

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Held at the Guildhall, on Monday 12th February 2018 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Town Mayor: Cllr. J.W. Walden
Deputy Mayor Cllr. A.L. Young
Councillors: G.S. Godbeer,
P.G. Hayward,
A.T. Moulding, A.E.J. Seward, Mrs. S.R. Spiller and
B.R. Watson.

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

4 Members of the public. 0 representative of the Press.

2018/0029 APOLOGIES: G. Alderson, S. E. Clarke, C. A. Doherty, D.R.H. Hull, Mrs. S.L.N. Leat, D.J. Moore, L.A. Rowe, and Cty. Cllr. I.L. Hall.

2018/0030 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:

CLLRS. GODBEER, HAYWARD, 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. MOULDING, 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. MOULDING DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING A MEMBER OF THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS:

ARC BEREAVEMENT, AXMINSTER ARTS, 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. 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)

2018/0031 RE-PRESENTED MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12TH DECEMBER
2017: Cllr. Watson, seconded by Cllr. Godbeer proposed that these be approved and
adopted.

2018/0032 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8TH JANUARY 2018: Cllr. Mrs. Spiller,
seconded by Cllr. Seward proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0033 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11TH
DECEMBER 2017: None.

2018/0034 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8TH
JANUARY 2018:

- i. 2018/0028 - Cllr. Godbeer asked that the words Arts Cafe be added in at minute in the
interests of clarity.
- ii. 2018/0003 – Cllr. Walden said that the following feed back from Councillors to the
Town Clerk the presentation of badges to former Mayors would take place prior to the
Annual Parish Meeting on 19th March.

2018/0035 MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8TH JANUARY
2018: Cllr. Watson seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, proposed that these be approved
and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0036 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING:
Dated 8th January 2018 – Cllr. Watson said that he had had further contact from the
local resident who objected to the conversion of garages and other outbuildings to
holiday lets. The Town Clerk was asked to contact the District Council to find out
whether such extensions are taxed as business premises.

- a. 2018/0037 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PIPPINS COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON 15TH JANUARY 2018: Cllr. Walden, Chairman of the
Committee, seconded by Cllr. Watson, proposed that these minutes be approved and
adopted. Cllr. Mrs. Spiller questioned the wording at the end of item 4b. The Town
Clerk confirmed that the word “no” had been omitted and that the sentence should
read “He added that as matters stood, the Town Council could hand the building back
to the County Council with further responsibility”. Agreed.

2018/0038 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PIPPINS COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated 15th January 2018 – Cllr. Mrs. Spiller referred to an email sent by Cllr. Walden regarding the re-instatement of an internal wall at Pippins which implied that this had been discussed and approved but not minuted at the meeting of the Town Council held on 14th December 2016. She said that according to the written notes she had taken at that meeting it had not been discussed and the written notes taken by the Deputy Town Clerk (who had been standing in for the Town Clerk in the latter's absence) also confirmed this fact. Cllr. Mrs. Spiller added that no decision could have been made as it was not an agenda item for that meeting. She expressed her concern about the way the matter had been handled and the lack of the proper consultation and recording and enquired who had done the work and paid for it. Cllr. Walden apologised to his fellow Councillors for the way in which he had handled the matter and said that the work had been paid for by the tenant.

Cllr. Hayward said that he concurred with Cllr. Mrs. Spiller's version of what had happened as he would have had views to express regarding any building works.

2018/0039 MINUTES OF RISK MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE DATED 15TH JANUARY 2018; Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Watson, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0040 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING DATED 15TH JANUARY 2018: None.

2018/0041 MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE DATED 29TH JANUARY 2018: Cllr. Watson, seconded by Cllr. Walden, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0042 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING DATED 29TH JANUARY 2018: None

2018/0043 MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING DATED 29TH JANUARY 2018: Cllr. Watson, seconded by Cllr. Walden, proposed that these minutes be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0044 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING DATED 29TH JANUARY 2018: Cllr. Walden asked that issues relating to traffic and parking provision at Tigers Way be passed on to Cllr. Hall for consideration at the next meeting of the Highways and Traffic Orders Committee for east Devon.

2018/0045 MINUTES OF THE OLD COURTHOUSE COMMITTEE MEETING DATED 29TH JANUARY 2018: Cllr. Godbeer, seconded by Cllr. Seward, proposed that the minutes of the above meeting be approved and adopted. Agreed.,.

