

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday 11th January 2021 at 7.00 p.m.
Under Regulation 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020

Present:

Deputy Town Mayor: Cllr. Ms. J.J. Farrow

Councillors: M.N. Adamson-Drage, C.A. Doherty, M. Featherstone,
Mrs. S.L.N. Leat, M. Mynard, Mrs. A. G. Sedgewick, S. Sleight,
M.D.G. Spurway and J.W. Walden.

The Town Clerk (Miss H. Kirkcaldie), the Deputy Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer, (Mrs. Z. Adamson-Drage) (for part of meeting) and the Administrative Assistant (Mrs. S. Gay).

In attendance: Dist. Cllrs. S. Jackson and A.T. Moulding.

5 Members of the public. 1 representative of the Press.

Prior to the start of the formal business of the meeting, the Deputy Mayor expressed the collective grief of Councillors, staff and residents following the sudden and unexpected death of the Town Mayor, Cllr. Mrs. A. Young, on 23rd December 2020. She then invited anyone present, who so wished to do the same. The tributes paid reflected the importance the Mayor had placed on furthering the well-being of the local residents and her mission to ensure that the town they lived in reflected their needs and desires in the facilities and environment provided. Her friendly, welcoming and artistic nature were all mentioned, and those contributing spoke of how she had touched their lives and how much she would be missed.

2021/0001 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR: two candidates were put forward, Cllr. Farrow (proposed Cllr. Doherty, seconded Cllr. Sedgewick) and Cllr. Walden (proposed Cllr. Adamson-Drage, seconded Cllr. Mynard). Following a secret vote, Cllr. Farrow was duly elected.

2021/0002 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR: two candidates were put forward, Cllr. Sedgewick (proposed Cllr. Farrow seconded Cllr. Doherty) and Cllr. Walden (proposed Cllr. Adamson-Drage). Cllr. Walden indicated that he did not wish to accept the nomination so Cllr. Sedgewick was duly elected.

2021/0003 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cty./Dist. Cllr. I.H. Hall.

2021/0004 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: CLLRS. DOHERTY, FARROW, MRS. LEAT, MRS. SEDGEWICK AND SPURWAY EACH DECLARED PERSONAL INTERESTS AS BEING MEMBERS OF THE AXMINSTER GUILDHALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE IN RESPECT OF ANY ITEMS RELATING TO THE GUILDHALL.

CLLR. FARROW DECLARED AN INTEREST AS BEING A MEMBER OF AXMINSTER TWINNING ASSOCIATION AND A GOVERNOR OF AXMINSTER

COMMUNITY PRIMARY ACADEMY AND AS A JOINT TENANT OF A TOWN COUNCIL ALLOTMENT AT WOODBURY PARK ALLOTMENTS

CLLR. ADAMSON-DRAGE DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING THE SPOUSE OF THE DEPUTY-CLERK

2021/0005 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7TH DECEMBER 2020: The Deputy Clerk said that the figure to be taken from reserves quoted in paragraph 2020/0402 should read £51821.95 not £53001.95. Cllr. Farrow, seconded by Cllr. Walden, proposed that, subject to that correction, the minutes be approved for accuracy. Agreed. Cllr. Farrow, seconded by Cllr. Walden, proposed that the minutes be adopted as policy. Agreed.

2021/0006 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14TH DECEMBER 2020: These were not available.

2021/0007 ROBIN CROSS CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD: this had been awarded to Ms. Cindy Furse for her work in organising community events such as the Christmas Lights, the Cherry Fayre and the Christmas Market, providing liaison between the Statutory Care Services and local voluntary organisations and her role in Axminster Community Emergency Response during the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic. Led by the Town Mayor, congratulations were extended from all present.

2021/0008 FINANCIAL MATTERS – APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS FOR DECEMBER:
CLLR. ADAMSON-DRAGE DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST IN RESPECT OF PAYMENTS MADE TO THE DEPUTY TOWN CLERK. HE WAS PLACED IN THE WAITING ROOM FOR THE DURATION OF THIS ITEM OF BUSINESS.

Cllr. Farrow, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Leat, proposed that the payments as listed be approved. Agreed.

CLLR. ADAMSON-DRAGE WAS RE-ADMITTED FROM THE WAITING ROOM.

