



MONTGOMERY TOWN COUNCIL

CYNGOR TREF TREFALDWYN

Minutes of the meeting of Montgomery Town Council held on **Thursday 23rd November 2023**

This meeting was recorded

Present in person:

Cllr Taylor, Cllr Stephenson, Cllr Beaven, Cllr Humphreys, Cllr Andrew, Cllr Weston

Present online:

Cllr Harper, Cllr Lewis

In attendance:

Helen Royall (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllr Jones

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. Break for the Public to Speak

A member of the public came to report on the Junior Football Club. The council had given permission for the football club to look at developing a junior pitch at Tan y Mur to develop the junior team and encourage the growth of the team. A large amount of work has been undertaken to create a pitch that would be suitable for playing on which has taken considerable time and has the football club has incurred some costs. The surface should be ready for use in the spring / summer. There is also a future ambition to perhaps use the pitch for other activities such as rounders or cricket. Query from the council around changing room facilities this will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

The council commended the football club for the work on the pitch and reminded the club of the Clos Tan y Mur fund and the small community request fund which could potentially help the club in the future.

4. Chairman's Announcements

The mayor reported the sad loss of a much-loved councillor Jill Kibble following a long and bravely fought illness. Her contribution and love of the town of Montgomery was to be admired. A moments silence was held for Cllr Kibble. The four young Shrewsbury men who lost their lives in a tragic accident were also remembered.

Paul Hodgson (AND OTHER MAN) who has admirably lead Montgomery's Remembrance Events is retiring from the role. The Mayor on behalf of MTC has thanked him for his efforts.

All Remembrance events were well attended with the weather holding for all of them. Preparations for the Christmas lights is underway for the first time led by the Council and other Christmas events are well underway.

The discussions around the council meetings moving back to the upper floor of the T hHall are ongoing. The councillors were also asked to consider additional membership to committees to ensure that they are Quorate. Cllr Beaven reminded committees to let her know when meetings are being held.

5. Minutes of the last meetings

Some small grammatical errors addressed

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Ordinary Business Meeting 26th October 2023 are approved and signed as a correct record.

6. Information from the minutes

9b. Finance - Community request for Tan y Mur fund

Clarification of the minutes – there are two separate funds one is administered by the council for small community requests and the Clos Tan y Mur fund is a charitable fund administered by Trustees (who are also members of the council) they are separate funds.

12a. Reference in the minutes 'Speak to the school' should be referenced as Friends of the School. For the event on the 9th of December should state musicians are free until 5pm

7 – Hafren Dyfrdwy updates - no update currently but meetings are scheduled in especially to address the bus service and looking at on demand taxi services.

9b. A previous request by a community group had been made to the council. The request is not eligible to the Clos Tan y Mur fund, but the council discussed the monies coming from the council's small community request fund.

Proposed: Council supports the Lego Club by contribution to the hire of the activity centre at a cost of £120

Proposed: Cllr Lock

Seconded: Cllr Taylor

All in favour

Motion passed

7. Report from County Councillor

No indication of a return date from HD, and they now expect it to be after Christmas. In the meantime, efforts are being made regarding diversions and buses, including discussions with Highways to improve and simplify signage for the upcoming roadworks. CCLr hopes to implement changes that will alert drivers earlier about alternative routes, shift the main barrier location to Caerhowel Bridge, and eliminate confusion about HGVs on signs.

Highways, however, are constrained by diversion regulations, which stipulate diverting along roads of equal or higher class than the closed one. As the diversion is on a B road, official signs have to redirect around Abermule and Glanmule instead of more direct routes. The individual acknowledges the limitations for local traffic and aims to make it more difficult to reach the Hendomen Lane junction.

Engaging with the police is underway to deploy a speed camera along Hendomen Lane (with a 20mph restriction) to mitigate traffic. However, the process is challenging due to the scarcity of resources. Residents' requests to extend the 20mph limit face resistance from PCC officers, citing strict regulations requiring a court order for speed limit changes.

A meeting with bus companies and PCC officers is scheduled to discuss improved bus provision during the roadworks. Efforts are being made to inquire about resources for a potential shuttle service, an on-demand taxi to transport people from bus stops to the middle of Montgomery.

Concerns about flooding and drainage issues have been reported to Highways for maintenance, although the team is struggling to cope with the workload. The individual encourages anyone with issues to report them and use the "report a problem" page on the website.

Addressing the climate and nature emergency is a priority for the CCLr and he is advocating for the council to take these issues seriously. Positive steps have been taken recently, with the new chief executive supporting the integration of these priorities across all council work. The council is mandated by the Welsh Government to publish carbon accounts annually, aiming for net-zero emissions by 2030. Despite having tools to monitor emissions closely, the individual acknowledges the ongoing increase and emphasizes the need for collective efforts. A climate stakeholder group has been established to allow external organizations to comment on the county council's strategy, with encouragement for Montgomery Town Council to send a representative to the group.

