

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

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

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

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

22 Members of the public. 0 representative of the Press. 2 representatives of the Devon and Cornwall Police.

2018/0072 APOLOGIES: D.J. Moore, A.E.J. Seward, B.R. Watson and Cty. Cllr. I.L. Hall.

2018/0073 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:

CLLRS. DOHERTY, GODBEER, HAYWARD, HULL, AND MRS. SPILLER 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, TATWORTH 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)

2018/0074 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12th FEBRUARY 2018: Cllr. Walden,
seconded by Cllr. Godbeer proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0075 TOWN FORUM – YOUTH MATTERS: the Town Mayor said that a small
minority of individual youngsters had been causing a variety of problems in the town
in recent weeks and he had encouraged residents to come and discuss this with the
Town Council.

Among the points raised were:

- a. A request for comparative figures from other East Devon towns.
- b. Disappointment at the small public representation in the light of the flood of comment on social media.
- c. General lack of understanding among young people regarding civic and democratic processes and procedures.
- d. The unwillingness of some young people to engage with the activities available.
- e. The effect of the widespread misuse of drugs and alcohol in society.
- f. The impact of austerity in causing chaotic family lives.
- g. The need for the core group to have somewhere warm, dry and with wi-fi provision. A pilot to do this at the Light House would be taking place soon as a joint venture with Axminster Youth Club and Light Up Axminster but would only be sustainable if sufficient adult volunteers come forward to ensure that child safeguarding issues are covered.
- h. That police initiatives had managed to reduce the numbers of incidents being reported but that it was important for any incidents to be logged via the police contact numbers rather than being aired on social media. Prosecutions could only be based on firm evidence. Use had been made of available response staff to try to address the problems.
- i. That there were far worse problems in some of the major urban areas.

- j. That the Town Council needed to put funding in place to offset that withdrawn from youth service provision by higher authorities.
- k. That Section 106 Money would be made available for upgrading play facilities at Foxhill and Loretto Road. District Council funds had been allocated to do the same at North Street. Invitations for sport and recreation would be put in place and voted on in June.

2018/0076 TOWN FORUM – POLICE REPORT: there was nothing to add to what had been said in public forum.

2018/0077 TOWN FORUM – PUBLIC HEALTH MATTERS: Cllr. Godbeer drew attention to the risks of contracting Lyme Disease from ticks and said that he would be placing leaflets in various locations to raise public awareness about this risk and how it could be reduced.

2018/0078 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12TH FEBRUARY 2018 – OLD COURTHOUSE GARDEN NOTICE: Councillors approved the wording for the notice to be placed at the street entrance to the garden.

If the garden is to be closed for any reason a temporary laminated notice will be put in place.

2018/0079 MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12TH FEBRUARY 2018: Cllr. Hayward seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0080 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING:
Dated 12th February 2018 – None.

2018/0081 MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19TH FEBRUARY 2018: Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Moulding, proposed that these minutes be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0082 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING:
Dated 19th February 2018 – Cllr. Hayward asked whether the location of the skate park was likely to be altered as a result of the proposals put forward for Cloakham recently. Cllr. Moulding said that it was highly unlikely as planning permission had already been obtained for the present position.

2018/0083 MINUTES OF AMENITIES COMMITTEE DATED 21ST FEBRUARY 2018:
Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Godbeer, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0084 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING DATED 21ST FEBRUARY 2018: None.

2018/0085 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUILDINGS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 26TH FEBRUARY 2018: Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Young, proposed that these minutes be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0086 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

BUILDINGS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 26TH FEBRUARY 2018:

Cllr. Mrs. Spiller referred to item 5 iii regarding lighting. Cllr. Young said that the discussion related to the fact that how stage lighting is provided would need to be addressed in light of the fact that the Guildhall Management Committee was getting more bookings for shows from independent organisations. This needs to be discussed by the Guildhall Management Committee before any firm decisions can be taken by the Town Council.

2018/0087 MINUTES OF THE CEMETERY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26TH FEBRUARY 2018: Cllr. Mrs. Spiller seconded by Cllr. Young, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0088 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CEMETERY COMMITTEE MEETING:
Dated 26th February 2018 – None.

2018/0089 MINUTES OF RISK MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5TH FEBRUARY 2018: these were not available.

2018/0090 MINUTES OF THE EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF THE OLD COURTHOUSE COMMITTEE HELD ON 6TH MARCH 2018: Cllr. Hayward, seconded by Cllr. Young proposed that these minutes be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0091 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF THE OLD COURTHOUSE COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated 6th March 2018 – None.

2018/0092 ADVERSE WEATHER DEBRIEF: The Town Mayor paid tribute to the efforts of the Snow Warden and his team of helpers and also the many individuals in the town who helped out in other ways.

A more detailed debrief will be held shortly with those involved in the work.

2018/0093 REQUEST FOR EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING: it was agreed that this take place on 2nd July 2018 once the Annual Return work had been completed.

