

**Minutes of a Hybrid Meeting by Usk Town Council (UTC) held in Sessions House
on Monday 12th June 2023 at 7.00pm**

Prior to the meeting the Chair extended a warm welcome to UTC's new Councillor Ben Thomas

Present Cllr. M Howells, Cllr A Ivin, Cllr Steve O'Brien, Cllr G Roderick, Cllr K Peacock, Cllr D Harrison, Cllr B. Thomas County Cllr Tony Kear
R.F.O Mrs. D. Richards, Town Clerk Mrs T Huxley

3.6 To accept apologies for absence.

All Cllrs were present

3.7 Mayor to sign DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE 2023/24

Cllr O'Brien signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Town Mayor.

3.8 Public Open Forum

(15 minutes at the discretion of the Mayor.) Members of the public are invited to address the Council in relation to items on the agenda. A member of the public shall not speak for more than 5 minutes unless directed by the Chair. A question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The Chair may direct that a written or oral response be given.

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

There were none

4.0 County Councillors participation

County Cllrs Howells & Kear reported on the following

- MCC will prepare a draft report on the causes of the recent flash flooding at Burrium Gate and will share the report as soon as possible.
- There will be an investigation into Castle Street flooding caused by blocked drains.
- Following recent damage to Usk Bridge, Cllr Kear discussed with Graham Kinsella (Highways, MCC) possible options to help reduce the bridge being hit by HGVs.
- UTC has not received the latest Bridge Report
- Usk is still waiting for the new SIDS signs to be replaced. The data from the SIDS may be available to download.
- MCC is planning a countywide review of car parking.
- Air Quality – this continues to remain below acceptable levels.
- To propose Community Speed Watch, join with Lorry Watch to monitor both speeding and HGV's in Usk
- To relocate the Hub bike shelter to outside the Co-op
- Bridges Car Share Scheme are looking for volunteers/befrienders – details to be shared on social media.

4.1 To Approve the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 15th May 2023

The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

4.2 Adoption of Income & Expenditure Report for 2022/2023 note S.137 Expenditure and Council Assets

- Annual Return
- Internal Auditors Report
- Income and Expenditure
- Balance sheet
- Annual Governance Statement
- Council Assets
- Section 137 spending

It was reported Year End figures have been internally audited.

Resolved:

- All of the above was approved and it was resolved to adopt the End of year Accounts for 2022/2023
- The Annual Return was approved and the Responsible Finance Officer along with the Chairman signed the Annual Return for submission to the External Auditor.
- RFO to Check Sessions House building insurance with regards to council assets and building valuation

4.3 To approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 15th May 2023

The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

4.4 Matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting held 15th May 2023

There were none

4.5 To receive a report from the Sessions House Management Committee

See report dated 7th June 2023

a) To receive an update on the Mather Jackson Library

Resolved: The Mather Jackson Trustees met recently and will write to UTC with some proposals for the extra books, currently stored in the Session House 'cell'.

4.6 To receive the monthly Finance report for May 2023

The bank reconciliation for May 2023 showed no erroneous receipts or payments. No payments were made outside the normal monthly running costs or not previously agreed.

See report dated 7th June.

4.7 To receive an update on the poor state of the Conigar path

Resolved: Cllr Kear reported works on the path should commence next week.

It has been noted the Kissing Gate on the path is no longer accessible to wheelchair users due to the an addition of a metal bar on the gate.

Resolved: MCC will be contacted about this

4.8 To Receive and adopt the Annual Report 2022/2023

Resolved: Apologies from the Clerk- the report will be available next month

4.9 To receive the following Planning Applications

- a) **DM/2023/00411** 1 Maryport Street Usk NP15 1AB Change of use from A2 to D2.

Recommend Approval

- b) **DM/2023/00697** 5 Castle Street Usk Monmouthshire NP15 1BU Alterations and Extension to existing dwelling and erection of garage.

Recommend Approval

5.0 To receive an update on the Masterplan for Usk

Cllr Ivin has been working on the Masterplan brief and reported UTC is waiting for MCC to send the brief out to consultants. The Chair thanked all those involved for their contributions to the Masterplan.

5.1 To discuss the use of the former Usk Household Recycling Centre (UHRC) site.

There has been no formal update from MCC regarding the review of the UHRC although County Cllr Kear has been informed MCC will be extending the licence.

Cllr Ivin informed Members there may be grant funding for the recycling centre in the form of Placemaking Grant funding. This would be for physical works rather than design, although design costs can also be included to enable the physical works. The funding needs to be spent by March 2025 and projects should be derived from a placemaking plan (i.e., the Usk Masterplan).

The Welsh Government element of the funding has been provisionally allocated to MCC, but MCC needs to submit an application to Welsh Government for their formal approval for individual projects.

Enquiries have been made as to whether UTC has other projects.

Ideas/proposals for community use of the site

- The provision of some low-cost business units for local businesses to establish themselves in Usk.
- HMP Usk to use as a market to sell wooden furniture/items created in their workshops.
- Climate Change group wish to use as a clothes exchange and or silent disco.

Resolved: UTC to contact Nick Keyse, MCC Estates to put forward the proposals for use of the site

5.2 To receive an update on the Town Guide

No update. It was proposed the Digital Information Board becomes interactive.

Resolved: Cllr Harrison will look into this.

5.3 To receive a report from the Events Committee

Events planned to date

- Crawfish Pie Gig on 14th Oct 2023
- Flanders & Swann Evening Saturday 28th October

There is an Events meeting 10.30am this Wed 14th June at Sessions House

a) To receive an update from a meeting with local businesses held on 5th June 2023

Following on from the success of the King's Coronation celebration the businesses would like to host other events.

