

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

DRAFT MINUTES – YET TO BE APPROVED; Part ONE version (redacted).

Held in person on Monday 13th February 2023 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Farrow (JF) (Chair), Sedgewick (AS) (Vice-Chair), Bourne (ABo.), Brooker (ABr.), Burrough (KB), Holt (SH), Huskisson (AH), Leat (SL), Lippett (RL), Paice (EP), Spurway (MS), Steadman (BS) and Walden (JW).

(Meeting was deemed quorate).

Also; Town Clerk, Paul Hayward (TC).
Cllr. Ian Hall (IH) (DCC & EDDC).
Cllr. Sarah Jackson (SJ) (EDDC).
Cllr. Andrew Moulding (AM) (EDDC).

Sixteen members of the public.
Ben Feasey – Speaker (Action East Devon)
John Marjoribanks – Speaker (Flamingo Pool)
Francesca Evans (Nub News) - Press

Chair highlighted the building fire precautions and alerted those present to the fire exits.

Public Forum session.

i) Presentation of the 2023 Robin Cross Award (Axminster Citizen of the Year) to Mary Darlow

Presented by the Mayor, Cllr. Jill Farrow. Presentation of Award Shield.
Donation of £100 requested by Mary to the Axminster Food Bank.

ii) Council to receive a representation from Devon County Councillor, Cllr. Ian Hall (at the invitation of the Mayor, Cllr. Jill Farrow)

Cllr. Hall spoke in response to invitation by Mayor.

Topics covered:

Highway maintenance and potholes on parish roads.

Flooding challenges across the town.

EDDC Emerging Local Plan and proposed development numbers for Axminster.

Town Centre traffic congestion and volumes.

Nutrient issues on River Axe and catchment area.

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Questions from the public and members of Council, and responses from Cllr. Jackson at the invitation of the Mayor.

Chair thanked Cllr. Hall and Cllrs. Jackson and Moulding for attending.

iii) Council to receive a representation from Ben Feasey on behalf of Action East Devon in support of a grant application to this Council from that organisation.

Chair thanked Mr Feasey for presenting to Council. The matter of the grant request would be discussed later in the meeting (see FC23/009).

iv) Council to receive a representation from John Marjoribanks on behalf of The Flamingo Pool in support of a grant application to this Council from that organisation.

Chair thanked Mr Marjoribanks for presenting to Council. The matter of the grant request would be discussed later in the meeting (see FC23/009).

Open Public Forum session (limited to 15 minutes or as otherwise agreed by Chair presiding).

Representations to Council from parishioners regarding four matters;

i) Graffiti nuisance in the town.

JW wished it minuted that he strongly disagreed with the statement made by the speaker that the graffiti nuisance was as a direct consequence of skatepark use at Cloakham.

Cllr. Jackson outlined what measures could be taken locally, depending on the ownership of the asset or property that had been "tagged".

Chair explained that the TC had neither the legal powers or resource to deal with graffiti on private property but directed Clerk to issue some local social media advice on how to seek help if residents were directly affected by such vandalism.

ii) An appeal for help at the Axminster Wellbeing centre.

iii) Request for additional lighting on a footpath in the centre of town.

Chair explained that this matter had been discussed in 2022 and no action were possible by the Town Council as the land over which the footpath ran was not in our ownership.

iv) Events in the Town relating to the Coronation of HM The King on 6/5/2023.

Continued Overleaf.

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Chair thanked all speakers for their representations and attendance and subsequently closed the Public Forum session at 8.05pm

FC23/001

To note members of committee present:

Attendance at meeting shown above.

FC23/002

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

Cllr. Birnie. Absence noted and reason and apology approved (conflicting engagement).

Acceptance of reason for absence proposed by Chair, seconded by JW.

Resolved unanimously.

FC23/003

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

Cllr. Mynard. Noted.

FC23/004

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.

The dispensations afforded to Cllr. Burrough & Cllr. Farrow (27/06/2022) were noted.

The dispensation afforded to Cllr. Birnie (12/12/2022) was noted.

SH declared an interest in FC23/014 (Affects NRI).

No other declarations of interest declared by members present.

FC23/005

i) To consider and, if thought fit, to approve the minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the FULL Council held on 16th January 2023 and to consider any matters arising from those minutes:

Approval of the minutes proposed by Chair, seconded by JW. Resolved unanimously.

Minutes signed by Chair as a true and faithful record of the business of that meeting.

ii) Matters arising from those minutes:

None.

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FC23/006

i) To consider and, if thought fit, to approve the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the FULL Council held on 30th January 2023 and to consider any matters arising from those minutes:

Approval of the minutes proposed by Chair, seconded by SH. Resolved unanimously.

Minutes signed by Chair as a true and faithful record of the business of that meeting.

ii) Matters arising from those minutes:

None.

FC23/007

i) To note the minutes of the committee meeting listed below and to consider any matters arising:

Employment Committee meeting held 23rd January 2023 – presented by AS.

