

## AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BUILDINGS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD AT 12.30 p.m. ON WEDNESDAY, 7<sup>th</sup> JULY 2017 AT THE AXMINSTER GUILDHALL.

1. PRESENT: Cllr. J.W. Walden, (Town Mayor), Cllr. D.R.H. Hull, Cllr. Mrs. S.L.N. Leat and the Town Clerk and the Deputy Town Clerk. No members of the public or press.

2. APOLOGIES: Cllr. P.G. Hayward, Cllr. G.S. Godbeer and Cllr. A.T. Moulding.

3. PUBLIC FORUM: None.

4. MAINTENANCE WORKS UPDATE - GUILDHALL:

- i. Roof void – given the wide differences in prices quoted on the basis of the original survey, resolved that a further survey be commissioned prior to any of the proposed works being undertaken.
- ii. Access Control – further quotes awaited.
- iii. Acoustic Clouds – on the information available regarding the cost of alternative products, it was resolved to accept the offer from the original supplier for replacement clouds which had been treated with an approved insect repellent which would be effective for many years. Discussions will be held with the supplier regarding fitting and supply of a scaffold tower – it may be cheaper for this to be supplied locally.
- iv. Central Heating Boiler – resolved that the insurers be asked to appoint an independent contractor to review the recommendation that the pressure vessel be replaced on the grounds that it was faulty as this was thought not to be the case.
- v. Matters Raised in email from Cllr. Mrs. Spiller to Town Mayor – the Caretakers would take remedial action regarding the toilet seat and the drain covers. The Handyman will be asked to look at the door hinges and recommend appropriate remedial action and also to paint the door blades and the stage edge. A local firm will be asked to advise regarding the double glazing. The swing doors into the main foyer have many problems and it was recommended that consideration be given to replacing them with an electronic system which would increase the thermal efficiency of the building at the same time. A structural engineer should be commissioned to inspect all Town Council owned properties and make recommendations as necessary. The Town Clerk had spoken to the contractors to remind them that the works to the gutters had not yet been done.
- vi. Electrical Matters – the Town Clerk was in the process of seeking quotes for electrical inspection tests.

5. MAINTENANCE WORKS UPDATE – OLD COURTHOUSE; the electricity meter boxes had been secured. There was discussion regarding the need to meter each individual area in the former Museum premises. The view was expressed that this could be an expensive exercise and that it should be possible to devise a way of monitoring running costs and re-charging these to tenants.

The draw of the heating in the common area (staircase and corridor) also needs to be monitored as a separate exercise.

Fire Risk Assessments – there was a discussion regarding the advantages of getting in a professional firm to undertake such assessments for buildings where there is a mixed tenure. Tenants also need to be involved in doing their own assessments.

6. MAINTENANCE WORKS - PIPPINS: Cllr. Hull expressed concerns regarding the maintenance costs of the building. He felt it would be useful to know the usage numbers for the various purposes for which the building is used, such as youth club, job club and other activities. He thought a full evaluation of the benefits of the town keeping the building was essential. Cllr. Walden said that there

were four organisations/businesses keen to take out longer term rental agreements and the Town Clerk had been in discussions with Devon County Council regarding varying our Tenancy at Will to enable this but the matter had been complicated by staffing changes and ill-health at County Hall.

Cllr. Walden pointed out that much work had been done by tenants as volunteers to the improvement of the building and the building was beginning to function as a real hub for community activities.

The Deputy Town Clerk said that she felt that any agreements with tenants needed to be on the same basis as with other properties owned by the Town Council. The listed status of the building was also a consideration. Cllr. Walden suggested that grants might be obtainable to assist with costs such as replacing the windows.

In response to a question from Cllr. Hull, Cllr. Walden said that there were circumstances when access to the building had to be limited as there were vulnerable users on site.

Cllr. Walden said that once the new key safe arrived he would get the locks checked and match keys to locks.

7. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS: the signatories need to be revised, following the resignation of some Councillors. Cllr. Mrs. Leat had submitted her forms but it was not known whether they had been processed.

The Deputy Town Clerk said that she had received no response to her request for volunteers to form a working party regarding modernising banking arrangements. It was agreed that Cllr. Rowe be asked to join Cllrs. Hull and Mrs. Leat.

8. MATTERS OF URGENCY: The Deputy Clerk mentioned the fact that the Town Handyman had reported that he needed a strimmer which had reduced vibration. A price had been obtained from a supplier for a battery operated strimmer and a demonstration would be arranged. It was resolved that, subject to the trial proving satisfactory, a battery operated strimmer be purchased.

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