

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Held at the Guildhall, on Monday 13th March 2017 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Town Mayor: Cllr. P.G. Hayward
Deputy Mayor Cllr. L.A. Rowe
Councillors: C. A. Doherty, G.S. Godbeer, I.L. Hall, D.R.H. Hull,
H.J.A. Jeffery, Mrs. S.L.N. Leat, A.T. Moulding ,
M.D. Symes, J.W. Walden, B.R. Watson,
and A.L. Young.

The Town Clerk (Miss H. Kirkcaldie).
The Deputy Town Clerk (Mrs. Z. Adamson-Drage)

7 Members of the public. 2 representative of the Press.

2017/0089APOLOGIES: Mrs. S.R. Spiller.

2017/0090 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:

CLLRS. DOHERTY, HAYWARD, HULL AND WATSON, ALL DECLARED PERSONAL INTERESTS AS BEING MEMBERS OF THE AXMINSTER GUILDHALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE IN RESPECT OF ANY ITEMS RELATING TO THE GUILDHALL. CLLR. YOUNG, IN HER CAPACITY AS GUILDHALL MANAGER FOR WHICH SHE DECLARES A PECUNIARY INTEREST, HAS A DISPENSATION TO SPEAK ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE GUILDHALL PROVIDED THE PECUNIARY INTEREST IS NOT OF OVER-RIDING SIGNIFICANCE.

CLLRS. GODBEER, WALDEN AND WATSON EACH DECLARED PERSONAL INTERESTS AS BEING MEMBERS OF AXMINSTER COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE.

CLLR. HAYWARD DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST AS CLERK TO ALL SAINTS PARISH COUNCIL AND CHARDSTOCK PARISH COUNCILS AND IN RESPECT OF HAVING A SPOUSE WORKING WITHIN THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE (IN RESPECT OF WHICH HE HAS A DISPENSATION TO SPEAK)

CLLR. MOULDING DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING A MEMBER OF THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS:

ARC BEREAVEMENT, AXMINSTER COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE, AXMINSTER AND DISTRICT HOSPISCARE, AXMINSTER HERITAGE LTD., AXMINSTER HOSPITAL LEAGUE OF FRIENDS, AXMINSTER MUSICAL THEATRE, AXMINSTER PATIENTS PARTICIPATION GROUP,

AXMINSTER REGENERATION PROGRAMME BOARD, AXMINSTER TOWN CRICKET CLUB, CLOAKHAM LAWN SPORTS CENTRE, CLOAKHAM LAWN SPORTS CENTRE LTD., CLOWANCE CHARITABLE TRUST, FRIENDS OF AXMINSTER CHURCH, LYME REGIS GOLF CLUB, TONY COLES CHARITABLE TRUST, VIRTUE AND HONOUR LODGE NO 494, CONSERVATIVE PARTY, CONSERVATIVE CLUB, EAST DEVON CONSERVATIVE GROUP, DEVON COUNTY CONSERVATIVE GROUP, MEMBER OF THE CONSERVATIVE COUNCILLORS' ASSOCIATION.

HE ALSO DECLARED THAT AS THE PARENT OF A DISABLED ADULT SON HE HAD AN INTEREST IN MATTERS RELATING TO DISABLED ACCESS AND BENEFITS

CLLR. HALL DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING A MEMBER OF THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS:

CLOAKHAM LAWN SPORTS CENTRE, CHAIRMAN AND TRUSTEE
MILLWEY RISE FOOTBALL CLUB
MILLWEY RISE COMMUNITY HALL USER GROUP - CHAIRMAN
LODGE VIRTUE AND HONOUR AXMINSTER NO. 494
AXMINSTER SKATE PARK TRUSTEE
TIVERTON AND HONITON CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION
GMB (GENERAL MUNICIPAL AND BOILER MEN'S) UNION
AXMINSTER COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE
AXMINSTER CONSERVATIVE CLUB

CLLR. MRS LEAT DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST IN RELATION TO ANY MATTERS PERTAINING TO LAND OWNED BY BETTERMENT HOMES AS BEING IN LEGAL NEGOTIATION WITH THAT COMPANY.

