

**Minutes of a monthly meeting of Usk Town Council held at
The Sessions House, Usk on Monday 10th April 2017 at 7.30pm.**

Present: Cllr G Roderick, Cllrs A Leathwood, Cllr Mrs. C Wilkinson, C. Cllr B Strong, Cllr Ms. I Brown, Cllr M Evans, Cllr A Watkins, Cllr R Galletley, Cllr J Jeremiah
RFO Ms. J Mee
Town Clerk – Mrs. Tracey Huxley

Prior to the meeting, Nigel Leaworthy from Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) addressed members of Usk Town Council (UTC) about "Bee Friendly" towns.
Alison Howard from the Incredible Edible gardens at MCC explained about plans they have with Usk in Bloom for planters around the town.

24.5 To accept Apologies for Absence

Cllr Keenan, Cllr D Harding,

24.6 To disclose personal and pecuniary interest in items of business listed below:

Cllr Strong – all planning

24.7 To Approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2017

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record and duly signed

24.8 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2017

• **22.9 White House situated in Old Market Street**

This remains in a poor state of repair

Resolved: UTC waiting for an update from MCC Cllr Strong will make some enquiries with MCC

• **23.9 To discuss the consultation on the planning of Gypsy, Traveller and Show people sites**

Resolved: UTC have written to Welsh Government informing them that UTC considers Gypsies and Travellers to have a fundamental right to appropriate accommodation sites

An acknowledgement has been received from Welsh Government

24.9 To receive a report from the Sessions House Management Committee

See report dated 3rd April 2017

25.0 To receive the monthly finance report

The Chair of Finance reported that UTC remain within budget and has increased reserves.

25.1 To receive Planning Applications

- 1) **DC/2017/00315 21 Ladyhill Close Usk NP15 1AS** Side and rear single storey extension with drops kerbs to the front of the property to provide parking for cars.

Recommend Approval

- 2) **DC/2016/00297** Stables Abergavenny Road Llanccayo Usk NP15 1JF. The proposal is for a 4 plot with space for mobile home, touring caravan, utility/amenity building and parking space.

Appeal Ref: E6840/A 17/3169689 & E6840/C/173169691 For information

- 3) Pre – application of the **proposed development at Woodbine Field, Monmouth Road.**

Pre- Application noted

Resolved:

- UTC consider the four vehicle access points to the site needs to be reviewed.
- UTC to write to the developers expressing their concerns about the number of entrances and to seek reassurance that the developers will comply with their own policy of reasonably price housing.

25.2 To receive a Report from the Traffic & HGVs Committee

No formal report. Ongoing discussions.

25.3 To receive Reports from Members serving on other bodies

- **Chamber of Commerce**

Cllr Brown reported that there had been no formal meeting

Usk Festivals group is due to meet soon.

Dates are 1st and 2nd July 2017.

Advertising will start after Easter. Entertainment for the weekend has been arranged.

25.4 Areas of concern around the Town

- **Athletic Club fence along Mill Lane**

This is unsightly and needs repairing

Resolved:

The Usk Athletic Club has been contacted.

- **Conigar Walk**

- One of the benches on the Conigar Walk is due to be replaced.

- **Caravan situated in St. Mary's Way, Usk**

Resolved:

Clerk to contact Mark Watkins at MCC and to notify the planning enforcement department at MCC

25.5 To receive an update from the Community Communication Committee including the "1 piece of litter campaign"

There has been no formal meeting of the Community Communication Committee, however members met with Geoff Burrows to discuss the possibility of Usk having an Electronic Communications Board.

Resolved:

- All Councillors were keen to explore this opportunity.
- Clerk to contact Geoff Burrows to register a formal interest.
- UTC now has an information email address usktowninfo@gmail.com
- UTC currently has 315 "likes" and is trialing Twitter with 56 followers.
- Further training will be given to Cllrs following UTC Annual Meeting

25.6 To discuss the current Usk Town Council website

Resolved:

Recommendations regarding the website will be made following UTC Annual Meeting

25.7 To receive an update from the Events Committee

The Rotary Music Night at Usk Memorial Hall on Saturday 25th March had been a big success.