2018/094 REVIEW OF COUNCIL COMMITTEE STRUCTURE: discussions highlighted the problems resulting from the number of committees, the need for Councillors to let the Town Clerk know well in advance if they could not attend, in order to avoid inaccuracy. This will be placed on the next agenda along with appropriate amendments to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to reflect any changes.

2018/0095 CONTENT OF MINUTES: Cllr. Walden recommended that these be condensed to decisions with reliance for detail being placed on the recording archive. Cllr. Mrs. Spiller said that when the need arose to look into past minutes paper copies with sufficient context were much quicker to scan through. This will form part of the debate in July.

2018/0096 MATTERS OF URGENCY – APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL DISPUTES RESOLUTION OFFICER RE PENSIONS: Cllr. Godbeer, seconded by Cllr.

Hayward, proposed that this become one of the responsibilities, ex officio, of the Deputy Mayor subject to necessary training being provided. Agreed.

2018/0097 FINANCIAL MATTERS – PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED:

Cllr. Moulding, seconded by Cllr. Godbeer, proposed that the schedule of payments for February be approved. Agreed.

2018/0098 FINANCIAL MATTERS – BANK RECONCILIATION FOR JANUARY:

proposed Cllr. Moulding, seconded Cllr. Young that this be signed by the Town Mayor. Agreed.

2018/0099 FINANCIAL MATTERS – TO REPORT MATTERS APPROVED BY TOWN MAYOR OR COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN: the following actions were presented and approved: (proposed Cllr. Walden, seconded Cllr. Young)

- a) Repair to defective gutter on Guildhall.
- b) Replacement of vandalised lock on toilet at Old Courthouse.
- c) Additional supplies of grit and ex gratia payment of costs to members of Snow Warden Team.

2018/0100 FINANCIAL MATTERS - FUNDING REQUESTS: A request for the Town Council to pay for hire of the Guildhall for exercise sessions for those suffering from dementia was rejected as the Town Council as all hirers would have to be treated in the same way. The Town Clerk will suggest other avenues of funding to the applicant.

2018/0101 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT: Mrs. Adamson-Drage said that she was working on the Annual Return. Two further errors relating to banking procedures would further delay the transfer of the account to a different. The Pensions Discretions Policy had now been completed and was ready for submission.

2018/0102 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS: a road closure is proposed for South Street in June.

2018/0103 TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS: the Town Mayor had attended the dementia evening and a quiz night in aid of local charities.

2018/0104 REPORTS RECEIVED FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS: Councillor Moulding had undertaken various duties in his capacity as Chairman of the District Council. Cllr. Hull supplied some detailed information regarding District Council attempts to improve the quality of house building. He suggested that the Town Council make an approach to the District Council to request that they provide alternative allotment provision on land off St. Andrews Drive in preparation for the possible use of the land at Millway Rise for housing. Cllr. Hayward asked that his concerns be passed on regarding the future funding of Adult Social Care given the diminishing proportion of funding available for other aspects of care once pay settlements had been met. Cllr. Hall said that the budget for the next year had been approved. He said that for the first time he had seen homelessness in the Rural Ward, which should be reported to the Housing Department, and had been working on individuals' problems.

2018/0105 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR: in a written report, Cllr. Hall stated that he had attended a session on mental health training, supported the approval of the budget for the coming year, had a meeting with officials from the District and County Councils regarding linking the relief road into the existing road network at Weycroft and the A35 and held discussions with Libraries Unlimited about Axminster Library.

2018/0106 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE: Cllr. Moulding said that he had transferred all data to the website provider to be uploaded. The Planning Consultants were working on finalising the draft plan prior to further public consultation.

2018/0107 CORRESPONDENCE:

- a. Letters Received –
 - i. various re Old Courthouse Garden.
 - ii. Funding availability for flood resilience. THE TOWN CLERK WILL SUBMIT AN APPLICATION
 - iii. Traffic Sensitive Street Review COUNCILLORS APPROVED THE RESPONSE DRAFTED BY THE CLERK

IT WAS AGREED THAT LETTERS OF THANKS BE SENT TO MR. HOARE AND MRS. HUMBERSTONE FOR THE HELP THEY HAD GIVEN TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, AS BOTH WERE RETIRING FROM THEIR PRESENT POSTS.

- b. Meetings L.A.G. Meeting 8th March
- 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.

2018/0108 CEMETERY MATTER: Cllr. Mrs. Spiller reported on a cemetery matter relating to grave ownership and said that the Town Clerk was seeking appropriate advice from Devon Association of Local Councils.

2018/0109 TENANCY MATTER: referring to the recent selection of new tenants at the Old Courthouse, Cllr. Hayward urged Councillors, in their own interests and those of the Council, to be scrupulous in declaring, either at the start of each meeting or during the meeting, matters recorded on their Register of Member's Interests as failure to do so can lead to public perceptions of bias even when none are involved.

Signed Date.....