

**Minutes of a monthly meeting of Usk Town Council held at
The Sessions House, Usk, on Monday 11th June 2018 at 7.30pm.**

Present: Cllr G Roderick, Cllr A Leathwood, Cllr C Wilkinson, Cllr Ms. I Brown, Cllr M Evans,
Cllr J Jeremiah, Cllr J Richards, C. Cllr B Strong
Town Clerk - Mrs. Tracey Huxley

Prior to the meeting at 6.45pm Nick Penny and Maureen McAllister from the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean
Tourism addressed Full Council

3.6 To accept Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Tony Watkins, RFO Ms Jenny Mee

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

Cllr Evans declared an interest in all matters relating to Usk Civic Society and the siting of the Alfred Russell
Wallace (ARW) statue.

3.8 To Approve for accuracy minutes of the Annual Meeting on 14th May 2018

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

3.9 To Approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2018

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

4.0 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2018

There were none

4.1 To receive a report from the Sessions House Management Committee

See report dated 4th June 2018

Cllr Leathwood thanked Cllrs Wilkinson, Roderick, and the other volunteers Lyn Barrett, Richard Wadley and
George Smith for all their hard work in creating the beautiful new garden at the front of the Sessions House

4.2 To receive the monthly finance report

The reconciliation for April/March 2018 showed no erroneous receipts or payments.

4.3 To receive Planning applications

- a) **DC 2017/01181** Willows Garden Centre Site between the months of July to March (inclusive) in any
year. **The Willows Garden Centre Baron Street Usk NP15 1AS. Recommend Approval**
- b) **DM/2018/00736** HMP Usk Wireless fire detection system & associated works **47 Maryport Street,
Usk NP15 1XP Recommend Approval**
- c) **DM/2018/00526** Change of use of first floor offices to residential, with associated works. Ground
Floor and First Floor Offices **5 Bridge Street Usk Np15 1SW Recommend Approval**
- d) **DM/2018/00581** Alteration and extension of existing modern extension to listed house
11 New Market Street Usk NP15 1AU Recommend Approval
- e) **DM/2018/00582** Alteration and extension of existing modern extension to listed house
11 New Market Street Usk NP15 1AU Recommend Approval

- f) **DM//2018/00802** Change of use to the ground floor only, from A2 (financial services) to A1, A2, & A3 **NatWest 57 Bridge Street, Usk, NP15 1ZY** **Recommend Approval**
- g) **DM/2018/00887** Alteration and renovation and loft conversion of 2 storey semi-detached Grade 2 listed house **Garden House Twyn Square, Usk NP15 1BH** **Recommend Approval**
- h) **DM/2018/00888** Alteration and renovation and loft conversion of 2 storey semi-detached Grade 2 listed house **Garden House Twyn Square, Usk NP15 1BH** **Recommend Approval**

4.4 To receive a Report from the Traffic & HGVs Committee

Nothing to report.

Following completion of the Future Usk Survey it was resolved UTC will pick up with the Hamilton Bailie consultation.

4.5 To receive Reports from Members serving on other bodies

Usk Twinning Association

- Cllr Richards reported £1080 had been raised from the recent German evening
- It is proposed Usk Twinning, UTC and friends will visit Graben – Neudorf and there will be a return visit in 2020 in order to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Twinning
- Cllr Leathwood was pleased to announce that Burgermeister, Christian Eheim, will be attending the Civic Service

4.6 Areas of concern around the Town

Car parks

It was reported that there has been recent criminal damage to cars in the car park.

Resolved: All such matters to be reported to the Police

Usk Traditional Fish and Chip Shop

There has been a number of comments on social media about the current fish and chip shop signage and opening hours

Resolved: Cllr Strong will investigate this matter

Owain Glyndawr Field

Concerns were raised about the area on the Owain Glyndawr field that has been left uncut as part of the pollinator policy.

The concerns are:

- the long grass is encouraging people not to clear up after their dogs
- activities are planned on the field i.e. Open Gardens on the 23rd /24th June the Community Festival the weekend of 21st/22nd July.

Resolved: The Clerk to investigate this matter

4.7 To receive an update from the Community Communication Committee

Future Usk Survey

Cllr Brown presented the initial headline summary and recommendations to Usk Town Council from The Communications Committee

They are as follows: -

- Overall Nos Completing Survey 525
- Age range completing wide, with representation in all categories, but highest majority in the brackets 45-64.
- More women than men completed the survey, 62% female 38% male
- Majority live in Usk 71% 4% Llanbadoc (next highest percentage)
- Remainder from outlying villages and farms

Headline Areas identified in the survey

An initial survey scan has highlighted the 7 main areas that our Usk electorate and surrounding communities would like Usk Town Council to look at when considering and developing a plan for Future Usk for the short, medium and long term needs of the town.

These are in summary:

1. Traffic Management - Flow and volumes of traffic through the town, speed, HGVs and parking.
2. The future of our high street – businesses, shops, services.
3. Better leisure facilities especially facilities for teenagers.
4. Tourism and events.
5. Environmental Issues – litter, derelict buildings, pot holes, dog mess.
6. Transport, buses, alternatives - cycling, walking.
7. Improved communications across the town.

