

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Held at the Guildhall, on Monday 12th June 2017 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Town Mayor: Cllr. P.G. Hayward
Deputy Mayor Cllr. L.A. Rowe
Councillors: C. A. Doherty, D.R.H. Hull,
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).

11 Members of the public. 0 representatives of the Press.

2017/0234 APOLOGIES: G.S. Godbeer, I.L. Hall and H.J.A. Jeffery and Devon and Cornwall Police.

2017/0235 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS – RECENT NATIONAL EVENTS:

The Town Mayor invited all present to join him in observing a minute's silence as a mark of respect to the victims of the terrorism incidents in Manchester and London.

Following on from there he informed those present that, in light of the above events, the Town Council's emergency plan had been reviewed and, likewise, arrangements for the forthcoming Yarty Party and the annual Carnival.

A benefit concert for the families of those affected by the two incidents will be held on 18th July at the Guildhall.

2017/0236 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS – COUNCILLOR RESIGNATIONS:

The Town Mayor announced formally the resignations of Cllr. Jeffery and Cllr. Hall.

Tributes were paid to Cllr. Jeffery's commitment to the Town Council and community of Axminster over more than 30 years public service. He had indicated that he would continue to serve the community and assist the Town Council as a volunteer but had other commitments to which he needed to give the time he had up till now spent on formal Town Council business. A formal motion of appreciation was proposed by Cllr. Hull and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Spiller and was carried nem. con.

Cllr. Hayward proposed that a suitable way be found to recognise Cllr. Jeffery's service to the community.

Cllr. Walden sought Councillors' approval, as a mark of respect for the hosts, for the Deputy Mayor to use the Mayoress's chain on occasions when he or she is representing the Mayor as it is more ornate than the Deputy Mayor's regalia. This was approved.

2017/0237 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:

CLLRS. DOHERTY, 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. 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. 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.

2017/00238 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8th MAY 2017: Cllr. Hayward, seconded by Cllr. Moulding, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2017/0239 POLICE REPORT: a written report had been circulated to all Councillors indicating that there had been 36 crimes in May 2017 compared with 20 in May 2016.

2017/0240 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: None had been received.

2017/0241 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS:

Cllr. Moulding said was honoured to have been elected Chairman of East Devon District Council and described some of the events which he had attended in that capacity, including a visit to Exmouth Town Hall in connection with the forthcoming relocation of the District Council head quarters..

Cllr. Hull reported on the Local Action Group meeting which he had attended earlier in the day.

2017/00242 TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS: the Town Mayor had attended the following events:

The service in the Minster Church to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the establishment of the Women's Section of the Royal British Legion in Axminster.

2017/0243 TOWN FORUM – SAFETY MATTER ON MINSTER GEEN:

A member of the public reported that an elderly resident had stumbled going down the steps from the Green towards West Street in the dusk. The Town Clerk will bring the matter to the attention of the Parochial Church Council and to the District Council..

2017/0244 TOWN FORUM – UNAUTHORISED ACCESS OVER PRIVATE LAND:

Residents from Millview Gardens expressed their objections to the fact that the District Council had, without prior permission, crossed what they considered to be a private road, in the process of making a new opening at the north end of the North Street playing field. The Town Council had not had any prior notification of the works either.

Cllr. Moulding explained that the action had been taken in preparation of intended improvements to the playing field in 18 months time as the existing entrance to the south of the site is often obstructed by vehicles and the slope is unsuitable for modern contractors, vehicles. He said that in response to an enquiry he had made he had been told by an officer at the District Council that private roads such as this are considered part of the highway network and therefore the District Council does not require permission from the landowner to use this road to access North Street play area. It was also stated that planning permission for works such as these is not needed. The residents explained that they were concerned about noise nuisance arising from the

proposed improvements. Cllr. Moulding quoted from correspondence he had received from a different local resident who was keen to see the provision at North Street improved.

2017/0245 TOWN FORUM – PROPOSED CLOSURE OF STONEY LANE: a resident made forceful representations about the effect that this lengthy closure would have on traffic. Cllr. Mrs. Spiller endorsed what had been said, citing that it had taken her 40 minutes to get from Beaver Lane to the junction of George Lane and Lyme Street when Stoney Lane had been closed recently at short notice. She also expressed fears about the amount of time it would take for an emergency vehicle to get through in such circumstances when the town becomes gridlocked.

It was suggested that it would mitigate the situation if signage stated the reason for the closure and warned that there would be long delays and that signage should be positioned so that it did not narrow the lanes of the road.

The Town Mayor suggested that the emergency services be advised of the situation and that it would be quicker to send help from Chard.

Cllr. Watson asked whether the exercise could be done as a night closure, such as had been done when the pavement works were done recently.

