

In the interests of transparency, minutes will be published in draft form within seven working days of the meeting. Please note that draft form minutes have not yet been formally approved by Councillors as a true and correct record of the meeting.

**Minutes of a Hybrid Meeting by Usk Town Council (UTC) held in Sessions House
on Monday 11th March 2024 at 6.00pm**

Present, Cllr M. Howells, Cllr G Roderick, Cllr A. Ivin, Cllr. D Harrison, Cllr B Thomas, Cllr K. Peacock, County Cllr Tony Kear, RFO Diane Richards, Town Clerk Mrs T Huxley

Prior to the meeting at 5.30pm Police Inspector Emma Sowrey addressed Full Council
The following matters were raised & discussed

- Residents at Sunnyside have concerns with neighbours causing nuisance.
- Parking near the school on Monmouth Road
- Parking by the One-Stop retail shop, Maryport Street, Usk
- Pavement Parking on Four Ash St
- HGVs coming through town

17.9 To accept apologies for absence.

Cllr Steve O'Brien

20.0 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.

- A member of the public who attended the finance meeting asked why a vote had been taken to admit him to the meeting
Response from UTC - there was a misunderstanding of the rules. The Clerk consulted the Standing Orders & the member of the public was admitted.
- The member present at the finance meeting asked why UTC has decided to spend money on seeking professional advice on staff payroll & VAT when advice is freely available from One Voice Wales (an organisation specifically set up to advise councils).
Response from UTC - the cost of the VAT advice would be met by MCC and the payroll check would be free

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

Item 21.8 Usk Athletic Club - Path Order Application – Cllrs Peacock & Thomas

Item 22.1 Matters of Information - installation of outdoor table tennis by Usk Scouts - Cllr Ivin

20.2 County Councillors participation - Meirion Howells (MH), Tony Kear (TK)

- Green Infrastructure enhancement schemes – MH reported four areas have been identified in Usk - the committee will report back to UTC
- MCC is carrying out ash dieback tree removal works
- Potholes -10 potholes have been reported to MCC

- 20mph signs have been installed near to Usk Athletic ground
- Resurfacing has taken place on the approach to the A449
- There has been retendering of the bus service in Usk. From the 1st April there will be an hourly No 60 bus, a Sunday service and better links between Nos 60 & 68 from 1st April
- The bus stop sign at Burrium Gate needs to be reinstalled
- Speed watch -TK reported there has been revised risk assessments in light of the new 20mph legislation. The group look to undertake more reviews
- SIDS – MCC are now able to download the data, but it is not yet available
- MCC to conduct a review of road conditions & repairs There will be a new grading system and roads assessed and prioritized
- There is a lack of activity in maintaining drains to prevent flooding
- School meals – following complaints about portions & waste, the Head is conducting a survey
- TK has expressed dissatisfaction that as a ward member the low-cost home ownership in Usk had not been better publicized

Cllr Harrison left the meeting

20.3 To approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 12th February 2024

The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record apart from Item 18.6 To receive the monthly Finance report for January 2024.

The Minutes should read 'Cllr Ivin said that the following had been reported to the finance committee by the RFO

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

County Cllr Kear joined the meeting

20.4 Matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting held 12th February 2024

Item 19.8 Cllr Ivin will liaise with The Grange regarding access to Little Explorers Nursery

20.5 To receive a report from the Sessions House Management Committee

See report dated 6th March

20.6 To receive the monthly Finance report for February 2024

See report dated 6th March 2024

The bank reconciliation for January showed no erroneous receipts

No payments were made outside the normal monthly running costs or not previously agreed.

The following payments were agreed:

- Town Clock - £1300 for the scaffolding to the clock repair
- Sessions House maintenance - £850 +VAT to Volute Architects for preparation of the report for the application to CADW for a building maintenance grant.

Renewal of UTC/Sessions House Insurance

Resolved: Cllr Ivin had contacted Insurance Brokers Thomas Carroll for a competitive quotation.

There has been no reply. Therefore, it was agreed UTC will accept Zurich's quotation, a fixed price 3 year policy at £3,865 per year

VAT -VAT issues are still ongoing. Cllr Ivin to meet with Centurion to seek VAT advice
Cllr Ivin has requested staff payslips from Nov 2023-2024 be submitted in order to submit to an independent pay company

20.7 To receive an update from the Welsh Audit Office

Correspondence has been received from the Audit Office requiring additional information for the Audit

Resolved: The RFO and Clerk are responding to this.

