding this and questioned if a paper survey was the best way. A paper had been circulated from Planning Aid Wales and an idea from Chepstow which had people taking photos and commenting on those photos, this could include all age groups and the school. There are many different ideas to be considered. Often responses to paper surveys are not successful.
- Fears that this may take time. Cllr Lewis advised the last survey was 1997 and he is very keen to carry on with this survey to gain public opinion good or bad.
- How would this survey be undertaken, which needs to include all residents Media, Google, Survey Monkey or e mails.
- Proposed Cllr Lewis, Cllr Kibble, Cllr Beaven and Cllr Thomas share ideas and come back with a proposal. AGREED
- Consider what Montgomery will look like in a Post Covid world. Urgent need for data.
- A representative from Newtown will attend the April meeting to discuss their plan.

MINUTE 203 – ASSETS GROUP

- Proposal to accept the Asset Groups Terms of Reference to set them up as a formal committee. As a working party they had met quite a few times.
- An observation was made about ToR regarding Town Clerk and management, that wording around this could be a recipe for challenges.
- It was advised that this was to put procedures in place and discuss them with the Clerk.
- A view was raised regarding the Health & Safety policy currently in place and its suitability. Assets Group are satisfied with the present policy which had been agreed at a previous meeting and plan to review at least annually.
- Various questions were raised regarding the ongoing maintenance of assets owned by the council. Much of this will rely on individual councillors monitoring assets of the council.
- This group will not have Delegated Powers.
- Asset Group plan to ensure everything is documented and analysed.

OL JK
WB CT

