

**Minutes of meeting of Usk Town Council held remotely on Zoom on
Wednesday 6th May 2020 at 11.00am**

Meeting ID: 812 1673 1012

Present

Chairman Cllr C Wilkinson, Cllr A. Watkins, Cllr A. Leathwood, Cllr S Williams, Cllr Roderick, Cllr M Howells, C. Cllr Strong, Cllr M. Evans, Cllr Galletley, RFO Mrs. D. Richards, Town Clerk Mrs. T Huxley

25.7 Welcome

The Chairman welcomed members to the first UTC meeting on Zoom and outlined household rules

25.8 Recording of meetings

- Under the Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014, recording and broadcast including blogging, tweeting and other social media is permitted during public session of Council meetings.
- The act of recording and broadcasting must not interfere with the meeting.
- The Council understands that some members of the public may not wish to be recorded and asks that they turn off their camera and access the meeting via audio only.

25.9 To receive notification of recent Councillor resignations

Members were informed there are currently three Town Councillor vacancies due the resignation of Councillors Jeremiah, Dancer and Richards. The Notice of Vacancies are currently advertised.

26.0 To accept apologies for absence

All Councillors present

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

Cllr A Watkins declared an interest in the following Planning Application

DM/2020/00451 Conigar House, Porthycarne Gate, Porthycarne Street, NP15 1RU Detached garage

26.2 To Approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 9th March 2020

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

26.3 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held 9th March 2020

There were none

26.4 To receive a report from the Sessions House Management Committee

There has been no SHMC report due to the Coronavirus crisis.

Resolved: There are currently no issues with the Sessions House. Consideration to be given to tenants regarding rent relief.

The following was reported

UTC has been successful in the first round of an application to CADW for renovations to the Sessions House

Resolved: Once there is a lift on current restrictions there will be a site visit from a CADW officer to assess the building

26.5 To receive the monthly finance report for April 2020

The reconciliation for April 2020 showed no erroneous receipts or payments.

i) To accept the appointment of Mr. John Evans as the Internal Auditor

Resolved: Mr. John Evans is appointed as the Internal Auditor and has completed the Internal Audit. This will be presented to Full Council for Approval at the Annual Meeting

26.6 To Approve the delegated powers of The Clerk during the current Coronavirus crisis for the following payments

Resolved: All payments made by the Clerk were included in the finance report for April 2020 and approved by Full Council

26.7 To discuss UTC's donation to Usk in Bloom 2020

UiB reported they have received official confirmation - competition wise - Wales in Bloom and Britain in Bloom have been cancelled for 2020. UiB wishes to continue with plans for the public floral displays this Summer, but is unable to fundraise and therefore, has requested a further donation from UTC .

Resolved: UTC appreciate all the work UiB do and it was agreed by Full Council to donate a further £2000 to the charity under section 137

26.8 To receive Planning Applications

- a) **DM/2020/00451** Conigar House, Pothycarne Gate, Pothycarne Street, NP15 1RU

Detached garage

Recommend Approval

26.9 To receive Reports from Members serving on other bodies

- Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Tourism
Cllr Williams reported the WVAFD are looking at ideas once the lockdown is eased, to let people know they are open and ready to start welcoming folks back.
They plan to put together a short video of innovative photography and are asking people to forward any photos or ideas they have, to get things started
- One Voice Wales (OVW)
OVW has asked local councils to complete a survey to assess the financial impact of Covid19.

Resolved: UTC has completed this survey

27.0 Areas of concern around the Town

The Cricket Club fence remains unsightly and in need of repair

Resolved: As there has been no response from the Usk Cricket Club or Usk Athletic Club (UAC) following numerous requests and emails, it was resolved the Clerk write officially to the Chairman of UAC asking this matter be addressed

27.1 To receive an update from Usk Twinning Association

Resolved: The scheduled visit in May has been cancelled due to the Coronavirus crisis. There is uncertainty about the visit planned in September

27.2 To receive an update the closure of the Usk Household Recycling Centre (UHRC)

It was reported the incidence of fly tipping has increased since closure of the UHRC.

Resolved: Members to put together a report supporting the continued opening of the UHRC

27.3 To receive an update on the Master Plan for Usk

No further meetings have taken place.