20.8 To consider MCC's countywide forthcoming parking review

It was reported MCC will be reviewed in the summer. TK reported UBSEG had discussed parking and the majority were in favour of 2 hours free

Resolved: Cllr Howells will look to put together a survey for residents.

It was noted the Memorial Hall committee has made a formal request to MCC for designated parking bays for Memorial Hall users – this will be reviewed as part of the countywide review.

20.9 To receive the following Planning Applications

a) **DM/2022/00736**

Little Bank 8 Porthycarne Street Usk Monmouthshire NP15 1RY Air Source Heat Pump, installation of a window to the northwest and a sky light

Recommend Approval- subject to the heat pump complying with regulations

21.0 To receive an update on the Masterplan for Usk

There had been a positive meeting last week. Still waiting for

- Work to be completed regarding the buses
- More detailed work on Bridge Street.

Resolved: UTC need to meet and give feedback on the plans from Roberts Limerick.

Steering Group scheduled to meet 13th March

21.2 To receive a report from the Groups/Organizations within the Town

- Twinning trip to Graben – Neudorf 30th April – 3rd May 2023. It was confirmed the arrangements are in place for the visit.
- Save the River Usk – will hold a festival on the 1st June
- Usk Civic Society – to celebrate an Alfred Russel Wallace Day – 5th July
- Together for the Climate -will be hosting a climate café in the Usk Hub, every Thurs 12-2pm.

21.3 To receive an update on use of the former Usk Household Recycling Centre (UHRC)

Confirmation received from Nick Keyse MCC, that credit will be given for the Licence Fee paid by UTC for the period when no licence was fee due.

Use of the area needs to be discussed UBSEG /No 49 had suggested a possible self-funding commercial recycling centre

Resolved: UTC to meet and discuss how best the UHRC can be utilised for the Town

21.4 To receive a report from the Events Committee

See Events report dated 28th February 2024

- The recent Choral Festival had been very successful
- Mayor's Tea Dance continues on 2nd Sunday of every month at Memorial Hall £5 entry with tea & cake.
- Green Top Markets will host markets in Twyn Square on 30th March

Resolved: UTC had allocated the Usk Participatory fund to a number of local organisations.

UTC Events committee is considering a summer event – Usk Young Farmers have been approached to see if they may be interested

Christmas Festival – UTC still waiting to see what involvement (UBSEG) propose.

Cllr Harrison rejoined the meeting at this point

21.5 To discuss the future of the Town Clock

TK has made UTC aware of the Community Ownership Fund. This fund helps community groups buy or renovate assets that would otherwise be lost to the community.

Resolved: TK will take up with Craig O'Connor, MCC, to understand the procedures/cost of taking the clock on as asset.

21.6 To discuss concerns raised by a resident regarding crossing the road at the Porthycarne St, Bridge St, Maryport St junction

Following discussion, it was resolved the issues raised by the resident were being discussed under the new development proposals, the consultants will take these onboard and will include in the consultation plans

21.7 To discuss concerns about the dangerous parking in Four Ash Street

This matter had been raised with Inspector Sowrey prior to the meeting.

Lines and signs are being considered for this area but will be included in the 2024-25 budget.

Resolved: MH will ask residents about displaying no parking signs on their premises to discourage parking.

21.8 To receive an update on the Usk Athletic Club - Path Order Application

It was noted by members that following consultation with UTC in Sept 2023, there had been an objection raised regarding the path order application. The Rights of Way Officer has subsequently liaised with the Athletic Club and it appears the club is seeking to address the objection .

21.9 To approve the Minutes taken in Committee on the 12th February 2024

The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record

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 item 22.0

22.0 To discuss Usk Town Council's Annual Community Awards 2024

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

22.1 Matters of Information

To receive information regarding the installation of an Outdoor table tennis table on the Owain Glyndwr field by Usk Scouts

Scouts have raised money for an outdoor tennis table. MCC has agreed it's installation and will officially record/draft a proper "hire/transfer" document.

19.8 Correspondence

From: Cllr O'Brien – notice of formal resignation from Usk Town Council

There was no further business and the meeting ended at 7.30pm

Draft