Next Steps and Recommendations

1. More in depth analysis of each of the separate survey sections is now required to compile and rank a priority list for Usk Town Council to work on. Being undertaken by Councillors Brown, Richards and Wilkinson over the summer – with full report produced and published by mid-September.
2. Many issues and suggestions raised are within responsibility area of Monmouthshire County Council so we will also need to work with them closely on solutions.
3. It will also be beneficial to involve members of the Usk community, neighbouring community councils and relevant groups in Usk in our solution seeking exercises.
4. It is apparent that issues and ideas arising from the survey link quite well to our UTC sub-committee structure and we recommend using this existing committee structure to work with the survey findings, as it is therefore fairly easy to match lead Councillors and Councillors belonging to committees to each of the areas identified.
5. We have already approved the setting up of a Youth Council so the needs of young people are better represented in the town – we recommend that when the Youth Council is in place that their focus should be the findings within the survey relating to under 25s and leisure facilities for teenagers. Further specifically tailored surveys within this group will be needed.
6. We also recommend linking to the relevant departments of Monmouthshire County Council e.g. Highways and Traffic Management; Youth Services; Business and Enterprise Team; Leisure and Tourism.
7. We recommend that we need to use the survey findings to revisit and evaluate the report produced in 2017 by Consultant Ben Hamilton Baille which recommended a 'whole town' approach to problem solving and planning for the future.

8. *We recommend that once the more in-depth analysis is carried out that a series of workshops and/ or meetings are held during Autumn 2018 to start the process of working on and developing a town plan, involving Monmouthshire County Council and members of the public. These will be active working parties with members charged with finding workable and affordable solutions.*
9. *A workshop schedule to be drawn up and published by mid Sept 2018*
10. *Aim/ outcome to create an outline Usk Town Plan by end of April 2019*

Resolved:

- To modify the report in order to make a public statement and press release
- The chairman will make reference to the report in his mayoral address at the Civic Service
- The chairman thanked Cllrs Brown, Wilkinson and Richards for all their hard work with the survey

4.8 To receive an update from the Events Committee including an update on the Big Usk Busk and Community Picnic the weekend of 21st/22nd July 2018

Christmas Markets

Cllr Richards gave a short presentation on proposals to rebrand the Christmas Markets as an "Usk Christmas Festival".

The proposals will include

- Adjustments to fit with Terms and Conditions of holding the markets
- Creating a broader Usk event to better serve local traders and residents
- Attracting more visitors to the town.

Resolved:

- Councillors are in favour of the proposals
- Liaison to take place with relevant parties and a steering group to be established

The Chairman thanked Cllr Richards for her work on this event

The Big Usk Busk/ Community Picnic

The Committee met with Nick Penny this evening and the plans for the event are progressing well.

Velothon

The bikes and bike wheels are now displayed around Usk

A couple of issues have been raised over the event.

- An incorrect map had been sent out to residents
- Signage and the closure of Castle street

Resolved:

- Velothon Wales will issue correct maps.
- The closure of Castle Street and signage will be examined more closely

4.9 To receive an update on the proposed gas works by Wales and West Utilities

Cllr Richards reported that the Gas Works are heading towards completion in Usk. They will then progress towards Little Mill.

Resolved: Following completion sweeping and cleaning will take place

5.0 To receive an update on the litter picker volunteer scheme

The group continue to meet on the first Saturday of the month with the next meeting scheduled for Saturday 7th July.

A letter has been sent to Coleg Gwent highlighting the problem with litter in and around their grounds

Resolved:

Correspondence received from Coleg Gwent gave reassurance that the Coleg will make every effort to address the issue of litter and the negative impact it has on the environment to their learners.

5.1 To receive an update on the promotion of “no plastic” in Usk

Resolved: Cllr Richards reported that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday 25th June at 7.30pm in the Sessions House

5.2 To discuss the Review of Communities and Electoral Arrangements

The review of communities and electoral arrangements by Mon CC has recommenced, based on the number of electors that UTC members be reduced from twelve to seven Councillors. This proposal will be forwarded to the Boundary Commission for their consideration.

Resolved:

- UTC wish to continue with twelve Councillors.
- UTC to await information on the consultation period and the process for responding once the Boundary commission makes it available.

5.3 To discuss the positioning of the Alfred Russell Wallace (ARW) statue in Twyn Square

Cllr Evans reported there is still uncertainty as to where the ARW statue will be sited.

Both UTC and Usk Civic Society has received a letter from a resident regarding the movement of a family memorial bench in favour of the ARW statue.

It was reported by Cllr Evans that this matter has been resolved.

5.4 To receive an update on the new General Data Protection Regulation (“GDPR”) which was introduced on 25th May 2018

Members of UTC were informed One Voice Wales has issued the following statement:

*“The Government has tabled an amendment to its own Data Protection Bill to **exempt** all community and town councils in Wales from the requirement to appoint a Data Protection Officer (DPO) under the General Data Protection Regulation*

All other measures will still apply, but the appointing a Data Protection Officer to support a council’s approach to data protection will be discretionary and may be regarded as good practice”

Resolved: UTC are working towards the necessary requirements for the GDPR

5.5 To discuss the proposed “World in Bloom” judges’ visit on 27th June 2018

It was confirmed the World in Bloom judging will take place on Wed 27th June.

Resolved: Cllr Richards will organize a buffet lunch for the judges, Usk in Bloom volunteers and council members in Sessions House

5.6 Correspondence:

From: Review of Communities and Electoral Arrangements

From: Mr. C. Evans regarding the positioning of the Alfred Russell Wallace statue

From: Coleg Gwent Regarding litter outside the college

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 5.7 and 5.8

5.7 To receive the nominations for Co option of new members to Usk Town Council

5.8 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

5.9 Any other Business *Any other business is at the discretion of and with prior notice to the Chairman*

Councillors were reminded of the following events

- Civic Service Sunday 17th June 3pm at St. Mary's Church
- Open Gardens 23rd -24th June
- WNO production of Rebel Rhondda 22nd – 24th June at Sessions House

There was no further business and the meeting formally closed at 9.25pm