Minutes of meeting reviewed and noted by members.

ii) To consider the recommendations from that committee (as per schedule circulated to members & published online) and, if thought fit, to approve these as Council policy (by way of resolution) *

** Only recommendations which fall outside of the relevant Committee terms of reference require FULL Council approval, unless the relevant Committee has formally deferred the decision to FULL Council, as specified within the minutes of that meeting.*

Recommendations from the Employment Committee meeting held on 23/01/2023 were proposed for adoption by Chair. Seconded by JW. Resolved.

FC23/008

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. Items already scheduled for Part Two consideration (FC23/024 (IC) to FC23/025 (IC) incl. below, were noted.

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FC23/009

To consider Council's financial matters:

a) To consider and, if thought fit, to approve payments for January 2023 (£24,145.68) Financial reports had been circulated to members before meeting and published online.

Chair proposed payment of accounts due for January 2023. Seconded by JW.

Resolved unanimously.

b) To receive, and note, Responsible Financial Officer's Report and financial pack for January 2023. Plus, update on recent CIL receipts. Noted.

c) Questions to the RFO on these accounts/financial reports.

None raised.

d) To consider a Grant Application from Action East Devon (AED) - £6000.

Proposed by BS, seconded by KB, that the Town Council grants an award of £1,500 towards the AED provision of mental health services for younger people in Axminster.

Resolved 10 for, 2 against and with 1 abstention. Carried.

RFO: Please note and make grant award accordingly.

e) To consider a Grant Application from The Flamingo Pool - £5000.

Proposed by JF, seconded by EP, that the Town Council regrettably cannot support the request for grant support towards the structural repair costs at the Flamingo Pool.

10 votes in support of refusal, 3 abstentions. Carried.

FC23/010

To consider planning matters:

a) To consider any planning applications awaiting consideration (and decision) *Hyperlinks to EDDC website can be found using the blue highlighted applications references. Applications presented by the Chair of the Planning Committee, SL.*

1) [23/0098/ADV](#) – Unit 9-9A (APT) Weycroft Avenue, Axminster, EX13 5PH
Installation 4 x poster display frames (illuminated) for advertising.

BS proposed support. Seconded by SH. Resolved nem con (12/1)

2) [23/0099/ADV](#) – J F Clarke & Son, Lyme Road, Axminster. EX13 5BE
Install 1 no. freestanding (illuminated) advertisement sign.

Chair proposed support. Seconded by BS. Resolved nem con (12/1)

3) [23/0122/FUL](#) – Yeatlands Farm, Westwater, Axminster. EX13 7JD (also [23/0123/FUL](#))
Proposed building to cover open cattle yard / cattle feeding area.

SL proposed support. Seconded by Chair. Resolved unanimously.

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b) To ratify planning decisions made by way of delegated authority afforded to Chair of Planning Committee, Cllr. Leat, and the Council's Proper Officer.

Hyperlinks to EDDC website can be found using the blue highlighted applications references. Applications presented by the Chair of the Planning Committee, SL.

1) [23/0114/TRE](#) – Tesco Store, Shand Park, Axminster, EX13 5NG
Prune 3 x Poplar's by 5m (or to nearest pruning point) and remove 2 x lower limbs overhanging car park.

Supported by way of delegated authority of Chair and members of the committee.

2) [23/0161/FUL](#) – 15 Prestor, Axminster, EX13 5BR. Proposed loft conversion.
Supported by way of delegated authority of Chair and members of the committee.
SL proposed ratification approval. Seconded by Chair. Resolved unanimously.

c) To consider any planning applications received after the agenda publication and currently awaiting consideration (and decision) – published on a supplementary agenda: *Hyperlinks to EDDC website can be found using the blue highlighted applications references.* None received for consideration.

d) To note planning correspondence received:
To note correspondence received from Grassroots Planning re: land development west of Chard Road Axminster. It was the decision of Council that Clerk should respond thanking them for the documents and confirming that Council looks forward to seeing sight of any future planning application. Noted.

Council Business to be considered:

FC23/011

To consider report from Clerk on the NALC/DALC (Foundation) Quality Award and to decide whether this Council should seek accreditation.

The Chair proposed that the Town Council should proceed with the application to obtain Quality Award accreditation from NALC. Seconded by JW. Resolved unanimously.

Clerk: please note and action accordingly. Please keep members abreast of progress.

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FC23/012

To consider whether this Council should support (and potentially organise) an Easter Fayre event at the Guildhall to primarily enable local charities to present their organisations to the wider public (and to encourage fundraising).

This request had been put forward by a member of the public.

Members were supportive of the concept/principle and directed the Clerk to liaise with the Guildhall Manager to ascertain whether any all-day bookings were available on the weekends immediately before and after the actual Easter weekend (8-9th April).

Clerk: Please action accordingly and liaise with local charity and community groups to gauge support for such an event.

FC23/013

To consider the date, venue, format and content of the forthcoming Annual Parish Meeting; to receive a report from the Clerk on options available to the Council. To also note that said meeting MUST be held between the 1st March and the 1st June annually, but that the Town Council elections are being held on 4th May 2023.

Initial preference with members was for the APM to be held on 27th March with Council meetings planned for that time to be re-scheduled. Arrangements were left with the Clerk to organise in conjunction with the Chair and Vice-Chair. Noted.

