

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Held at the Guildhall, on Monday 11th September 2017 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Town Mayor: Cllr. J.W. Walden
Deputy Mayor Cllr. A.L. Young
Councillors: S. E. Clarke, C. A. Doherty, G.S. Godbeer P.G. Hayward,
D.R.H. Hull, D. Moore, A.T. Moulding, L.A. Rowe,
A.E.J. Seward and Mrs. S.R. Spiller.

The Town Clerk (Miss H. Kirkcaldie) and the Deputy Town Clerk (Mrs. Z. Adamson-Drage).
Cty. Cllr. I.L. Hall was in attendance.

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

2017/0378 APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Mrs. S.L.N. Leat and B.R. Watson. No representative from
Devon and Cornwall Police.

2017/0379 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:

CLLRS. DOHERTY, GODBEER, HAYWARD, HULL, MRS. SPILLER AND YOUNG
ALL DECLARED PERSONAL INTERESTS AS BEING MEMBERS OF THE
AXMINSTER GUILDHALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE IN RESPECT OF
ANY ITEMS RELATING TO THE GUILDHALL.

CLLRS. GODBEER AND WALDEN DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING
MEMBERS OF AXMINSTER COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE.

CLLR. WALDEN DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING CHAIRMAN OF
THE GOVERNORS OF AXE VALLEY ACADEMY

CLLR. ROWE DECLARED AN INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEM 16 AS BEING A
LANDOWNER TO THE WEST OF AXMINSTER

CLLR. HAYWARD DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST AS CLERK TO ALL
SAINTS, CHARDSTOCK AND NEWTON POPLEFORD PARISH COUNCILS
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. 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

2017/0380 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14TH AUGUST 2017: Cllr. Walden pointed
out that the date in item 17/0323 should read 26th September not 26th August.

Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Doherty, proposed that the minutes be approved and adopted subject to that correction. Agreed.

2017/0381 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14TH AUGUST 2017 – 17/0327 OBSTRUCTION OF PAVEMENTS: The Mayor said that smaller bins had been issued to properties where bins were deemed to be obstructing the pavements.

2017/0382 MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON 14TH AUGUST 2017 – 17/0336 MINUTES OF CEMETERY COMMITTEE MEETING: Cllr. Mrs. Spiller asked that a matter relating to those minutes be considered In Committee. Agreed.

2017/0383 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14TH AUGUST 2017 – 17/0349 IN-FILLING OF POTHOLES: the Mayor said that these would be in-filled once the materials were available. A list of those locations where potholes are in-filled needs to be lodged with the Town Clerk.

2017/0384 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 21ST AUGUST 2017: these were not available because of staff absence.

2017/0385 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 30TH AUGUST 2017: Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Young proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2017/0386 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 30TH AUGUST 2017: None.

2017/0387 CASUAL VACANCY ARISING FROM RESIGNATION OF CLLR. SYMES: Cllr. Walden reported that Cllr. Symes had tendered his resignation. The Town Clerk will follow the procedure for advertising this.

Cllr. Walden paid tribute to Cllr. Symes who had served on the Council for 26 years, including a term as Mayor between 2001 and 2003.

2017/0388 MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14TH AUGUST 2017: Cllr. Hayward, Vice-chairman of the Committee, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2017/0389 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated 14th August 2017 – None.

2017/0390 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OLD COURTHOUSE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22ND AUGUST 2017: Cllr. Godbeer, seconded by Cllr. D.R.H. Hull, proposed that these minutes be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2017/0391 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE OLD COURTHOUSE COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated 22nd August 2017 – None

2017/0392 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 23RD AUGUST 2017: It was pointed out that the meeting was held on Wednesday not Monday. Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Young, proposed that the

minutes be adopted subject to that correction. Agreed.

3017/0393 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF THE EMPLOYMENT

COMMITTEE MEETING : Dated 23rd August 2017 - resolved that these be referred into committee.

2017/0394 CONSIDERATION OF THE ROUTE OF THE RELIEF ROAD.

CLLR. ROWE DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST AS BEING A LANDOWNER IN ONE OF THE AREAS UNDER DISCUSSION AND LEFT THE CHAMBER.

Cllr. Watson had requested that the option of the relief road being aligned to the west of Axminster down the Axe Valley rather than to the east of the town through the land proposed for housing development be discussed.

Within each of the two options different sub-options had been put forward by various parties. These had been set out in the Traffic Report commissioned by the Town Council as part of the Neighbourhood Planning process. Following discussion of the perceived merits and demerits of each, a vote was held with a majority in favour of supporting an easterly alignment for the relief road. Those voting against supporting an easterly alignment were Cllrs. Doherty, Seward, Mrs. Spiller and Young. It was further resolved to support any opportunities to access funding for the relief road in addition to that which would come through housing development.

CLLR. ROWE RETURNED TO THE CHAMBER.

2017/0395 ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS – COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS: the list of Committee Members was updated to reflect the co-option of new Councillors.

2017/0396 ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS – OFFICE CLOSURE AND STAFF TRAINING: Cllr. Walden said that the office would be closed during the first week in October for re-organisation and staff training. In future, those wishing to see the Town Clerk would be expected to make an appointment. Councillors would be free to call in to see the Town Clerk on a Tuesday. It was resolved that these new arrangements be adopted.

To facilitate business further, County and District Councillor's reports and other announcements would be placed on the website.

2017/0397 PARTICIPATION IN THE KEEP BRITAIN TIDY “DOG POO FAIRY SCHEME”: it was resolved that the Town Council make use of this scheme to try to encourage reluctant dog-owners to clean up after their pets for the benefit of all in the parish.