Resolved: UTC has given much thought and consideration to the varied views and comments of residents regarding the proposed re-routing of the A472. UTC also took the advice of both MCC officers and ARUP and as a result, it was unanimously agreed, that the proposed one-way system was not viable.

Resolved: UTC to remove the option from the Plan.

Residents will be asked to takedown the notices regarding the re-routing currently displayed around Usk

27.4 To receive an update forming a digital infrastructure sub- committee

Resolved: Cllr Williams & Howells will progress this further when able to do so

27.5 To accept proposals for nominations for Chairman 2020/2021

Cllr Galletley proposed the current Mayor Cllr Wilkinson and Deputy Mayor Cllr Watkins (see item 27.6) continue in office for another year.

Resolved: All Councillors were in favour of Cllr Christine Wilkinson remaining as Mayor for 2020/2021

27.6 To accept proposals for nominations for Deputy Chairman 2020/2021

Resolved: All Councillors were in favour of Cllr Tony Watkins remaining as Deputy Mayor for 2020/2021

27.7 To discuss the current state of the Usk Post Office

The Clerk reported she has been in discussion with Matthew Gatehouse and Richard Drinkwater regarding the possible reopening of the Post Office

Resolved: It is hoped this will be progressed in the next four weeks.

Cllr Strong to speak with Paul Jordan, Mon CC in a bid to expediate this

27.8 To receive an update on the poor amenity state of

a) The Whitehouse, Newmarket Street Usk

Resolved: Work appears to be on going

b) The Priory Gatehouse

Resolved: The Clerk has been in correspondence with Mon CC regarding the state/safety of the Gatehouse. An email has been written to Jonathan Morgan Heritage Officer, stating that not only UTC, but residents consider the current state of the Gatehouse to be unacceptable.

The correspondence highlighted the Gatehouse is a prime building in the town where people worship, attend marriages, and say farewell to the deceased.

UTC expressed concern, that if nothing is done to end the disrepair of the Gatehouse, it will remain in its current state for years to come, with the fencing being a permanent eyesore. UTC consider the only way to resolve this is for Mon CC to oblige the owner to repair the damage and to then remove the fence

27.9 To receive a report on the Mayor's Fundraising

Cllr Wilkinson reported that to date, she has raised £4000 towards her chosen charities

28.0 To discuss the Alfred Russel Wallace statue application

Planning application for the ARW statue has been agreed by Mon CC.

However, there is an issue with the street licence application. This can only be applied for by UTC, who would as a result, be required to take ownership of the statue. The Heritage Lottery Grant would then have to be applied for by UTC, which, may jeopardize UTC application for Sessions House restoration grants

Resolved: This matter to be explored further by Usk Civic Society

28.1 To inform UTC of the Accessibility Statement for Usk Town Council Website

An accessibility statement has been added to the footer of the UTC website.

Further accessibility amendments are required to ensure the UTC website meets the current regulations by September 2020

Resolved: Cllr Williams will take a look at the amendments required

28.2 To receive the Clerks report on the following

- **Winter Festival** – following Cllr Richards Resignation the Diane Richards RFO is taking expressions of interest for stalls on a 'date received' basis
- **To receive an update on the commemorations plans for VE day Friday 8th May 2020**

All arrangements for outdoor celebrations have been cancelled. Residents have been notified of televised and online activities for Friday 8th May.

- **To receive an update on the proposed Usk Park toilets** - Work is currently ongoing
- **Keep Wales Tidy Local Places for Nature scheme**
Resolved: UTC has been successful in its application and UTC will be able to start work as soon as government guidance allows
- **To receive an update on Coronavirus Usk help & support group – it was reported the group are doing an excellent job in helping the community**
Resolved: UTC to donate £100 under section 137 to support the work being undertaken
- **There is currently no update on planning application DM/2018/01641** Erection of fuel storage building to replace existing storage compound and relocation of 2no.porta cabin office buildings together with parking provision Trustee Court Farms Barns, Clytha Road trotter Common Glenelg Monmouthshire
- **Mon CC Dog Fouling Group** – all work has been postponed until further notice

28.3 Correspondence

From: Resident from Monkshoods regarding felling of trees by NRW at Can Maws wood – for information

28.4 Any Other Business

Notification has been received from The Usk Farmer's Club that they are continuing to plan for this year's Usk Show – this will be discussed further at the next Full Council meeting