

Axminster Town Council

Office Hours
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
10am – 12 noon

Mayor: Cllr Jill Farrow
Town Clerk: Paul Hayward

www.axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk



THE GUILDHALL
WEST STREET
AXMINSTER
DEVON
EX13 5NX

Tel. 01297 32088

Email: Clerk@axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk

Axminster Town Council: Minutes of the meeting of the FULL Council

Minutes approved 11th April 2022 FULL COUNCIL; Part ONE version (Redacted).

Held in person on Monday 28th March 2022 at 7.00 pm in the Guildhall.

Present: Cllrs. Farrow (JF) (Chair), Sedgewick (AS) (Vice-Chair), Birnie (SBI.), Brooker (S) (SBr.), Burrough (KB), Holt (SH), Leat (SL), Paice (EP), Spurway (MS), Steadman (BS) and Walden (JW) (*Meeting was quorate*).

Locum Town Clerk, Paul Hayward (LTC).
1 members of the public.

Chair welcomed all in attendance. Chair highlighted the building fire precautions and alerted those present to the fire exits. Chair also reminded those present of their personal obligations in relation to the ongoing CV19 situation and health guidance in that regard.

Public Forum session.

No public representations made.
Chair closed the Public Forum session at 7.05pm

EFC22/001

To note members of committee present:

Attendance at meeting shown above.

EFC22/002

To note and, if thought fit, to approve apologies for absence and reasons therefore:

Cllr. Brooker (AB). Absence noted and reason and apology approved.
Cllr. Huskisson (AH) Absence noted and reason and apology approved.
Cllr. Mynard (MM) Absence noted and reason and apology approved.

Proposed by Chair, seconded by AS. Resolved unanimously.

EFC22/003

To note members of committee not otherwise present and to receive any other apologies for absence:

None.

Continued overleaf.

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EFC22/004

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:
A declaration at this point does not preclude the need for members to declare any additional interests that may arise during this meeting.

None declared. Dispensation afforded to Cllr. Farrow (14/02/2022) was noted.

EFC22/005

i) To consider and, if thought fit, to approve the minutes of the FULL Council meeting held on 14th March 2022 and to consider any matters arising from those minutes:

The Chair proposed that the consideration of these minutes be deferred until the next Ordinary FULL meeting of the Council on 11th April 2022. Agreed.

EFC22/006

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:

None raised by committee members.

EFC22/007

To receive update on the Casual Vacancy that exists as Town Councillor for the Weycroft Ward created by the resignation of former Councillor, Charles Hall:
BS and JW recused themselves from the vote as they were acquaintances of the candidates.

After a paper ballot of members present, and the votes having been counted, **it was proposed by Chair, seconded by SH, that Andrew Bourne be co-opted onto the Town Council for the vacancy Weycroft Ward seat. Resolved nem con (2 abstentions).**

LTC to write to both candidates accordingly.

EFC22/008

To consider how the Town Council (and the wider Axminster community) might support refugees from Ukraine at this time:

Councillors considered a report on the combined work being undertaken by Team Devon (DCC and EDDC) in this regard and, after debate, the Chair suggested that the Town Council assess the ongoing situation and offer whatever help it could (within its powers) to assist the higher tier authorities in helping any refugees that required assistance or shelter in Axminster. Agreed.

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EFC22/009

To consider any matters of urgency for noting/Chair's announcements:

None raised.

EFC22/010

To note the date of the next FULL meeting of the Town Council; 11th April 2022

Noted.

AS 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. Seconded by Chair. Resolved.

All members of the public were thanked for their attendance and participation by the Chair and the meeting moved into closed session (Part Two). Recording of meeting was stopped to ensure a full Part One recording was available. The Part Two session was also recorded.

Part TWO business to be considered.

Chair proposed that the agenda business be re-ordered as below. Agreed.

EFC22/012 (IC)

To consider a confidential matter pertaining to the Town Council's relationship and day-to-day co-operation with the Guildhall Management Committee:

LTC provided a report outlining the financial links between the two organisations and its impact on the Council's financial records and the staffing resources available. LTC asked that Council consider two matters; 1) ending any arrangement whereby the Town Council made payments on behalf of the GMC (even if reimbursed) and 2) that the Town Council take steps to arrange independent Internal Auditing services [for the reason that a conflict of interest had arisen with both organisations sharing the same auditor whilst also having financial transactions in common].

It was subsequently proposed by JW, seconded by SH, that:

- i) The Council immediately advise GMC that no payments on their behalf will be made in the future (ie after 1/4/2022) but that the TC will assist as far as possible in developing a payment system for GMC that accords with their requirements.*
- ii) That Council consider the provision of Internal Auditing services to the Council as per the recommendations of the recent adopted Internal Financial Control Review [Policy]*
- ii) That the Town Council remit the 2022-23 Annual Support Grant to the GMC as soon as possible after the 1/4/2022 (ie in the new financial year) to support that organisation as per the budget approved last year. Resolved unanimously. LTC: Please note and action.*

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EFC22/013 (IC)

To consider a confidential matter pertaining to the progression of the Axminster Skate Park project and the Town Council's involvement with the project development and funding and to consider how the Town Council might support the project financially:

After receiving, reviewing and discussing a briefing report from the LTC which followed a recent meeting between EDDC Officers, ward members and the LTC, **It was proposed by SBi, seconded by KB, that the Town Council would support the delivery of Phase Two of the Skatepark Project at a significant level (£value redacted on the grounds of commercial confidentiality) once level of additional (match) funding was decided upon by 3rd parties.**

The discussion then turned to matters relating to the proposed play area at Raymonds Hill and it was suggested that a formal business item be added to the next Ordinary FULL Council agenda (for 11/4) to re-assess the financial viability of the proposed play area after members had reviewed a report from LTC on the S106 funding available and the constraints of that funding scheme based on correspondence with the EDDC S106 officer.

LTC: Please add to 11/4 FULL agenda accordingly.

EFC22/011 (IC)

To consider a confidential employment matter regarding the recommendation of the Employment Committee meeting held 25th March 2022 relating to the recruitment of the permanent Clerk/RFO to the Town Council; To agree contractual terms and conditions, hours of work, remuneration, superannuation and any other matters deemed appropriate):

LTC was asked to leave the meeting given the nature of the business to be discussed, and BS agreed to take minutes in his absence.

AS proposed that the Town Council ratify the appointment of Paul Hayward as the permanent Town Clerk/RFO as per recommendation of the Employment Committee. SBi. seconded. Resolved unanimously.

LTC was asked to re-join the meeting.

Chair congratulated Mr. Hayward on his appointment.

AS advised that this was subject to receipt of satisfactory references and agreement on contractual terms and conditions (based on the NALC template to be provided by the Independent Person, JV). The arrangements for those matters was duly delegated to AS and SH to take forward. Members would be notified as, and when, the references had been obtained. Mr. Hayward thanked members for their decision and said a few words about his wish to help the Council achieve more, deliver more and serve the town better.

Continued overleaf.

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With no further business to deal with, the Chair closed the meeting at 20.05pm.

Signed Date : 11th April 2022