Resolved:

- UTC agreed and considered it important the businesses take ownership and financial management of future events.

- UTC will offer all the help and support needed with contracts, where to obtain grants etc and any physical help it can provide. This will allow greater UTC financial flexibility, allowing more non-profit community events for Usk.
- UTC to check insurance with regard to road closures.
- The businesses plan to meet on 19th June to look at hosting a "Pride" themed event.

5.4 To receive an update on Community Speed watch

Cllr Kear reported there has been two sessions outside Burrium Gate and it was proposed Community Speed Watch join with Lorry Watch.

Resolved: UTC to advertise for Lorry Watch volunteers.

5.5 To receive an update on the Priory Gatehouse

Update as follows

- MCC Heritage has notified UTC that they have received the surveyor's report and will now start proceedings. There is currently no timescale.
- Meeting with CADW to decide the next steps.
- MCC will then obtain costings from contractors for the schedule in order to see how much it will cost to do the works in default. This will allow MCC to know how much of a grant they require and how much they (MCC) will have to put forward.
- MCC can gain approval to serve the Urgent Works Notice from delegated panel and then service the notice.
- The notice will have a compliance period, a time in which the owner can do the work themselves. If this is not carried out in the period MCC will then step in and carry the works out in default with the joint funding from MCC and CADW.

It was reported this is a complicated process, however, Heritage has a proper schedule and much clearer idea of what is needed.

It was noted that the area behind the herras fencing currently in situ is very poorly maintained.

Resolved: Cllr Kear will contact the owner and request the area be cleared and tidied up

5.6 To receive an update on the repair of the Town Clock

Smiths of Derby have taken away the clock workings for repair and it is hoped repairs will be completed in six weeks, It was however noted, the wooden frame within the clock is rotten and in need of repair.

Resolved: Clerk to investigate this matter further

5.4 To receive a report from the Dog Action Day held in conjunction with Mon CC on Thursday 25th May.

Resolved: As a result of the recent Dog Action day new signs have been installed by MCC to remind people to clean up after their pets. Key areas, prone to dog fouling, such as the riverside walk along the Usk and the sports field will be surveyed and patrolled regularly for several weeks to see if these signs have helped raise awareness.

5.5 To review the Civic Service held on 4th June 2023

Members agreed this had been a very successful occasion and Cllr O'Brien thanked all those involved for their help and support.

5.6 To receive proposals (a maximum of two motions) for debate at the One Voice Annual Meeting on Saturday 30th September 2023

Members were reminded to submit proposals by the next Full Council meeting in July.

5.7 To confirm the Chapter 8 Training is booked for the Wednesday 6th September 2023

This was noted by Members

5.8 To discuss Street Cleansing in Usk

It was proposed Members meet to discuss this matter more fully.

Resolved: Clerk to arrange

5.9 To remind Councillors of the statutory requirement Training Plan for Members and staff as per the directive from The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (section 67)

Councillors were reminded of the importance of attending training events to ensure "best practice"

6.0 Correspondence

Usk has received the Parking Enforcement Review April 2023 from Mon CC

Upon review of the suggestions MCC officers have made the following comments below.

1. **Maryport Street Kerb Ticks (No Loading at Any time)** – MCC traffic would support these proposals, and this has been added to our TRO program of implementation for later this financial year.
2. **Maryport Street 20 Min Limited Waiting Bays** – Due to the residential nature of this location with nearby carparks, MCC does not support the introduction of 20-minute short stay bays at this location as this will increase parking stress and displace vehicles elsewhere. Motorists parking for short durations on the double yellows will be remedied by the No Loading TRO mentioned in #1.
3. **Four Ash Street Double Yellow Lines (Denbury Mews to Ty Brith Gardens)** - MCC traffic would support these proposals, and this has been added to our TRO program of implementation for later this financial year.
4. **Four Ash Street Double Yellow Lines (Blind Bend o/s no 21)** - MCC traffic would support these proposals and this has been added to our TRO program of implementation for later this financial year.
5. **Maryport St at junction of Mill St Double Yellow Lines** - MCC traffic would support these proposals, and this has been added to our TRO program of implementation for later this financial year.
6. **Maryport St entrance of The Grange extension of Double Yellow Lines** - MCC traffic would support these proposals, and this has been added to our TRO program of implementation for later this financial year.
7. **Maryport St South Car Park Double Yellow Lines** - MCC traffic would support these proposals and this has been added to our TRO program of implementation for later this financial year.
8. **Removal of Double Yellow Lines on Maryport Street/Old Market St Junction** – due to the double yellow lines protecting the turning manoeuvre for northbound traffic entering priory gardens, we do not support the removal of this section of double yellow lines.

9. **Castle St – Four Ash St No entry Sign moved** – this post was moved due to the post blocking the entrance to the adjacent property.

Following discussion, it was agreed to discuss further with MCC items 2 and 8.

Item 2 UTC's intention for the 20- or 30-minute waiting bays would be that they would service short stay shoppers at the One Stop shop and the Post Office. UTC recognises these premises attract customers who currently have nowhere convenient to park.

Item 8 Linked to the close proximity of item 2 would provide extra all-day parking for residents & visitors and remedy MCC's concerns for item 2. Concerns around the turning manoeuvre for northbound traffic entering Priory Gardens (north) are noted however, the other entrance to Priory Garden (south) does not have yellow lines with vehicles parking roadside without issues.

Resolved: Cllr Howells will arrange a site meeting with MCC to discuss further.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 8.05pm