The following events are scheduled

- Tony Watkins has agreed to do a talk on Wednesday 19th April entitled " My years in Special Branch with one case in particular"
- Monmouth Male Voice Choir with Chris Moreton on Saturday 22nd April 2017 in aid of Kidney Wales Foundation
- Kidney Wales Walk for Life Sunday 23rd April at 10.30am

The Brain of Usk 30th April RBL – this has been postponed until the autumn

25.8 To receive an update the proposed increase in Business rates announced by the Government for 2017

No update

25.9 To receive an update from the recent Usk Area Cluster Workshop and discuss Councillor attendance at the next Cluster meetings

Cllr Brown reported that the following speakers were at the meeting

- Andy Smith
- Mark Hand
- Mike Powell

Andy Smith Funding guru informed the group that there are Funding Streams available which community councils can potentially tap into. Andy is happy to come and talk to UTC if there are any specific projects in mind and can tailor advice accordingly.

He outlined some of the Key Funding Pots as follows;

Rural Development Plan

- ❖ **Max £160, 000**
- ❖ Renewable Energy
- ❖ Broadband Infrastructure
- ❖ Setting up local services
- ❖ Support for tourism infrastructure
- ❖ Heritage
- ❖ Key to successful application is Innovation –something that hasn't happened in the area (e.g. skate park)

Community Facilities Programme

- ❖ **Projects up to £600,000**
- ❖ Wales wide scheme
- ❖ Key to application success is community consultation and improvement
- ❖ Will fund what a community wants

Lottery Rural Programme

- ❖ Websites development

Mark Hand MCC spoke on Planning issues and reported on the following

- ❖ Planning Aid Wales Training which helps community councils to comply with planning response deadlines
- ❖ The need for community consultation if there is a development planned
- ❖ Gypsy sites mentioned – Monmouthshire has no official gypsy site
- ❖ Areas need to be regularly reviewed
- ❖ The need to renew Local Development Plans

Mike Powell MCC reported on Broadband and mobile signals

- ❖ Progress has not happened on the promised Wi-Fi in Village Halls - only 15 Village halls have it so far
- ❖ 75% of Monmouthshire can access superfast Broadband
- ❖ MCC are now looking at using Television White Space
(TV White Space refers to the unused TV channels between the active ones in the VHF and UHF spectrum. These are typically referred to as the "buffer" channels. In the past, these buffers were placed between active TV channels to protect broadcasting interference. It has since been researched and proven that this unused spectrum can be used to provide broadband internet access while operating harmoniously with surrounding TV channels).

26.0 To receive an update on the forthcoming Velothon on Sunday 9th July 2017

Cllr Brown reported the following

'Cycle Usk' Committee has now formed and had their first meeting. It was disappointing that no Usk businesses attended the meeting, nevertheless, the meeting had been successful and UTC, Mon CC, Velothon Wales, Usk Primary School reps and local Usk cyclists had been involved and things are gathering momentum.

Velothon Wales and Mon CC have stated that Usk is leading an example across Wales on taking this forward.

The Main aim is to promote Usk as a cycling destination in the run up to and during the event

- 16,000 cyclists on the day will come through the town
- Massive opportunity to promote the town

- Businesses stand to benefit not so much on the day but from the 'legacy' of the event in promoting Usk as an ideal place to come for a cycling holiday or to stop off en-route on their training runs
- Usk cyclists are working with Velothon Wales to produce routes starting and finishing in Usk and the 16,000 cyclists will get a link to in order to download Apps on their devices such as STRADA when they receive their pre-event information
- The town will be decorated in order to welcome cyclists preparing for and taking part in the Velothon.
- Signs are needed by the Cricket field so their entrance to Usk is very obvious.
- On 12th May there will be "The Great Usk Bike Off" between 3.30pm – 5.30pm at Usk Primary School. Old bikes will be decorated with bright paints (some coordinated with the UIB colour scheme of yellow, purple and white) and placed around the town. It is hoped UIB will incorporate the bikes into some displays
- Meeting with Usk Open Gardens to discuss how they too can be involved.
- MCC collecting old bikes from their refuse stations already have over 30 bikes collected
- Bikes will be along the Velothon route and a bike trail around the town including shop windows to encourage people to explore the wider town
- Businesses have been sent communication with information on how they can get involved, for example decorate their own bike, decorate their window – sponsor the children to decorate a bike (£20 a business). They have been sent an accompanying toolkit on how they might 'cash in' on a cycling market more permanently.
- Community fun by having a bike rally around the town or cycle route for children on the day- safety advice and giveaways provided by Mon CC
- Parking - spectator / visitor parking and arrival advice currently being explored
- Velothon communications will begin to go out in May and all residents will receive information through their letterboxes and via Social Media

