

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Held at the Guildhall, on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May 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 ,  
Mrs. S.R. Spiller, M.D. Symes, J.W. Walden, B.R. Watson,  
and A.L. Young.

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

52 Members of the public. 2 representatives of the Press.

2017/0175 APOLOGIES: None.

2017/0176 NEWLY ELECTED COUNCILLOR FOR WEYCROFT WARD: the Town Mayor welcomed Ms. S. E. Clarke the successful candidate in the recent election. Ms. Clarke signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2017/0177 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR: Cllr. Hayward indicated that he would not be seeking a second term as Town Mayor. Cllr. Jeffery, seconded by Cllr. Symes, proposed Cllr. Walden. There were no other nominations. Cllr. Walden was duly elected and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2017/0178 ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR: Cllr. Mrs. Rowe indicated that she would not be seeking a second term as Deputy Town Mayor. Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Doherty, proposed Cllr. Young. There were no other nominations. Cllr. Young was duly elected.

2017/0179 REGISTERS OF MEMBER'S INTERESTS: those Councillors who had completed their registers passed them to the Town Clerk.

2017/0180 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:

CLLRS. DOHERTY, GODBEER, HAYWARD, HULL, MRS. LEAT, MRS. SPILLER 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 COUNCIL AND IN RESPECT OF HAVING A SPOUSE WORKING WITHIN THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE (IN RESPECT OF WHICH LAST 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 SKATE PARK, AXMINSTER ARTS, 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.

CLLR. HULL DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING A GOVERNOR OF ROYAL DEVON AND EXETER NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE FOUNDATION TRUST AND AS BEING A MEMBER OF THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS:  
AXMINSTER DYSLEXIA TRUST  
AXMINSTER HERITAGE LTD.  
AXMINSTER HOSPITAL LEAGUE OF FRIENDS

CLLR. SYMES DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING A MEMBER OF  
AXMINSTER HOSPITAL LEAGUE OF FRIENDS.

2017/0181 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2017: Cllr. Symes, seconded by Cllr. Doherty, proposed that these be approved and adopted, subject to the last sentence in minute 2017/0171 being amended to read “Cllr. Young said that she had correspondence with the licensing officer regarding the matter and what would and would not be acceptable.” Agreed.

2017/0182 POLICE REPORT: Sgt Helm paid tribute to the late Special Inspector Cross. Moving on to the monthly crime figures, Sgt. Helm said that there had been 21 crimes in April this year compared with 30 in the same month of the previous year. He explained that one call out could comprise several different crimes. There was no distinction in statistical terms between a sheep on the road and a murder. Issues relating to youth antisocial behaviour were being address and reports had declined.

Cllr. Hull proposed that a minute’s silence be observed in tribute to Mr. Cross both for his service as a member of the special constabulary and also as caretaker at the secondary school for 25 years. This was done.

2017/0183 COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT: Cllr. Walden paid tribute to Cllr. Moulding as retiring member and congratulated Cllr. Hall on his election as the new member and commiserated with Cllr. Hayward who had been runner-up. Cllr. Moulding, said that he would continue as County Council Chairman until the first meeting of the new Council.

Cllr. Hall thanked his predecessors as County Councillors for the work they had done. He promised to be a strong voice for Axminster at County Hall.

2017/0184 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS’ REPORTS:

Cllr. Hull said welcomed the District Council’s decision to establish a Local Housing Company to deliver more housing. He urged that relevant ward members should be involved on any committee in rotation.

Cllr. Moulding said he had had a site meeting at the flood alleviation works at Wilhayes Park.

Cllr. Hall had nothing to report.

2017/0185 TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS: the Town Mayor mentioned that there would be over-night closures on the A35 between Kilminster and Honiton for the next 6 nights. There will be a similar closure, in due course, between Raymonds Hill and Bridport.

2017/0186 TOWN MAYOR’S ENGAGEMENTS: the Town Mayor had attended the following events:

An event for visitors to the Secondary School from Germany.

2017/0187 TOWN FORUM – ELECTION HUSTINGS:

A member of the public regretted that recent hustings for the local elections had not been more widely advertised and requested that any similar event for the coming General Election was better publicised. He was informed that that was a matter for those who organised the event.

2017/0188 TOWN FORUM – UNTIDY LAND AT GAMBERLAKE: Several residents expressed their concern regarding the condition of the land in the former car park at Axminster Carpets. Cllr. Walden said that Town Council had drawn the attention of the District and County Councils to this problem and also the Environment Agency. Cllr. Hull said that he had raised the matter with various departments at the District Council.