2017/0091 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13TH FEBRUARY 2017: It was resolved that these be approved and adopted (proposed Cllr. Hayward, seconded Cllr. Walden).

2017/0092 POLICE REPORT: On behalf of the police, Cllr. Jeffery said that there would be a "Have Your Say" surgery at the library on 24th April between 10.00 and eleven. There had been 35 crimes in February 2017 compared with 17 for the same month in 2016.

2017/0093 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: Cllr. said that the budget had been confirmed with an overall increase of 4.9% which included expenditure on adult social care. He said that it had not been the Exeter Waste To Energy plant which had been affected by fire recently.

Cllr. Hull asked how many schools in Axe Valley now remained under the jurisdiction of Devon County Council. Cllr. Moulding undertook to let him have the

information in due course.

2017/0094 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS:

Cllr. Moulding welcomed the start of the relocation of District Council offices. He said that the District Council had set its budget. He said that the District Council had adopted a protocol for child safeguarding.

Cllr. Hall said that he had chaired the final housing delivery task and finish forum in East Devon and welcomed the fact that the District Council had agreed to form a building company. He would be chairing a meeting of Axminster Together on 9th June to co-ordinate local community groups and avoid duplication. He had been present at the opening of a community orchard at First Avenue.

Cllr. Hull said that he was continuing his campaign for better regulation of new build housing. He deplored the waste of public money involved in the lack of re-use within the health service of aids given out to patients but no longer needed by them.

2017/0095 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS: the Town Mayor alerted the public to an expensive telephone scam.

He welcomed the fact that the permissive path would soon be formally opened to the public

2017/0096 TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS: the Town Mayor had attended the following events:

A celebration of the 5th birthday of Switch.
The opening of a new bridal boutique in South Street.
The induction of the new Rector.
A meeting of the Clinical Commissioning Group.

2017/0097 TOWN FORUM – ARRANGEMENTS FOR RECYCLING OF GREEN WASTE:

In response to a question from a member of the public, Cllr. Moulding said that there had been some complications with the arrangements but it was hoped that these would be resolved soon.

2017/0098 TOWN FORUM – FLAWED NATURE OF CONSULTATION ON CLOSURE OF HOSPITAL BEDS: A resident said that it was not possible to make an informed response given the lack of information regarding the costs of providing equivalent care within the community. He said that the funding allocated to Devon County Council was one of the lowest per capita in the country for social care. He expressed grave concerns regarding the whole process of closure of hospital beds, referring to such aspects as the moneys put in

by local support groups, the concerns of local general practitioners and called for a petition to record the feelings of the community. He urged the County Council to fight for the money needed to deliver proper care in the community. He said that the whole matter should be called in.

Cllr. Moulding responded by agreeing with much of what had been said. He said that the matter would be of great concern to our Member of Parliament. He referred to the fact that that the group considering where the latest bed closures should fall seemed to have been presented by a fait accompli and said he was sure that Mr. Parish would take the matter up. He added that the beds would not be closed until arrangements for care in the community were in place.

2017/0099 TOWN FORUM – CLOSURE OF IN PATIENT BEDS AT SEATON HOSPITAL: The Town Mayor invited Cllr. Rowland, a member of Seaton Town Council to speak.

Cllr. Rowland spoke of the shock caused by the decision. He said that the a flawed comparison had been made between Seaton and Sidmouth in terms of demographics and the decision had been based on this. He outlined the difficulties involved for anyone trying to get from Axminster to Sidmouth by public transport to visit a friend or relative, a trip which would involve several changes of bus and considerable time. He urged Axminster and Seaton to work together in respect of action which can be taken to get the decision reversed.

A member of the public felt that the issue of the closure of the hospital beds should have been put on the agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting.

THE TOWN MAYOR PROPOSED THAT AGENDA ITEM 14a BE BROUGHT FORWARD. AGREED.