2018/0046 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE OLD COURTHOUSE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 29TH JANUARY 2018: **TO DO**

2018/0047 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUILDINGS AND FINANCE

COMMITTEE HELD ON 29TH JANUARY 2018: Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Young, proposed that these minutes be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0048 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUILDINGS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 29TH JANUARY 2018:

Referring to the running deficit on Pippins, Cllr. Mrs. Spiller questioned how such a deficit could be recouped. Cllr. Walden replied that it was represented mostly by running costs and pointed out that it had taken much longer to tenant the building than expected. He said that a meeting would be held on on 14th February with appropriate officers from Devon County Council to discuss possible ways forward. He said prices would need to be increased to try to offset the losses but pointed out that the community benefit arising from activities based in Pippins was inestimable.

Cllr. Mrs. Spiller expressed concerns regarding competition between the Guildhall and Pippins to the likely detriment of the former. She questioned Devon County Council's reasons for seeking to hand over the building and said that the fact that Devon County Council did not want the building was not a reason for Axminster Town Council to take it on.

Cllr. Walden said that if the Town Council did take on the building it had the option to sell it in the future, though there would be a requirement that some of the proceeds would have to go to Devon County Council. Cllr. Moulding commended the wide range of activities available at Pippins and the benefits this brought to the community.

Cllr. Young said that she was concerned at the potential costs of over £26,000 highlighted in the surveyor's report. She said that at least in the case of the Guildhall there had been a referendum in support of the Town Council continuing to own the building. She felt that Pippins had a smaller outreach in terms of the services offered there and feared that if it was taken on it would be an expensive burden for future generations in terms of maintenance.

Cllr. Walden said that a better fee structure was needed and that the Town Clerk was seeking more accurate figures regarding the cost of repairs.

Cllr. Mrs. Spiller said that the Guildhall was badly in need of money being spent on it and could lose out to Pippins.

Cllr. Hayward asked which Committee had authorised the running up of such a deficit. He did not think Councillors were aware of the level of loss and that "creeping happenstance" was not a responsible way to manage public money. Cllr. Walden said that there would be a separate meeting at which this would be an agenda item.

2018/0049 MATTERS OF URGENCY – MEMO REGARDING TIMING OF WORKS ON HIGHWAYS: The Town Mayor urged Councillors to come to the next meeting with proposals in response to this memo.

2018/0050 FINANCIAL MATTERS – PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED:

CLLR. HAYWARD DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST IN RESPECT OF CHQ 6609 AS BEING THE RECIPIENT.

CLLR WALDEN DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST IN RESPECT OF CHEQUE

6587 AS BEING THE RECIPIENT. BOTH WITHDREW FROM THE CHAMBER.

Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Seward, proposed that the schedule of payments for January be approved. Agreed.

CLLRS. HAYWARD AND WALDEN RETURNED TO THE CHAMBER.

2018/0051 FINANCIAL MATTERS – BANK RECONCILIATION FOR DECEMBER: this was signed by the Town Mayor.

Cllr. Hayward asked whether either income or expenditure would exceed more than £250,000 and was advised that this was not likely.

2018/0052 FINANCIAL MATTERS – TO REPORT MATTERS APPROVED BY TOWN MAYOR OR COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN: Cllr. Walden asked that the quote for the domed badge be brought back with a more detailed breakdown. Regarding the entry control at Pippins he had suggested that any expenditure be delayed until the Fire Alarm had been repaired as this was linked to the door control system and may resolve the problems.

2018/0053 FINANCIAL MATTERS - FUNDING REQUESTS: None.

2018/0054 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT: Mrs. Adamson-Drage said that she was working on the Annual Review and had been updating the asset register. She and the Town Clerk had had a meeting with the internal auditor regarding changes in the procedures, including the detail of his response.

2018/0055 MATTERS RELATING TO AXE VALLEY ACADEMY:

CLLR. WALDEN DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING THE CHAIRMAN OF GOVERNORS OF AXE VALLEY ACADEMY AND VACATED THE CHAIR FOR THE DURATION OF THIS ITEM OF BUSINESS AND TOOK HIS SEAT WITH THE PUBLIC

Following a period of consultation, the Vector Learning Trust, of which Axe Valley Academy is a member, had announced a slight change in position from outright cessation of provision of Sixth Year educational provision to one of temporary suspension of such provision.