Cllr. Hayward said that the District Council should use powers available under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act. He said that it was very effective when used in other areas.

The Mayor urged residents to write, too, to the Environment Agency but did point out that staffing levels had been cut.

It was agreed that District Councillors should be urged to act on this matter and report back at the next meeting.

2017/0189 TOWN FORUM – SUPPORT FOR AXMINSTER: a resident sought assurance from the in-coming County Councillor that he would always put the interests of the Town above those of party and was informed that this would be the case.

2017/0190 TOWN FORUM – AUDIBILITY: it was requested that the Town Council invest in a better sound system so that all Councillors could be heard.

2017/0191 TOWN FORUM – HOSPITAL BED CLOSURES: A member of the public enquired whether the County Council scrutiny committee had had any response to the questions it had posed to the New Devon Clinical Commissioning Group.

Cllr. Moulding said that the Group was advocating care in the community as this is what patients say that they want. However, there was a commitment that this would not be introduced until there were sufficient staff to care for people in their homes. In the meantime, various groups were challenging the decision to close down inpatient beds in hospitals such as Seaton and Honiton. He said that this would be a lengthy and expensive process. He urged the community to get behind the services which are provided at the hospital so that it could become a hospital hub.

Cllr. Walden said that these comments did not answer the question from the member of the public. Cllr. Moulding replied that it would be some time before the Scrutiny Committee would be likely to get a response from the Clinical Commissioning Group to the questions it had posed to help it decide whether to refer the matter to the Secretary of State to be called in. Cllr Walden asked for an update from the new County Councillor as soon as possible.

Cllr. Hull said that research was being conducted into how the new system would operate in urban areas but they had not completed that and had not even started on the rural areas.

He said that it was vital that any plan should work in the rural areas.

Cllr. Hayward said that there were two different parties involved in the processes, the Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Healthcare Trusts. He said that the effect of the interplay between these two groups was to unsettle staff so that they sought employment elsewhere and then to use staff shortages as a reason not to send patients from acute hospitals to community hospitals on safety grounds so that it could then be claimed that the hospitals were under used, which was a vicious circle.

Cllr. Moulding said that Devon County Council could only refer a matter to the Secretary of State on the basis of process and not a disagreement with the decision made.

Cllr. Jeffery said that there was virtually no local provision for end of life care.

39 people left the meeting at this point.

2017/0192 TOWN FORUM – LIGHT UP AXMINSTER: a local resident said that a meeting would be held next week and sought any feed back from members.

**CLLR. HAYWARD DECLARED A PERSON INTEREST AS BEING A MEMBER OF AXMINSTER CHRISTMAS LIGHTS ASSOCIATION.**

Cllr. Symes asked whether the Town Council would continue to maintain the existing lights on the two trees on the Minster Green. Cllr. Walden said that it was always a risk that the lights may stop functioning over the course of the Christmas period and in such cases it was not easy to get a contractor to take remedial action.

2017/0193 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2017: None.

2017/0194 MATTERS OF URGENCY: None.

2017/0195 MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

Cllr. Watson pointed out the following corrections:

That the last three words in the comments on application 17/0679/FUL should read “back land development”

That the decision on application 17/0263/ADV had been entered twice as a result of which the word “level” had been deleted from the end of the description of application 17/0248/FUL

It was resolved that these be approved and adopted subject to these corrections.

2017/0196 MINUTES OF EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated 23rd March 2017: Cllr. Hayward, seconded by Cllr. Walden, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2017/0197 MINUTES OF BUILDINGS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017 – it was resolved that these be approved and adopted.

2017/0198 MINUTES OF RISK AND EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated 3<sup>rd</sup> MAY 2017 – it was resolved that these be approved and adopted.

2017/0199 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING : None.

2017/0200 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETING: none.

2017/0201 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF BUILDINGS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING: None.

2017/0202 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF RISK AND EMERGENCY PLANNING MEETING: None.

2017/0203 FINANCIAL MATTERS – APPROVAL OF MARCH EXPENDITURE:  
CLLR. JEFFERY DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST IN CHEQUE 6384 AS BEING THE RECIPIENT AND LEFT THE CHAMBER

CLLR. HAYWARD DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST IN CHEQUE 6405 AS BEING THE RECIPIENT AND LEFT THE CHAMBER

Cllr. Godbeer, seconded by Cllr. Doherty, proposed that these payments be approved.  
Agreed.

CLLRS. HAYWARD AND JEFFERY RETURNED TO THE CHAMBER

2017/0204 FINANCIAL MATTERS – APPROVAL OF APRIL EXPENDITURE:  
CLLR. JEFFERY DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST IN CHEQUE 6262 AS BEING THE RECIPIENT AND LEFT THE CHAMBER

Cllr. Watson, seconded by Cllr. Symes, proposed that these payments be approved. Agreed.