2017/0100 CLOSURE OF IN PATIENT BEDS AT SEATON HOSPITAL: Cllr. Walden said that there had been no promise that Axminster patients in Seaton hospital could continue under the care of their own general practitioner. He mentioned that the Kings Fund was of the view that a 3% increase in spending on social care was not enough as it would not cover the cost of pay increases arising from the increase in the minimum wage.

Cllr. Hull said that there appeared to be a lack of knowledge and understanding of rural areas and their problems.

Cllr. Symes asked what was happening to equipment bought by Axminster Hospital League of Friends, which had been transferred to Seaton.

Cllr. Hall said that pilot schemes should have been set up to investigate how well the proposed model would work in practice.

Cllr. Young said that it was a nationwide problem and the local situation should be brought to the attention of the national press. She felt that the decision about closing beds had been taken long ago.

Cllr. Jeffery said that the politicians' view bore no relation to real life. He said that the health service was being dismantled bit by bit. He said all generations were affected. He urged that the local Member of Parliament should be involved and that the communities should all work together.

Cllr. Walden will attend Seaton Town Council meeting the following week.

Cllr. Watson observed that although Sidmouth had retained its beds more of these would be used by people from outside Sidmouth and Sidmouth should be involved in the campaign.

The Town Mayor said that a date for a public meeting with Mr.Parish would be arranged as soon as possible.

THE TOWN MAYOR RE-OPENED TOWN FORUM

2017/0101 TOWN FORUM – LOCAL APATHY: A member of the public regretted the lack of responsibility shown by the numbers of people who fail to attend arranged appointments at the local surgery and took the same attitude in respect the loss of hospital beds.

2017/0102 TOWN FORUM – HIGHWAY MATTERS: A member of the public asked when the next phase of pavement improvements would take place and was informed that South Street was next in line for remedial action in the coming financial year.

Cllr. Moulding said that some new regulations were coming in to force, such as the banning of parking in King Edward Road but that in other areas they to be discussed in the local Highways and Traffic Orders Committee as some members of the public had objected to the proposals. He said that the committee had approved that the additional lines be put in place.

2017/0103 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13th FEBRUARY 2017: Cllr. Moulding said that the representative from Axminster Carpets would speak at the April meeting of the Town Council.

2017/0104 MATTERS OF URGENCY – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS: the Town Mayor mentioned that new funding opportunities had just been announced.

2017/0105 MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated 13th February 2017 – it was resolved that these be approved and adopted.

2017/0106 MINUTES OF OLD COURTHOUSE COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated 6th March 2017 – it was resolved that these be approved and adopted.

2017/0107 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING: none.

2017/0108 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF OLD COURTHOUSE COMMITTEE MEETING: Cllr. Godbeer thanked all those who had assisted in the removal of ivy from the building.

2017/0109 FINANCIAL MATTERS – APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY EXPENDITURE: details had been circulated to all Councillors.

Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Watson, proposed that the payments be approved.
Agreed.

2017/0110 FINANCIAL MATTERS – JANUARY BANK RECONCILIATION:
Resolved that this be approved.

2017/0111 FINANCIAL MATTERS – MATTERS APPROVED FOR EXPENDITURE BY TOWN MAYOR OR COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN – FAULT ON SMOKE ALARM AT GUILDHALL.: The Town Clerk reported that it had been necessary to call in the contractor to replace a faulty sensor. This was noted and approved.

2017/0112 FINANCIAL MATTERS – MATTERS APPROVED FOR EXPENDITURE BY TOWN MAYOR OR COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN – ADDITIONAL LIGHTING ON STAGE AT GUILDHALL: this was following advice from a contractor that the existing emergency lighting was not compliant. Noted and approved.

2017/0113 FINANCIAL MATTERS – MATTERS APPROVED FOR EXPENDITURE BY TOWN MAYOR OR COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN – REMOVAL OF IVY FROM SHED: this was because the shed was becoming swamped by ivy and the work needed to be completed prior to the end of February. Noted and approved. Some temporary remedial work had been necessary to secure the slates and a more detailed repair will be needed over the summer.

2017/0114 FINANCIAL MATTERS – REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL HELP: It was resolved that £500 be awarded to East Devon Citizens' Advice Bureau and £300 to Axe Valley and West Dorset Ring and Ride Ltd.