2017/0246 TOWN FORUM – HOSPITAL CLOSURE ISSUES: a resident expressed his disappointment at the absence of Cty. Cllr. Hall as he wished to know what Cllr. Hall would be saying at the meeting of the meeting of the Adult Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee meeting the following week when the matter of referring the decision to close the in-patient beds at Seaton Hospital to the Secretary of State for Health would be discussed.

2017/0247 TOWN FORUM – FORMER MAGISTRATES COURT AREA: A member of the public observed that this land was now on the market. He was informed that there had been no planning application in respect of the site. He said that the Environment Group on the Neighbourhood Plan had been keen to retain the green spaces in this area as it was beneficial to nature conservation and said that several trees were covered by preservation orders. He added that it was an historic area as it formed part of the Petre estate.

Cllr. Moulding said that the Town Council would be able to make comments regarding retention of green space as and when a planning application was received. He said that the report from the Environment Group had not put the area forward as green space, even although they may have discussed it as a group.

Cllr. Hull felt that the District Council should ask the County Council to put a moratorium on the sale of the land until the Axminster Regeneration Committee set up by East Devon District Council had met.

2017/0248 TOWN FORUM – ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: a resident asked whether Councillors have to indicate in advance if they are intending to resign and was told that this was not the case.

2017/0249 TOWN FORUM – ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: the Deputy Town Clerk was asked to publicize the Have Your Say police meetings which would be taking place in the coming month and also the list of clinics available at Axminster Hospital so that residents could request appointments in Axminster to encourage use of our local hospital.

2017/0250 TOWN FORUM – SIGNAGE PROBLEM: a member of the public highlighted the fact that the new 40 m.p.h. sign at Hunters Lodge was obscured by a tree. The Town Mayor suggested that it may simply be that the sign had been installed before the tree could be cut back.

2017/0251 TOWN FORUM – FLORAL DISPLAYS: The Town Mayor thanked those volunteers who had worked in very unseasonal weather to plant out the floral displays on the Minster Green and at the Guildhall.

2017/0252 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8th MAY 2017 – MINUTE 2017/0184 WORKS ON CULVERT AT WILHAYES LANE: Cllr. Hayward said that residents had asked him why some elements of the wooden poles had been put in at the height of the walls on either side of the flood wall as this had a potential to attract dangerous mis-use. The Town Clerk will ask Cty. Cllr. Hall to investigate.

2017/0253 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8th MAY 2017 – MINUTE 2017/0188 UNTIDY LAND AT GAMBERLAKE: this was reported as still being untidy. Cllr. Hull said that he had asked the Chairman of the Development Management Committee to investigate use of Section 215 powers, as suggested by Cllr. Hayward but had been told that it was considered by officers that there were too many loopholes. A meeting had been held at Gamberlake with the District Councillors and Officers and the tenant had been told that the land had to be cleared within 4 weeks. The activity being undertaken there would be re-located to a more screened area of the site.

Cllr. Mrs. Spiller said that the an open area of land between derelict building in King Edward Road and the Telephone exchange was full of tyres and vehicles. The enforcement officer will be informed.

2017/0254 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8th MAY 2017 – MINUTE 2017/0190 AUDIBILITY: In response to a question from Cllr. Hayward, the Town Clerk said that she had been looking into systems which would give a linked network of individual microphones for each Councillor. Cllr. Hayward said that he spoken to someone who specialised in providing stand alone systems. It was agreed that Cllr. Hayward would get quotes from his contact.

2017/0255 MATTERS OF URGENCY: None.

2017/0256 MINUTES OF PIPPINS COMMITTEE MEETNG: Dated 26th April 2017. Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Watson, proposed that these be approved and adopted.

Agreed.

2017/0257 MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated 8th May 2017.
Cllr. Watson, seconded by Cllr. Hayward, proposed that these be approved and adopted.
Agreed.

2017/0258 MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated 22nd May 2017.
Cllr. Watson, seconded by Cllr. Young, proposed that these be approved and adopted.
Agreed.

2017/0259 MINUTES OF TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated
22nd May 2017: Cllr. Watson, seconded by Cllr. Young, proposed that these be
approved and adopted. Agreed.

2017/0260 OLD COURTHOUSE COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated 12th April 2017 – Cllr.
Moulding, seconded by Cllr. Young, proposed that these be approved and adopted.
Agreed.

2017/0261 MINUTES OF RISK AND EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING: Dated 8th June 2017 – Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Hayward,
proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2017/0262 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETINGS : In respect of planning application 17/0984/V106, District Councillors were
asked to look into this as the Committee did not feel it could make a reasoned response as
it was not given access to the information required.

The Town Clerk was instructed to write to the District Council chief executive regarding this
matter.

2017/0263 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PIPPINS COMMITTEE
MEETING: none.

2017/0264 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING: None.