CLLR. JEFFERY RETURNED TO THE CHAMBER.

2017/0205 FINANCIAL MATTERS – MATTERS APPROVED FOR EXPENDITURE BY TOWN MAYOR OR COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN: the Town Mayor had approved a quote to supply a wooden planter at the the Tesco Round about.

2017/0206 FINANCIAL MATTERS – REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL HELP: a request had been received from Light Up Axminster towards the costs of organising a Cherry Fayre to raise funds for the Christmas Lights. After discussion it was resolved not to support this request as it would be invidious to support this when there were many other groups also trying to raise funds for good causes in the town. Councillors commended the exertions of the group and offered practical support if needed.

2017/0207 FINANCIAL MATTERS – PARISHES TOGETHER FUND: The Town Clerk said this fund would be continued for the coming year and liaison with other parishes would take place so that a suitable project would need to be identified.

CLLR. WALDEN DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING ASSOCIATED WITH THE SECONDARY SCHOOL WHICH WOULD BE PUTTING FORWARD AN APPLICATION FOR FUNDING FROM THIS SOURCE.

2017/0208 FINANCIAL MATTERS - APPROVAL OF SECTION 1 ON AUDIT FORM This had been circulated to all Councillors along with supporting information. No questions were raised. Cllr. Hayward, seconded by Cllr. Godbeer, proposed that the statement of Governance be approved and signed. Agreed.

2017/0209 FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT: The Responsible Financial Officer asked that items i to iii be considered in Committee. This was agreed. She said that the supporting documents for Section 2 would be available for Councillors to view at the office. She said that the Internal Auditor had been in to make further checks.

She asked that consideration of the quarter 4 and budget reports be deferred to the next meeting.

2017/0210 HEALTHCARE – TO PLEDGE SUPPORT IN FIGHT AGAINST THE BASIS ON WHICH THE DECISION TO CLOSE FURTHER IN-PATIENT HOSPITAL BEDS WAS TAKEN: Cllr. Jeffery, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Spiller proposed that this resolution be passed. Agreed.

2017/0211 COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FORUM: It was resolved that Cllr. Jeffery and Mr. Hall attend this event on 7<sup>th</sup> June.

2017/0212 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS: Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Godbeer, proposed that these be approved.

2017/0213 STANDING ORDERS: Cllr. Spiller proposed that a clause be added limiting the continuous term of office for both Mayor and Deputy Mayor to a maximum of two years. It was agreed that the standing orders be approved with this addition.

A working party to review the Standing Orders will be consist of Cllrs. Young, Hayward, Doherty and Hull.

2017/0214 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY: Cllr. Jeffery, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Spiller proposed that this be approved and adopted.

2017/0215 DISCIPLINE AND GRIEVANCE POLICIES: Cllr. Hayward, seconded by Cllr Watson, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2017/0216 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE: Cllr. Moulding said that the draft plan was progressing but that further information on some points was needed. Cllr. Walden asked that a statement requiring that the hospital site be retained for healthcare purposes. This was supported.

2017/0217 JUBILEE FIELD: Cllr. Walden confirmed that the litter bins had been installed.

2017/0218 CORRESPONDENCE:

- a. Letters Received
  - i. Various re Jubilee Field
  - ii. D.C.C. – re change in Neighbourhood Highway Officer arrangements.
- b. Meetings – East Devon L.A.G. 8<sup>th</sup> June, Colyton
- c. Reports Received - the following reports are available for consultation in the office:
  - i. East Devon L.A.G. Minutes

Cllr. Young 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. Agreed.

2017/0219 SANTANDER BOND:

CLLR. MRS. LEAT DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST AS BEING AN  
EMPLOYEE OF SANTANDER AND LEFT THE ROOM

Mrs. Adamson-Drage reported that the funds had been transferred to a standard bond at a lower interest rate. She had been looking into alternatives and would report on these at the next meeting.

2017/0220 BUSINESS WATER SUPPLIER: Mrs. Adamson-Drage said that following deregulation of water suppliers, she was looking into the most competitive option.

2017/0221 BANKING ARRANGEMENT: Mrs. Adamson-Drage said that she was investigating online banking options and outlined the information she had obtained to date.

2017/0222 QUOTES FOR WORKS AT GUILDHALL: None

2017/0223 STAFFING MATTER: a letter had been sent to a former employee and a response was awaited.

Signed ..... Date.....