

# Axminster Town Council

Office Hours  
Monday to Thursday  
9am – 4pm

Mayor: Cllr Jill Farrow  
Town Clerk: Paul Hayward

[www.axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk)



THE GUILDHALL  
WEST STREET  
AXMINSTER  
DEVON  
EX13 5NX

Tel. 01297 32088

Email: [Clerk@axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:Clerk@axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk)

**Minutes of the meeting of the Operations Committee held on Monday,  
15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7.00 p.m. at Axminster Guildhall  
Minutes approved on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**Present: Cllrs. Walden (Chair), Brooker (Vice-Chair), Bruce, Burrough, Farrow, Paice and Willey. Meeting was quorate.**

**Also in attendance was the Clerk to the Council, Paul Hayward.**

No members of the public in attendance.

Meeting began at 7.00pm.

The Chair of the Committee, Cllr. Walden, welcomed all in attendance and outlined fire precautions, exits etc and ran through the agenda procedure and protocol, noting the agenda statements as published.

**Public Forum:**

No members of the public were in attendance. No committee members indicated that they wished to speak in public forum session.

**Chair subsequently closed the public forum session at 7.05pm.**

**OC24/001**

**To note members of the committee present:**

As detailed above.

**OC24/002**

**To note and, if thought fit, to approve apologies (and reasons for absence):**

**(LGA 1972 S.85 (1))**

No apologies received.

**OC24/003**

**To note members of the committee not otherwise in attendance.**

Cllr. Langdon's absence was noted.

**OC24/004**

**To receive any declarations of interest from members of the committee in relation to items of business on this agenda and to note any dispensations previously afforded. This does not preclude the need for members to declare any additional interests that may arise during the meeting.**

None declared.

**OC24/005)**

**To consider and, if thought fit, approve the minutes of the Operations Committee meeting held 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023.**

**Chair proposed approval of these minutes. Seconded by Vice-Chair. Resolved unanimously. Chair signed the approved minutes accordingly.**

*Continued overleaf*

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## OC24/005ii)

To consider any matters arising (not included within this agenda as business to be attended to) from the meeting of the 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and to receive progress report from Clerk:

Clerk outlined those matters outstanding/arising from the previous meeting that had not been included in this meeting agenda. Noted with thanks.

## OC24/006

To consider any matters listed on this agenda that Councillors consider should be dealt with as confidential business as per the provisions of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

No such matters raised or considered other than those also shown on the agenda under item OC24/012 (IC).

## Operations Committee business to be considered:

### OC24/007

To consider matters pertaining to the Town Cemetery:

i) To consider the future use of the former “top” area (currently designated as ZZ) at the Town Cemetery for future burials; Clerk to provide report.

**Proposed by Chair, seconded by KB. Resolved unanimously.**

It was suggested that the Operations Committee undertake a site visit to the cemetery when the weather improves.

### OC24/008

To consider matters pertaining to Town Amenity and services:

i) To consider whether the Town Council wishes to afford a grant to a community group based at Abbey Gate for the purpose of providing another AED at the southern area of the town; the group has offered to purchase the cabinet from their own resources and to provide a host mounting point and an electrical supply. Likely cost to the Town Council - £875 net.

**It was proposed by JF that the Council should not provide grant assistance to this organisation as the costs of maintaining the pool of defibrillators in the town was now significant. Seconded by EP. Resolved unanimously.** Clerk: please convey this decision to the applicant.

ii) To approve the removal of the installed defibrillator at Raymonds Hill Post office to another location nearby; *Clerk to provide update.*

Clerk confirmed that the proprietors of the Hunters Lodge PH had agreed to act as a host for the RH defibrillator cabinet and AED. **Proposed by Chair, seconded by Vice-Chair. Resolved.**

Clerk: please action accordingly.

iii) To consider the proposals for the permanent disconnection of the Christmas Lighting on the Cedar Tree (recently damaged) on Minster Green, or to approve replacement lighting.

**It was proposed by JF, seconded by DW, that the existing lights on the damaged tree should be disconnected and the supply made safe. Redundant lights to be disposed of. Resolved.**

Clerk: please action accordingly.

*Continued overleaf*

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## **OC24/008**

### **To consider matters pertaining to Town Amenity and services (continued):**

iv) To note the decision of the Town Council (FULL) on 8th January 2024 to proceed with the Millwey Rise Play extension project using dedicated and ring-fenced Section 106 funds and, furthermore:

a) To afford delegated authority to the Clerk/RFO to seek suitable and appropriate legal counsel for the purposes of verifying the Heads of Terms (and subsequent lease) for the 30 year tenancy of the proposed land from EDDC. **Proposed by Chair, seconded by EP. Resolved.**

Clerk: please action accordingly.

b) To afford delegated authority to the Clerk (and Deputy Clerk) to commence discussions with relevant play consultants (as per previous resolution of Council) to start the administrative arrangements for the clearance, preparation, design and planning of the site to enable the completion of the project.

Clerk was asked to discuss the project with the EDDC Play Engineer and return back to OPSCOMM with a further report. Members felt that some additional consultation should take place with key user groups especially as the equipment proposed was aimed at those who already experience specific barriers to play amenity. Noted.

c) To consider whether the Council should use any additional reserve funds to enable the project to proceed.

**Proposed by JF, seconded by Chair, that no additional Town Council funds be put towards this project. Resolved.** It was suggested however that external grant funding might be available and Clerk was asked to investigate this further and report back with his findings.

## **OC24/009**

### **Chair's Announcements / Matters of Urgency to be noted:**

Chair noted recent correspondence from residents regarding flooding events in the town and suggestions put forward thereafter that the Town Council should create a parish Emergency Plan. It was suggested that this matter be considered by the FULL Town Council given the resource and cost implications. It was also noted that there was little the Town Council could do to prevent flooding in the town given our limited powers and funding; it was felt that the EA were the agency to offer more help and advice and assistance.

Chair also noted a request from Plastic Free Axminster (PFA) making a request for the removal of an item of town street furniture/amenity to try and alleviate litter nuisance in the vicinity.

Members did not feel this was necessary but thanked PFA and their team of volunteers for their continued sterling efforts to keep the town clean and tidy with regular litter picks and other anti-litter projects.

*Continued overleaf*

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## OC24/010

Date of next scheduled meeting for the committee; 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024 – 7pm (Guildhall)

Future committee meetings: 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2024 \*

\* These dates were recently revised by FULL Council as per their resolution.

## OC24/011

**The Vice-Chair of the Committee proposed that [under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, (as amended by the Local Government Act 1972)] the public, (including the press) should be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. Seconded by DW. Resolved unanimously.**

**Matters to be considered in committee session (Part Two):**

**The items of business listed below and any others from this agenda to be agreed upon by members of the committee if and when appropriate (see OC24/006)**

## OC24/012 (IC)

**To consider matters pertaining to the Old Courthouse building.**

i) Matters pertaining to the Old Courthouse complex which require consideration but which are considered confidential due to the commercially sensitive nature of the business to be considered (as the tenancies of that building are confidential due to the information likely to be considered by members).

Report received from RFO. Noted. No further action proposed at this time.

**With no further business to attend to, the Chair closed the meeting at 20.05hrs.**

Signed ..... Date: 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024

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**Minutes approved on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024**