Cllr. Moulding proposed that this Town Council should send a strong letter to the Vector Learning Trust asking them to think again and explore all options which could be taken to enable the sixth form to continue. Cllr. Godbeer seconded the proposal, which was agreed following a lengthy discussion.

CLLR. WALDEN RESUMED THE CHAIR.

2018/0062 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

2018/0057 TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS: None.

2018/0058 REPORTS RECEIVED FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS: Councillors

Moulding had undertaken various duties in his capacity as Chairman of the District Council. Cllr. Hall had been dealing with matters raised by residents. He welcomed the funding for the relief road and reported that the District Council would be offering a green waste collection from the start of the new financial year.

2018/0059 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR: Cllr. Hall reported that he had been dealing with items raised by individuals, along with trying to set up a new Friends of Axminster Library Group, liaising with various people regarding the matter of Sixth Year provision at the secondary school and looking into the formation of a speed watch group.

2018/0060 TOWN FORUM – SCHOOL ISSUES: A member of the public expressed his disappointment that as a parent he had been assured that there would be sixth form provision at the school and this now appeared to have been a false promise.

2018/0061 TOWN FORUM – DISABLED PARKING SPACE IN NORTH STREET: A member of the public stated this new bay had been positioned in a very inappropriate place. Cllr. Watson said that the matter had been reported to Devon County Council.

2018/0062 TOWN FORUM – FUNDING FOR RELIEF ROAD: A member of the public welcomed the award of £10,000,000 towards this project.

2018/0063 TOWN FORUM – PIPPINS: A member of the public said that it was important that information about what the Town Council intended to do with this building in the future should be set out in as plain and straight forward a way as possible as there was a great deal of public misconception.

2018/0064 TOWN FORUM - TOWN FORUM: Cllr. Watson suggested that there was an argument for having Town Forum twice on the agenda, firstly early on to raise any matters not connected with the agenda and then later on to comment on what had been said at the meeting. A member of the public said that having Town Forum earlier would enable greater public participation. Cllr. Hayward endorsed this view and said that there was room for greater openness and a need to do things in a very different way from at present.

2018/0065 ARRANGEMENTS FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING: It was resolved that there be two guest speakers, Ms. Coplestone, the new Business Studies Teacher at Axe Valley Academy and an officer from the Planning Department. The meeting would start with the presentation of badges to past mayors.

2018/0066 DELEGATION OF POWERS IN RESPECT OF ALLOCATION OF SECTION 106 FUNDING FOR PLAY: information from the District Council's Section 106 Monitoring Officer had been circulated. Cllr. Walden proposed that power to agree how this funding be allocated within Axminster by the District Council be delegated to the Amenities Committee at the forthcoming meeting with the Officer in order to ensure that the money is spent within the specified time scale. Agreed.

Cllr. Seward spoke of her disgust at the condition of the Play Area in the Jubilee Field and this will be raised with the developer.

2018/0067 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE: Cllr. Moulding said that a meeting had been held with consultants to produce a draft document with policies which had sound supporting evidence and this would then be presented to the public.

Cllr. Hayward raised the issue of the lack of information regarding the level of affordable housing specified. He feared that the town could be held to ransom by developers hiding behind the cloak of commercial confidentiality as regards viability levels. Cllr. Moulding said that these levels are set by the District Council via the Local Plan which stipulates 25%. Central Government has said that it would negotiate with developers regarding this level in order to bring forward more development.

2018/0068 GUILDHALL – LOCATION OF PROPOSED MIXING DECK: Cllr. Mrs. Spiller said that advice received indicated that this should be located upstairs. It would involve removal of some seats in the balcony and a check with the local and fire authority regarding any variations required to the licence.

Cllr. Mrs. Spiller proposed that the deck be located in the balcony subject to the approval of the appropriate regulatory authorities and that three quotes be obtained from contractors to supply suitable housing once the opinion of the authorities had been given and that the money raised from sale of the seats removed be used to offset the overall costs. Agreed.

2018/0069 CORRESPONDENCE:

- a. Letters Received .
- 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.

The 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.

2018/0070 QUOTATIONS RECEIVED FOR CONFERENCE SYSTEM: Prices had been obtained for various options. Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Moulding proposed that the quote to supply a hard-wired system with 17 microphones and roving microphones and with storage cases for the sum of £2705.94 inclusive of value added tax be accepted. Agreed.

2018/0071 TENANCY MATTER: this was deferred for lack of time to the next Buildings and Finance meeting.

Signed Date.....

DRAFT