8. Highways

No Highways issues reported

9. Finance

a. Current financial position and transactions

Salary	Town Clerk Salary	£	594.40
Salary	Town Operative Salary	£	634.26
HMRC	HMRC	£	202.40
MBC	800 yrs celebration	£	213.60

Benchmark	Playground Equipment	£ 792.00
Broxap	Bins	£ 1,764.96
Gaskells	Waste	£ 86.06
WPG Printing	Contingency	£ 31.20
Smith of Derby	Clock maintenance	£ 318.00
Andrew Evans	Grass Cutting	£ 1,994.36
Cllr Allowance	Annual Allowance	£ 150.00

b. Precept

Council had a look at the draft proposed precept. Some categories had been clarified or had titles changed to make them clearer. Some event lines were removed as the events had passed and new events for 2024 had been added.

New items included:

Mayor Making The cost of this event has previously been covered by the Mayor which can be exclusive or prevent people wanting to put themselves forward for the office. By putting this amount in the precept the council will ensure there is a consistent event experience, and the income Mayor does not have to be concerned about the cost.

Playgrounds will now be identified separately in the income and expenditure lines to ensure grants/income is correctly allocated and the council can allocate precept funds in a targeted way.

Christmas lights has been added due to the council taking this event on.

Council suggested a line go in for the Remembrance Event and donations for the Remembrance events reflecting the standing down of Paul Hodgson. There is also the consideration of the maintenance of the Pound War Memorial.

10. Planning

No new planning applications currently

11. Assets

a. Community Graden Lease

Small typo noted in the agreement.

Council agreed that it can be sent to the lawyer to check the agreement if there is anything to be changed before being returned to the Council.

12. Dogs at the castle

Cllr Humphreys talked around the issue of dogs being not allowed on the castle grounds. In her opinion dogs on the castle do not appear to be causing issues and asked the council if we could approach 1dogs could be allowed through an approach to CADW. It is known that they are reviewing the policy and that there may be some changes in the future. Council would await a repose from CADW.

13. May Fair

Graham Evans spoke about his impressions of the May Fair and the slowly declining attendance and quality of the event. The decrease in footfall has meant that the larger rides do not come to Montgomery anymore. Discussion around what the town and the Town Council can do to support the event and the organiser of the event.

Some conceptual ideas were discussed including raising the profile of the fair through social media by knowing what is coming and promotion of the event/informed by the fair owner. This happened prior to Covid and there was a bigger attendance and a larger attendance.

It was also discussed that we could encourage people to recall their memories of the May Fair - collecting photographs and recordings of people's memories, the Old Bell is willing to collect the information and have an exhibition. This will add to the memories that the Old Bell already holds. Also talking to schools and groups about the exhibition and building interest about the May Fair and its long history.

The Fair organiser had previously brought vouchers to the local schools with discounts to the rides to encourage attendance. This could possibly happen again if the proprietor would be willing to provide a similar scheme.

Query – does it need to take place on the Thursday? Ask if there could be a group to look at the May Fair and promote the event with some of the ideas above. The request to council was to support as previously with the promotion of the event and if the council could support the closure of the road.

Cllr Weston asked for council's support for the exhibition and promotion, and the potential use of the Clerks time in contacting the fair provider and potentially some financial support of the promotion of the fair.

14. Community Health & Care

Cllr Stephenson sat on the practice council and asked for councillors to let him know of issues brought up by members of the public

15. Allotments

Moved to next agenda as apologies from Cllr Jones

16. Parking at Maldwyn Way and Recycling Centre

There has been an increase of parking including double parking and dangerous parking. Some issues with dog fouling on the field too and a query if the dog bags could be brought back and promoted again.

17. Civic Events

The Charges for corkage at Mayor Making was questioned and there was a query to see if there could be an abstention from corkage for civic events. This is to be discussed at the next MCBPT meeting as this would have an impact if we held a ball or the tea for the elderly in the community.

18. Communications from the meeting

May Fair

Charter Granted 1227 • Cyflwynwyd y Siarter ym 1227

Mayor/Maer: Mrs Wendy Beaven

Town Clerk/Clerc y Dref: Miss Helen Royall

07846269021 • townclerk@montgomery-wales.uk

Clos Tan y Mur fund
Christmas Lights

19. Items for the next agenda

May Fair and potential financial support
Remembrance Events
Elderly Persons Community Lunch

20. Confidential Items

a. Staffing Proposal

Review of the proposals put forward to council in the paper which outlined a new role and a change in the existing role of Town Operative. The council discussed the outline of the role and the need to discuss the contract at Staffing Committee. There was also a request to pay above the national minimum wage.

Propose: To approve the change of role from the Town Operative

Proposed: To approve the change in the role and responsibilities for the Town Operative and create a new role of Cleaner to be taken forward to Staffing Committee and increase the salary to be above the new national minimum wage to £12 per hour

Proposed: Cllr Weston

Seconded: Cllr Stephenson

All in favour

Motion passed

b. Review of Equipment costs for Gaol Road

Gaol Road waiting for surfacing costs but also getting costs for the other equipment this will be brought to the meeting in February.

c. MCBPT

Chair of the committee was sympathetic of the position of the council and the desire to use the civic chamber which we should be using from this meeting. This has been delayed due to the group upstairs not having another date to move to as of yet.

Suggest that a letter is sent from full council from the Town Clerk requesting formally the return of the civic chamber for council use to send to councillor