2021/0009 FINANCIAL MATTERS — RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER’S REPORT: the Deputy Clerk said that she was carrying out work in readiness for the financial year end. The third quarter report against budget would be dealt with at the next meeting. Risk Management and Strategic Planning training had been arranged for the evening of 2nd February.

2021/0010 FINANCIAL MATTERS –INSURANCE: The Town Clerk reported that the loss adjustor had approved the contractor for the cleaning of the fire damaged section of the Old Courthouse.

Cllr. Walden asked that a valuation be sought from the District Council for the Jubilee Field so that appropriate allowance could be made for its insurance cover.

2021/0011 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE: A document put forward by Cllr. Adamson-Drage outlining a possible committee structure had been circulated. Following discussion, Cllr. Farrow expressed the view that in the interests of clarity it would be preferable for responsibility for the two major buildings, namely the

Guildhall and the Old Courthouse, to lie with the Strategy and Finance Committee, while that for the Cemetery Chapels would lie with the Operations Committee as would Allotments and the minor structures of the War Memorial and Jubilee Fountain. To enable engagement with the Neighbourhood Highway Officer, Traffic Management matters would be dealt with via ad hoc working parties which would report to the Operations Committee.

Cllr. Farrow, seconded by Cllr. Adamson-Drage, proposed that the new Committee Structure be adopted subject to the clarifications above. Agreed.

2021/0012 REVISION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS: The committee structure having been adopted, Councillors were asked to let the Town Clerk know by noon on 14th January those Committees on which they wished to serve.

2021/0013 MEETING DATES FOR 2021: No amendments were put forward in respect of the new schedule of meetings.

2021/0014 COVID 19 RELATED MATTERS: There was nothing new to be reported but Cllr. Farrow, seconded by Cllr. Walden, proposed that power be delegated to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Town Clerk to take any actions necessary as a result of new directives from central Government. Agreed.

2020/0015 OPENING AND CLOSING OF OLD COURTHOUSE GARDEN: The winter opening hours are from 10.00 to 16.00 and in summer from 10.00 to 21.00. The garden will be locked overnight. The opening will be subject to Government Regulations regarding COVID 19.

2021/0016 TOWN FORUM – PROJECT IN MEMORY OF CLLR. YOUNG: a member of the public suggested that fitting project to mark Cllr. Young's service to the town would be the siting a of a defibrillator at the Waffle House. This would make provision right at the centre of the town and could be achieved at minimal cost by viring funding set aside for provision of a defibrillator box at Weycroft along with contributions from the three District Councillors and a resident. A larger project suggested, also dear to Cllr. Young's heart was to improve the land beside the pedestrian approach to the station from Trafalgar Way. Cllr. Mynard offered to liaise with the rail authorities in the first instance.

The matter of suitable ways to commemorate Cllr. Young's life will be placed on the next agenda.

2021/0017 MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON 7th DECEMBER 2020: The Town Clerk reported that various matters were being progressed. Cllr. Walden suggested that an explanatory note be prepared setting out the reasoning behind the setting of the precept. He offered to prepare a draft for consideration at the next Town Council meeting.

2021/0018 MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON 14th DECEMBER 2020: not available.

2021/0019 MATTERS OF URGENCY: None.

2021/0020 MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 9TH NOVEMBER 2020:

Cllr. Mrs. Leat, Chairman of the Committee, proposed, seconded by Cllr. Adamson-Drage, that these be approved for accuracy. Agreed. Cllr. Mrs. Leat, seconded by Cllr. Doherty, proposed that they be adopted as Town Council policy. Agreed.

2021/0021 MATTERS ARISING FROM ABOVE MEETING: None.

2021/0022 MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 10TH DECEMBER 2020:

Cllr. Mrs. Leat, Chairman of the Committee, proposed, seconded by Cllr. Adamson-Drage, that these be approved for accuracy. Agreed. Cllr. Mrs. Leat, seconded by Cllr. Sedgewick proposed that they be adopted as Town Council policy. Agreed.

2021/0023 MATTERS ARISING FROM ABOVE MEETING: None

2021/0024 MINUTES OF THE BUILDINGS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON 30TH NOVEMBER 2020: Cllr. Farrow, seconded by Cllr. Walden proposed that these be approved for accuracy. Agreed. Cllr. Farrow seconded by Cllr. Leat, proposed that they be adopted as Town Council policy. Agreed.

2021/0025 MATTERS ARISING FROM ABOVE MEETING: None

Signature Date.....