

AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY, 6th APRIL 2021 AT 7.00 P.M.

1. PRESENT: Cllr. Walden (Chairman), Cllr. M.D.G. Spurway (Vice-chairman), Cllr. J.J. Farrow, the Town Clerk and the Administrative Assistant.

0 Members of the public, 0 representative of the press.

2. APOLOGIES: Cllrs. M. Mynard and S. Sleigh.

3. NOT PRESENT: none.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

CLLRS. FARROW AND SPURWAY EACH DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST 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. WALDEN DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING A MEMBER OF AXMINSTER COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE.

CLLR. WALDEN DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE GOVERNORS OF AXE VALLEY ACADEMY, AS A MEMBER OF AXMINSTER SKATEPARK STEERING GROUP, AXMINSTER TWINNING ASSOCIATION AND AS BEING SAFEGUARDING LEAD FOR AXMINSTER YOUTH CLUB.

5. COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE: No alterations were put forward.

6. PUBLIC FORUM: None.

7. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES – POSITIONING OF POLE FOR LYME STREET VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGN; this had been referred to the Highway Authority and a response was awaited.

8. UPDATE ON SECTION 106 MATTERS: Three projects remain outstanding. The Town Clerk expressed her fear that progress with the Skatepark Project had been so slow that there was a risk that the funding might be lost. She will send a letter to the Chief Executive at the District Council regarding the date for a proposed site meeting. Consultation with three local primary schools had indicated that the Proludic Climbing Wall was most popular. The next stage is to contact the landowner and put an agreement in place. Then a planning application can be prepared and submitted to the District Council. The most likely site for the fun trail is the Millwey Rise Play area when that is upgraded.

9. UPDATE ON VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGNAGE: Devon County Council had been informed of the equipment requirements and preferred sites for the sign poles. A response to the email was awaited.

10. UPDATE ON TOWN SIGNAGE: Cllr. Walden advised that he was waiting for Axminster Heritage and Totally Locally to arrange a date for a meeting at which proposals would be produced for consideration by the Town Council and, if necessary, submission for all necessary approvals from other authorities and landowners.

Councillors expressed a preference for re-instatement of the hanging sign over the entrance to the Old Courthouse rather than provision of a multi-finger post on the Minster Green opposite.

11. UPDATE ON JUBILEE FIELD: correspondence between the developer and the District Council suggested that both parties were slightly nearer reaching an agreement that they had been previously.

The immediate maintenance arrangements in respect of the play area safety inspections and grass cutting, should the Town Council become responsible for the field in the near future, were discussed. It was agreed that if necessary, these be done by contractors on a short-term basis if lack of staff training and available working hours precluded their being undertaken by Council staff. The matter will be referred to the Employment Committee. Training for the outdoor staff in respect of playground inspection will be arranged as soon as possible.

12. REPORT ON REVIEW OF EQUIPMENT AND SERVICING ARRANGEMENTS: there was insufficiently detailed information available at the meeting at which this was to have been discussed and the key staff members were unavoidably absent. The meeting will be re-convened as soon as it can be fitted in.

13. UPDATE ON PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY: the Lengthsman had completed his condition surveys of each path and based on that information will undertake remedial work such as replacing/refurbishing finger posts and improving way marking over the summer in tandem with clearance of vegetation. Consideration will be given to numbering each path at suitable points along its course, including on way marking posts. A small grant towards this work may be available.

14. UPDATE ON JUBILEE FOUNTAIN: the draft planning application had been circulated. No changes were put forward other than those raised already by the Town Clerk. It was agreed that the application should be submitted. Western Power Distribution were awaiting notification as to when they should disconnect the power supply.

15. MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE CEMETERY:

- a. Paths – a more robust pathway is needed than that laid in the Z section 3 years ago, which is on the verge of disintegration. Cllr. Walden said that professional advice was needed. The Town Clerk suggested that the Community Benefit Fund might be a suitable source of finance.
- b. Preparation of Next Interment Area – Cllr. Spurway will talk to former Cllr. Mrs. Spiller regarding the preparation prior to occupancy of the present Z section. The Cemetery Caretaker will also be consulted. Advice will be sought from District and County Councils regarding how to proceed should there be long-term trespass in the area scheduled for next use.

16. MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE ALLOTMENTS:

- a. Asbestos – the sites at Millwey and North Street had been cleared. Tenants present during the works had commended the standard of work of the contractors.
- b. Visibility Splay at Lower Gateway at Woodbury – as COVID regulations become more relaxed, Cllr. Walden will visit a local resident to discuss the possibility of a mirror placed in one of the gardens as a means of resolving this problem.

17. STREET FURNITURE: The outdoor staff will replace the defective panel in the Trinity Square bus shelter in the week beginning 12th April.

Following a lengthy discussion, the desirability or otherwise of placing a seat in the former bus stop recess on Chard Road was referred to the full Town Council.

18. HEALTH AND SAFETY: No matters were raised.

19. HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE: The Town Clerk had not completed work on these.

20. MEMBERSHIP OF HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE: The unforeseen but unavoidable lack of staff able to attend the preliminary working party meant that this could not be settled.

21. MATTERS OF URGENCY: None.

Cllr. Farrow 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) 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. Cllr. Spurway seconded the proposal.
Agreed

22. QUOTATIONS RECEIVED

- a. Asbestos Removal. The Administrative Assistant advised that a greater-than-agreed amount of asbestos had been removed from the site at Millwey and that there was a possibility that the contractor may make an additional charge.
- b. Cemetery Chapels – Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Spurway, proposed that the quote to prepare a specification for remedial work to the stone fabric for the sum of £300 be approved. Agreed.

23. ALLOTMENT TENANCY MATTERS: The Administrative Assistant gave an update on the length of waiting list for each site.

Signed Date