FC23/014

To consider a Street Trading Licence Application (as below) and to decide whether this Council wishes to make any formal representation to the licensing authority (EDDC) in this respect:

The Brunch Box. In car park at front of Unit 16, Weycroft Avenue, Axminster. EX13 5HU
Monday to Friday operation, 7am until 3pm daily. Provision of hot food and beverages.

Cllr. Holt had already made a declaration of interest as a family member was opening a similar venture in the same area. Clerk confirmed that this was not a pecuniary interest but, rather, an "affects NRI". Noted.

Proposed by Chair, seconded by EP, that Council had no objection to the granting of a street trading licence for this venture and that, as such, it would make no formal comment to the licensing authority. Noted.

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FC23/015

To note the advertised Waiting restrictions and Parking Places Amendment Order from Devon County Council for West Street, Axminster and to decide whether the Council wishes to make any formal response, comment or representation.

Noted. Chair proposed that no formal response be sent as Council was supportive and only objections required a reply to DCC. Agreed.

FC23/016

To receive and note a report from the Proper Officer's regarding NALC advice on Defamation (referred to as Legal Topic Note (LTN) 30), the review of which forms part of Council's Annual risk assessment and management protocol.

Received and noted.

FC23/017

To receive an update on the ongoing development of the Axminster Neighbourhood Plan (ANP).

Update received from Cllrs. AS and SH. Formal response from EDDC was being awaited in reply to the NHP Steering Group response submitted last month. Feedback from recent meeting between SH and Cllr. Ian Hall (DCC) was being submitted and all of this new data will be used to create the next draft version of the ANP. That, in turn, will lead to further consultation. It was noted that meetings were planned at EDDC which may have an impact on the ongoing ANP process. Further updates to members of Council would follow in due course. Noted.

FC23/018

To consider matters pertaining to the Coronation of His Majesty The King on 6th May 2023;

i) To consider local events and how the Council might assist community groups and organisations in celebrating the Coronation event; and

ii) To consider expenditure related to the celebration of this Coronation event;

Chair put forward proposal that the organisation of community events was best left to the individual community groups who had indicated a wish to participate. Civic representation from the Mayor had been arranged. Chair indicated that small grants might be available if organisations wished to apply via the RFO. Noted.

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JW proposed that Standing Orders be suspended to permit the meeting to pass beyond the normal 2-hr point. Seconded by Chair. Resolved Unanimously.

Meeting continued accordingly.

FC23/019

To consider how the Town Council wishes to respond to recent public concerns over worsening graffiti nuisance in the town.

As this matter had been discussed under the public forum session earlier, and a lengthy debate had ensued, the Chair felt that no additional consideration was necessary. Clerk was asked to publicise the clean-up options for persons/parties affected by graffiti. Noted.

FC23/020

To consider whether Axminster Town Council wishes to forge closer links and bolster cooperation with Seaton Town Council (as joint parties in the Axe Valley Local Government Catchment area) on matters such as tourism, economy, climate action and governance.

Chair proposed that this matter be deferred to the Strategy & Finance Committee for their consideration. Agreed.

Clerk: Please add to that committee's agenda accordingly for deliberation and discussion at the earliest opportunity.

FC23/021

To confirm the date of the next scheduled FULL meeting of the Town Council - 13th March 2023

Noted.

FC23/022

To consider any matters considered as urgent by the presiding Chair and to receive any announcements from the Chair of the Council.

Chair raised the ongoing issue of dangerous masonry in a garden in the centre of town and asked Clerk to re-engage with the EDDC Building Control team and the DCC Highways Officer to try and arrange some remedial action given that the material is posing a public health risk. Clerk: Please note and action accordingly (a previous resolution refers).

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FC23/023

Vice-Chair 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 the Chair. Resolved unanimously.

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.

FC23/024 (IC)

To receive a report from the Clerk on a potential land acquisition opportunity in the parish and to decide whether this Council wishes to begin negotiations/discussions with the freeholder to provide improved open public space amenity in the town.

This matter is deemed confidential due to the commercial sensitivity of the subject to be discussed and the nature of the information to be considered by members.

Chair proposed that this matter be deferred to the next meeting of the Strategy & Finance Committee to be held on 27th February 2023. Seconded by AS. Resolved unanimously.

Clerk: please add to that committee's agenda accordingly.

FC23/025 (IC)

To consider future tenancy arrangements for the Old Courthouse complex (retail shop) that requires Councillors decision on terms, duration and usage.

This matter is deemed confidential due to the commercial sensitivity of the subject to be discussed.

Proposed by Chair, seconded by JW, that retail unit be let at the earliest opportunity at the prevailing market rate agreed beforehand for other tenants. Delegated authority was to be afforded to RFO to negotiate with incoming tenant to obtain "best value" for the Council based on their preferred tenancy terms etc. Resolved unanimously.

RFO: Please note and advertise/publicise accordingly. Please keep members abreast of any developments or progress with enquiries and liaise with Chair of Operations when a tenancy agreement needs to be formally approved. Noted.

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With no further business to deal with, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.25pm.

Signed Date: 13th March 2023

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