It was proposed that painted bikes be placed along the Sessions House railings

Resolved:

To be discussed at the next Sessions House Management meeting
Next Cycle Usk meeting on Mon 24th April 6.30pm at the Sessions House.

26.1 To receive an update on the forthcoming Usk Pageant on the 16th July 2017

Resolved:

Progressing. Next meeting Thursday 27th April at 6.30pm

26.2 To discuss Usk Town Council registering as a Tree Charter Branch

Following discussion, it was resolved that a member of the Tree Charter Branch be invited to address UTC. Clerk to arrange.

26.3 To discuss the growth of Himalayan Balsam on Usk River Bank

Cllr Watkins reported that the growth of Himalayan Balsam on Usk River Bank is getting worse. It was reported that Giant Hogweed is also growing rapidly.

Resolved

UTC to write to Natural Resource Wales to enquire as their intentions as regards treatment of these non - native species.

26.4 To discuss the Community Governor Vacancy at Usk Church in Wales Primary School

The correspondence from Usk Church in Wales Primary School was noted.
Cllrs were unsure as to whether there is actually a Community Governor Vacancy.

Resolved

C Cllr Strong to clarify the vacancy

26.5 To accept proposals for nominations for Deputy Chairman 2017/2018

Cllr Evans proposed Cllr Leathwood as Deputy Mayor Elect for 2017/2018.
All Cllrs were in favour of this proposal.

At this point, Cllr Galletley left the meeting

26.6 To receive a copy of the new Usk Town Guide

Copies of the new Town Guide were distributed and very well received by Cllrs. Members of UTC thanked Cllrs Jeremiah and Wilkinson and RFO Jenny Mee for all their hard work in producing the guide.

26.7 To discuss Usk Town Council's participation in the Usk Agricultural Show 2017

Resolved

UTC will hold a stall at this year's Usk Show.

26.8 To discuss Usk becoming a Bee Friendly Town

Resolved:

Following the presentation from Nigel Leaworthy and discussion all Cllrs are in favour of UTC becoming a "Bee Friendly" Town

26.9 Correspondence:

From: Thank you from Gwent Young Farmers re: recent donation

From: Update on Local Air Quality in Usk

From: Welsh Government Bee Friendly Towns

From: One Voice Wales Consultancy Services

From: National Training Programme for Community & Town Councils in Wales

From: Welsh Government Section 137(4) (A) Local Government Act 1972 Expenditure Limit for 2017-18

From: MCC Notice of Election – Council Elections 4th May 2017

From: Welsh Government re litter picking on the A449

From: St David Lewis & Francis Xavier Church Usk re: successful heritage lottery funding for major restoration

Exclusion of Press and Public

By virtue of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public are excluded from discussions on the items listed on the basis that disclosure thereof would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Council went into Committee to discuss items 27.0

27.0 To receive the latest report on the Movement of Prisoners from HMP Usk to HMP Prescoed.

Following discussion Council came out of Committee and returned to the main meeting

27.1 Any other Business

Notices

- Tony Watkin's Talk entitled "My years in Special Branch with one case in particular" will be at The Sessions House 7pm on 19th April
- Mayor's presentation of cheques and Community Awards will be on Wednesday 26th April 7pm
- Kidney Wales Foundation Monmouth Male Voice Choir with Chris Moreton – Saturday 22nd April 7pm
- Walk for Life Sunday 23rd April at 10.30am from the Sessions House
- Brain of Usk 30th April Royal British has been postponed until the Autumn

For information

- The recent dog fouling incident outside the One Stop retail shop - awaiting a decision as to whether MCC will issue a fine.
- Air Quality the average figures demonstrate Usk has not exceeded the maximum limit for two years.

There was no further business and the meeting formally closed at 9.00pm