

AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OLD COURTHOUSE COMMITTEE

HELD AT 5.00 p.m. ON TUESDAY 22ND AUGUST 2017

IN THE MAIN HALL AT THE AXMINSTER GUILDHALL

1. PRESENT: Cllrs. G.S. Godbeer (Chairman), J. W. Walden, D.R.H. Hull and the Deputy Town Clerk.

No members of the press or public were present.

2. APOLOGIES : Cllrs. P.G. Hayward (Vice-Chairman) and A. Moulding.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING : the minutes meeting held on 22nd may 2017 were not available and deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

4. PUBLIC FORUM: None.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: deferred.

6. GARDEN MATTERS:

- a) Cllr. Godbeer advised he had inspected the ivy on the south garden wall and it had indeed lifted the wall plate on the shed. The Town Handyman was approved to effect repairs in the Autumn.
- b) The Deputy Clerk advised a resident who lived adjacent to the Arts Café garden who had logged a complaint regarding the encroaching foliage into her garden. The Town Handyman had completed the necessary cutting back requested.
- c) The committee felt that there were sufficient garden ornaments in the Art Café garden at the moment, and that until one is removed or irreparably damaged, no more should be accepted. In general, Cllr Godbeer advised that no one ornament should be in situ for more than 2 years

The item of correspondence from the Arts Café was brought forward for discussion. Cllr. Walden advised that unsavoury items which could potentially endanger members of the public were not the responsibility of the Streetscene, East Devon District Council team. However, this problem should have abated given that the gates to the garden are now locked in the evening.

On the matter of the removal of the bench, the Deputy Clerk advised that it had been removed temporarily to refurbish it and the bench that had replaced it was only there to minimise the impact of loss of seating during the Arts Café's busy summer season. Cllr Godbeer asked the Deputy Clerk to inform the Arts Café of this. The rest of the letter was deferred to other relevant agenda items for discussion.

7. MAINTENANCE MATTERS:

- a) i. Cottam & Northcote had been commissioned to carry out the gutter cleaning and pair works but had not yet carried out the works. Cllr. Godbeer asked the Deputy Clerk to

contact them about their schedule for carrying out the works, and whether their quotation remained the same.

ii. Cllr. Godbeer advised that other external works that were required were painting of the barge boards and removal of the buddleia that was growing out of the front wooden roof valley. A quotation was requested. There was also a hole in the apex of the gable front over the Arts Café kitchen door which jackdaws were nesting in which requires filling in and Cllr Godbeer asked the Deputy Clerk to request Cottam & Northcote to add it to their quotation. Alternatively if they couldn't carry this out, to obtain another quote from another contractor. Cllr. Walden asked Committee members if the change in quotation was within reasonable limits, that the work could be approved. The Deputy clerk arranged to email committee members with the quotations in order that they could approve the contractor prior to the next Committee meeting.

iii. Drain The wire found in the drain by Axminster Drainage was discussed. Cllr. Godbeer asked that the Town handyman meet with committee members at the Old Courthouse to inspect the manhole and decide on the appropriate action.

iv. Electrical Matters Cllr. Godbeer advised that the Town handyman had been requested to monitor electricity usage in order that accurate rental rates be applied. The Deputy Clerk was tasked to look into the possibility of installing a sub-meter with suitable contractors.

b) Senior Citizen's Centre: Report of cistern dripping. Cllr. Godbeer tasked the Town Handyman to look into it if it was internal. However if the drip is external, the Deputy Clerk is to source a contractor to look into it.

c) Arts Café: The Deputy clerk was advised by Cllr. Godbeer to issue the annual rental invoice with immediate effect.

i. Awning: Cllr. Walden advised that the Committee is awaiting a report from a surveyor to advise if there are any structural concerns affecting the integrity of the wall as it is a listed building. Similarly, consent may be required. Findlay & Butler had been commissioned to look at this.

ii. Already discussed in item 7. ii.

d) Future Use of former TIC: The Arts café had expressed an interest in the former TIC offices. Cllr. Godbeer advised that their expression of interest had been received, and the Deputy clerk was to issue a letter confirming receipt. Other interested parties were discussed in committee.

e) Devon County Council Office: An expression of interest had been received by the Town Clerk in using this space. A rental rate was discussed in committee.

f) Former Museum Area: Cllr Hull proposed that the Chairman/Vice Chairman follow up one of the two expressions of interest directly. This was seconded by Cllr. Walden. The other issues were discussed in committee.

8. FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT: Cllr. Godbeer expressed that the risk assessment needs to be updated. Cllr. Walden advised that he had completed one for the Pippins building by following a template

which he would complete for the Old Courthouse. Cllr. Godbeer advised that the Arts café would need to complete their own specific one and provide a copy to the Town Council for our records.

9. MATTERS OF URGENCY : None.

In committee:

10. TO CONSIDER ANY FRUTHER PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE USE OF MUSEUM AREA AND TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICE. Two expressions of interest had been received for the former Museum area, three expressions of interest for the former Tourist Information office, and one expression of interest for the Uniform Room. A proposed rent was set for the former TIC and the uniform room, and the Deputy Clerk was asked to write to the potential tenants with the council's terms.

11. TO REVIEW LEASES GENERALLY. The terms of the existing leases ended in 2011, so the committee requested that current tenants be written to to advise that the leases and rental amounts are due to be reviewed.

12. TO CONSIDER ANY QUOTATIONS FOR WORKS RELATING TO MAINTENANCE. None received.

Signed Date