2017/0398 ROBIN CROSS CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD TROPHY: the Town Mayor announced that written nominations for this award be sent to the Town Clerk. The winner each year would be presented with a trophy, a certificate and a donation of £100 would be made to a charity of the winner's choice. It was resolved that the trophy should take the form of a shield. It was further resolved that enquiries will be made to find out the cost of a board on which the recipients names could be recorded

for display at the Guildhall.

2017/0399 AXMINSTER YOUTH FORUM: Cty. Cllr. Hall said that there was a great interest among young people in the town in matters affecting the town. Cllr. Walden proposed that a youth forum be set up to which all young people in the wider area be invited. The meeting could be held in the Guildhall in the first instance and the young people could select the name. It should be open to all students in the Axminster County Ward attending any of the four local secondary schools. Cty. Cllr. Hall had offered funding from his locality grant. Cllr. Rowe asked whether such a forum could make any substantive decisions. Cllr. Walden responded that the views expressed there could inform the Town Council in its decision making processes. Cllr. Mrs. Spiller said that representatives could come to the Town Council to present their views and the Town Council could then discuss them. Cllr. Walden said that nothing should be set in concrete. Cllr. Young said that it was important that there was a process whereby the views of young people were seen to be taken seriously and reporting to the Town Council would provide that.

2017/0400 TOWN FORUM – PARKING IN CHURCH STREET: A representative of Axminster Care Service reported problems caused by inconsiderate parking in Church Street on Tuesday mornings when they had elderly or infirm visitors trying to gain safe access to the Tuesday Lunch Club at the Senior Citizens Centre. The matter was referred to the next meeting of the Traffic Management Committee.

2017/0401 TOWN FORUM – GRANT APPLICATION: A local community activist spoke in support of a request for a grant towards improvements to the garden at Pippins. The Mayor said that the Town Council would not make any decisions regarding grants for organisations based at Pippins until the Town Council had clarified its own position regarding the building.

2017/0402 TOWN FORUM – PROPOSED AXMINSTER REGENERATION BOARD: in response to a question, Cllr. Moulding explained that the Neighbourhood Plan, when approved, would set out future developments in Axminster for the next fifteen years and the Axminster Regeneration Board would be the body responsible for implementing the proposals.

2017/0403 TOWN FORUM – TIMING OF TOWN FORUM: a member of the public expressed her disapproval of the change in placement of Town Forum within the agenda with no prior warning or public consultation. The Town Mayor explained that it was important for the Councillors to give priority to Council business so that meetings do not exceed two hours duration.

2017/0404 TOWN FORUM – AXMINSTER HOSPITAL HUB: A member of the public stressed the importance of retaining the hospital intact. He said that Axminster was not adequately supported in its fight to retain hospital beds. Cllr. Hull expressed his frustration at being refused detailed information to show that the proposed alternative forms of care in the community would be adequate for rural areas.

2017/0405 FINANCIAL MATTERS – PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED:
CLLR. WALDEN DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST, AS BEING THE RECIPIENT, IN CHEQUE 6441 FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR GOODS

PURCHASED ON BEHALF OF THE TOWN COUNCIL AND LEFT THE ROOM

Cllr. Doherty, seconded by Cllr. Doherty, seconded by Cllr. Hull, proposed that the schedule of payments for August be approved. Agreed.

CLLR. WALDEN RETURNED TO THE ROOM

2017/0406 FINANCIAL MATTERS – BANK RECONCILIATIONS FOR JULY: Cllr. Hayward, seconded by Cllr. Young, proposed that this be signed. Agreed.

SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC LEFT AT THIS POINT.

2017/0407 FINANCIAL MATTERS – TO REPORT MATTERS APPROVED BY TOWN MAYOR OR COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN: None.

2017/0408 FINANCIAL MATTERS – TO CONSIDER REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OR GRANTS – KILMINGTON PRE-SCHOOL GROUP: it was resolved that this be refused.

2017/0409 FINANCIAL MATTERS –PARISHES TOGETHER FUND – CHRISTMAS LIGHTS FUND AND DEVON AIR AMBULANCE TRUST NIGHT LANDING PROJECT: Cllr. Hayward proposed that Axminster make an increased contribution of £195 towards this project. Cllr. Walden seconded the proposal. Agreed.

2017/0410 FINANCIAL MATTERS - RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT: Mrs. Adamson-Drage reported that the V.A.T. rebate had been received. Regarding the investment bond money, she had been informed that the financial organisation which said that it would receive half the money had now decided it would not do so. She is investigating an alternative option. She said that the external auditors had given a verbal indication that there was no problem with the audit but the form had not been returned as yet. No progress had been made regarding the current account.

2017/0411 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING UPDATE: Cllr. Moulding said that the text was complete and photographs had been inserted.

2017/0412 CORRESPONDENCE:

- a. Letters Received
- b. Meetings
 - i. E.D.D.C. – Communities working together – Knowle, 29th September 9.30-2.00 p.m. Cllr. Hull will attend on behalf of the Town Council.
- c. Reports Received - the following reports are available for consultation in the office:
 - i. East Devon L.A.G. Minutes
 - ii. Healthwatch Devon.

Deputy Mayor 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.

2017/0413 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE EMPLOYMENT

COMMITTEE: Cllr. Moulding, seconded by Cllr. Hayward, proposed that the pay awards as set by National Association of Local Authorities, be applied pro rata to all staff both clerical and non-clerical back dated to 1st April 2016. Agreed.

2017/0414 CEMETERY MATTER: Cllr. Mrs. Spiller reminded Councillors that it had been agreed at the site meeting that a quote be obtained to add in a pathway from the top field gate to the approved new path in the Z section. That quote, for an additional sum of £808 had now been received from the approved contractor and she proposed that it be accepted. Cllr. Hayward seconded the proposal. Agreed.

Signed Date.....