

AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OLD COURTHOUSE COMMITTEE HELD IN THE MAIN HALL AT THE GUILDHALL ON MONDAY 22ND FEBRUARY 2016 AT 4.00 P.M.

1. PRESENT: Cllrs. G.S. Godbeer (Chairman), D.R.H. Hull, A.T. Moulding (part), J.W. Walden and the Town Clerk.

2. APOLOGIES : Cllrs. P.G. Hayward,.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28TH SEPTEMBER 2015 : the minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2016, having been approved and adopted by the Town Council were signed by the Chairman.

4. PUBLIC FORUM: None.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28TH SEPTEMBER 2015 NOT COVERED BY AGENDA ITEMS: it was noted that a letter of thanks had been received from Axminster Arts for the various electrical and other repairs which had been done.

6. GARDEN MATTERS

a) Programme of works – to remain the same with minimal care to create an informal garden. It was noted that it was important that vegetation be kept cut back from pathways.

Agreed that the lavender in the round bed should be renewed. The wish was expressed that the existing Dyers' Garden remain in place under the care of the gardener and that a new Dyers' Garden with new plants be established in due course at the Heritage Centre by the original designer and maintained by her.

A letter will be sent to Axminster Arts regarding the statuette and the request for a permanent awning.

b) Ivy – the consent of the owner of the adjacent gardener had been obtained for the eradication of the plant. Cllr. Godbeer will arrange with the gardener for the most effective way to remove the ivy from the building.

7. MUSEUM AREA: the Town Clerk said that no new expressions of interest had arisen from the advertisement placed in the press and on the Town Council notice board and website.

A letter had been received from Arc suggesting that the area would make a good social hub for several of the local charities acting as a group.

Axminster Arts had put forward a suggestion that the Courtroom space could be used as a studio show case for local artists.

It was agreed that remedial decorative works would need to be done throughout the premises and other matters such as provision of heating and other electrical works may be needed.

Cllr. Godbeer reported on the accessibility options which had been put forward by the property consultants. Subsequent investigations had indicated that two of these options would not be acceptable. It was agreed that this needed further discussion and contact will be made with the consultants regarding new suggestions. It was agreed that no long term plans should be made until the question of accessibility options had been investigated fully and discussions held with the Listed Buildings Officer.

It was agreed that any meeting with prospective tenants be deferred until the space had been cleared completely. A deadline of 31st March was set for this.

8. MAINTENANCE MATTERS:

a) Roof – there had been further ingress of water in the Tourist Information Centre lobby. The Deputy Town Clerk had asked the contractor to take appropriate remedial action.

b) Other Exterior Works – Cllr. Godbeer will discuss the exterior painting works required at the same time as he meets the contractor to discuss what is needed to refresh the interior of the Museum Area. A letter of thanks will be sent to Axminster Care Service for the work carried out on the entrance gates. The bin area has been gated off. Cllr. Godbeer, seconded by Cllr. D.R.H. Hull, proposed that approval be given for guttering clearance works costing £120 to that part of the building which is accessed from the rear of the Archway Bookshop. Agreed.

Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. D.R.H. Hull, proposed that approval be given to a different contractor to undertake inspection and clearance of the remaining guttering areas and removal of vegetative growth on the frontage of the building for the sum of £600. Agreed.

c) Senior Citizens' Centre – nothing to report.

d) Axminster Arts Cafe – a contractor had sealed the gaps in the plaster work which had arisen during the recent electrical works.

e) Tourist Information Centre – as at a) above.

f) Museum – as at item 7.

g) Devon County Council Office – no matters had been raised by the tenants.

9. ACCESSIBILITY: Cllr. Godbeer outlined the various options suggested by the property consultants. The various disadvantages and advantages of each were discussed but none was felt to be ideal. A different option was suggested and this will be put to the property consultants for their consideration. Cllr. Moulding arrived at this point.

10. FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT: the Town Clerk is still working on this, pending the final clearance of the Museum. Liaison with tenants will be necessary for communal areas such as the stairwell and first floor landing in the Arts Cafe area.

Signed Date