

AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OLD COURTHOUSE COMMITTEE HELD IN THE MAIN HALL AT THE GUILDHALL ON MONDAY 25th SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 3.45 P.M.

1. PRESENT: Cllrs. G.S. Godbeer (Chairman), D.R.H. Hull, A.T. Moulding and the Town Clerk. No members of the press or public.

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

2. APOLOGIES : Cllrs. P.G. Hayward (Vice-chairman), L.A..Rowe, J.W. Walden and the Deputy Town Clerk (Mrs. Z. Adamson-Drage).

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22nd AUGUST 2017 : the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd August 2017, having been approved and adopted by the Town Council were signed by the Chairman.

4. PUBLIC FORUM: None.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22nd AUGUST 2017 NOT COVERED BY AGENDA ITEMS: the Town Clerk said that a contractor had dealt with immediate problem presented by the blocked drain. She will ask the Handyman to contact Cllr. Godbeer to arrange a suitable time to discuss the remaining matters.

6. GARDEN MATTERS

At the request of a neighbour, some overhanging vegetation had been cut back. The gardener will be cutting back the plants in preparation for winter over the next few weeks.

7. MAINTENANCE MATTERS:

a) Roof and Guttering – work will begin at the end of the week. The Town Clerk will contact the practice manager regarding Rest Harrow. Cllr. Godbeer asked that the plant growing in the valley be removed completely, or if this was not possible killed to prevent damage to the roof.

b) Other Exterior Works – specifications for works to the rear wall were awaited from the surveyor. Quotes will be obtained for painting the barge boards.

A meeting with users will be arranged to discuss various matters including what policy is being applied in respect of locking of the gate in the evenings.

c) Senior Citizens' Centre – the Town Clerk will enquire what action had been taken regarding the dip in the floor of the main room.

d) Axminster Arts Cafe – a request to mount a retractable awning would be discussed further once a report from the surveyor had been received. A hole in the gable end will be blocked at the time the roofing works are undertaken.

e) Tourist Information Centre – the Town Clerk said that various expressions of interest had been received in respect of this area.

f) Devon County Council Office – nothing to report.

g) Former Museum Area – the Constable’s Rooms and the Uniform Room had been taken. There was discussion regarding the possibility of partitioning the Courtroom to make the cloak room available to all tenants and allow access to the rear fire escape. The Town Clerk will try to clarify what regulations stipulate.

8. FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT: this will be updated to reflect changes in the tenants. A fire officer will be asked to make a visit.

Cllr. Hull 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

9. TENANTS FOR VACATED PARTS OF THE BUILDING several expressions of interest have been received, some for the ground floor premises only but some for that in conjunction with the Courtroom on the first floor.

Cllr. Godbeer suggested that consideration be given and professional advice sought in respect of partitioning the Courtroom to create a corridor which would allow access to the rear fire escape for all tenants. A fire officer will be invited to make a site visit.

10. LEASES: following discussion, Cllr. Moulding proposed that all rents be set at a commercial level and then a decision can be made as to whether a grant should be awarded to off-set the cost if it is likely that the price exceeds what a non-commercial tenant could afford.

Fine details of leases will be considered at a later date.

11. QUOTES FOR MAINTENANCE WORKS:

None were put forward.

Signed Date