2017/0115 FINANCIAL MATTERS - RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT: Mrs. Adamson-Drage said that she had had a meeting with the internal auditor and was continuing preparations for the year end. She had been updating the Asset Register and would keep separate lists for Audit and Insurance purposes, seeking professional advice where appropriate. She reminded

Committee Chairmen that she had sent each of them Risk Assessment Forms for completion and consideration by the Risk Assessment Committee.

The report was noted.

2017/0116 FUNDING FOR DROPPED KERBS FOR PERMISSIVE PATH: It was resolved that the cost for this be taken from the Community Benefit Fund.

2017/0117 RESPONSE TO DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ELECTORAL REVIEW OF EAST DEVON: The suggestions put forward relating to Axminster had been supported by the review team.

2017/0118 HIGHWAY MATTERS – CLOSURE OF WILHAYES LANE FOR FLOOD RELIEF WORKS: The Town Clerk said that a temporary route for pedestrians had been put in place with a footbridge over the Millbrook.

2017/0119 HEALTH SERVICE MATTERS – TERMINATION OF TELEPHONE ORDERING OF REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS AT LOCAL SURGERY: Cllr. Moulding reported that no other surgeries offered this facility. Online ordering was considered most efficient but patients would be issued with pre-printed envelopes in which to submit written requests for repeat prescriptions. It had been agreed to extend the deadline for the termination of the telephone service to the end of April.

2017/0120 HEALTH SERVICE MATTERS – POSSIBLE NIGHT-LANDING SITES FOR AIR AMBULANCE: sites put forward included Cloakham, North Street Playing Field and the Axe Vale Festival site.

2017/0121 HEALTH SERVICE MATTERS – RESPONSE TO DEVON ACUTE SERVICES REVIEW: Cllr. Walden proposed that there was no point in responding as any response made would be ignored. Agreed.

2017/0122 SIGNAGE: Cllr. Moulding said that much signage in the town was out of date. A working party, comprising Cllrs. Hayward, Young, Hull, Godbeer and Moulding will look into this after the elections in May.

2017/0123 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRATEGIC REVIEW OF GREATER EXETER: It was agreed that the response be submitted by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

2017/0124 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING: Cllr. Moulding tendered his apologies, as did Cllr. Walden. There will be two guest presentations followed by the usual reports.

2017/0125 INTRODUCTION A PROTOCOL FOR COUNCILLORS FOR SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN IN THE

COMMUNITY: Several Councillors felt that all members should have a level 2 clearance as the nature of their duties involved them in meeting minors. After discussion it was resolved to await a report on the subject from East Devon District Council and follow its recommendations.

2017/0126 CORRESPONDENCE:

- a. Letters Received
- b. Meetings
- c. Reports Received - the following reports are available for consultation in the office:

Cllr. Rowe 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.

2017/0127 QUOTES FOR WORKS AT GUILDHALL – FLOOR WASHER: It was resolved that a new floor washer be purchased using moneys from the Guildhall Fund Raising Account for the sum of £1914.69.

2017/0128 QUOTES FOR WORKS AT GUILDHALL – UPGRADE TO CROCKERY: It was resolved that new crockery for 160 place settings be purchased for the sum of £1200 using moneys from the Guildhall Fundraising account.

2017/0129 QUOTES FOR WORKS AT THE GUILDHALL: it was resolved that a new 16 track mixer deck be purchased using a grant from Devon County Council locality budget of £1000

2017/0130 QUOTES FOR ADDITIONAL ACCESS CONTROL AT GUILDHALL: the Town Clerk and the Guildhall Manager outlined the desirability for this equipment. The Town Clerk will continue her investigations as to the options and their costs and report back.

2017/00131 PURCHASE OF NEW MOWER FOR CEMETERY: it was resolved to purchase a new ride-on mower for the cemetery as the existing one had seen several years' service.

2017/00132 Consideration of a letter to tenants was deferred to a later date.

2017/00133 Discussion on purchase of projector screens was deferred to a later date.

Signed Date.....