2017/0265 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF OLD COURTHOUSE
COMMITTEE MEETING: None.

2017/0266 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF RISK AND EMERGENCY
PLANNING MEETING: None.

2017/0267 FINANCIAL MATTERS – APPROVAL OF MAY EXPENDITURE:
CLLR. WALDEN DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST IN CHEQUE 6267 AS
BEING THE RECIPIENT AND LEFT THE CHAMBER

Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Hayward, proposed that these payments be approved.
Agreed.

CLLR. WALDEN RETURNED TO THE CHAMBER

2017/0268 FINANCIAL MATTERS – MATTERS APPROVED FOR EXPENDITURE BY TOWN MAYOR OR COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN: the Deputy Town Mayor reported that she had authorised the installation of an additional lock at Pippins following a problem with an existing lock.

2017/0269 FINANCIAL MATTERS – REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL HELP: None.

2017/0270 FINANCIAL MATTERS – PARISHES TOGETHER FUND: The Town Clerk and Cllr. Hayward, who declared an interest as Clerk to All Saints Parish Council, explained that Kilmington Parish Council had been given consent by East Devon District Council to switch its funding for last year's application to provide a community defibrillator subject to the agreement of the other participating Councils, one of which was Axminster. It was resolved that Axminster Town Council had no objection to Kilmington Parish Council participating in the project along with Axminster, All Saints and Chardstock and Hawkchurch.

So far no projects have been put forward from within Axminster for the current year or overtures received from other parishes regarding possible projects.

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.

2017/0271 FINANCIAL MATTERS - APPROVAL OF SECTION 2 ON AUDIT FORM

The documentation relating to Section 2 of the Audit form had been circulated to members.

Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Doherty, proposed that the Statement of Accounts be approved and signed. Agreed.

CLLR. MRS. LEAT DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST AT THIS POINT AS BEING AN EMPLOYEE OF ONE OF THE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS WHOSE PRODUCTS WOULD BE UNDER DISCUSSION AND LEFT THE CHAMBER

2017/0272 FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT – REVIEW OF SANTANDER BUSINESS

BOND: Details had been circulated regarding various bonds offered by different Financial Organisations all of which would offer a better return than was being obtained at present. Cllr. Hayward, seconded by Cllr. Rowe, proposed that the investment be split equally between the Cambridge Building Society and the Hampshire Trust Bank. Agreed.

2017/0273 FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT – UTILITY MATTERS:

The Responsible Financial Officer reported that electricity charges were due to rise by just under 1p per unit. She is looking into options for water supply since that is now open to competitive pricing.

2017/0274 FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT – CURRENT ACCOUNT: research was on-going.

CLLR. MRS. LEAT RETURNED TO THE CHAMBER

2017/0275 FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT – EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET

YEAR END REPORT: The Responsible Financial Officer said that over the past year

expenditure had been 38% over budget. Some of this was attributable to the Permissive Path Project and the purchase of the machinery following the decision to employ a Town Handyman. Councillors commented that the expenditure had been properly accounted for via the minutes and other controls and that the benefits from the expenditure had been appreciated by local residents. The report on spending against budget was noted.

2017/0276 ROLLING PROGRAMME OF SEAT REPLACEMENT: Cllr. Hayward, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Spiller proposed that two seats per year be replaced in environmentally recycled plastic to save on the maintenance costs incurred with seats made from other materials. Agreed.

2017/0277 PROPOSED TRAFFIC CALMING SCHEME FOR STONY LANE: this had been covered during public forum.

2017/0278 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE: Cllr. Moulding said that work on the draft plan was continuing. A meeting was required to insert the photographs and other material at appropriate points and then to send it on to the District Council for comment. Attempts to make contact with Royal Mail regarding the sorting office site had been unsuccessful so far. The identification of suitable parking sites in and around the town centre as the town grows needed to be considered.

2017/0279 JUBILEE FIELD: Cllr. Walden had nothing to report. Cllr. Hull urged a planned approach to the planting of trees once the area was handed over to the Town Council.

2017/0280 PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY ROAD WARDEN SCHEME (AS REVISED): It was resolved that the Town Council should sign up to the revised scheme. The Town Handyman and former Cllr. Jeffery had attended a recent meeting on community resilience. Cllr. Hayward said that there were funds available to purchase equipment such as personal protective equipment. Sourcing a place for storage was a consideration.

2017/0218 CORRESPONDENCE:

- a. Letters Received
 - i. Offer of Space in Advertising Brochure.
 - ii. D.C.C. – re renewal of temporary diversion order on FP80.
- b. Meetings
- c. Reports Received - the following reports are available for consultation in the office:
 - i. East Devon L.A.G. Minutes
 - ii. Healthwatch Devon D.C.C. – re change in Neighbourhood Highway Officer arrangements.

Signed Date.....