

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Held at the Guildhall, on Monday 9th April 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,
P.G. Hayward, D.R.H. Hull, D.J. Moore,
A.J.E. Seward, and 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.

5 Members of the public. 0 representative of the Press. 0 representative of the Devon and Cornwall Police.

2018/0110 APOLOGIES: Mrs. S.L.N. Leat, L.A. Rowe, Dist. Cllr. Moulding and Cty. Cllr. I.L. Hall.

2018/0111 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:

CLLRS. DOHERTY, HAYWARD, HULL, MOORE, 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

CLLR. WALDEN DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING A MEMBER OF AXMINSTER COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE.

CLLR. WALDEN DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING CHAIRMAN OF THE GOVERNORS OF AXE VALLEY ACADEMY AS A MEMBER OF AXMINSTER SKATEPARK STEERING GROUP AND AS BEING SAFEGUARDING LEAD FOR AXMINSTER YOUTH CLUB.

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)

2018/0112 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12th MARCH 2018: Cllr. Walden,

seconded by Cllr. Hayward, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0113 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12TH

MARCH 2018 – ADULT SOCIAL CARE PROVISION: Cllr. Walden had circulated to Councillors both his letter setting out Cllr. Hayward's concerns that the response to that letter from Cty. Cllr. Hall.

2018/0114 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS: the cancelled Annual Parish Meeting will take place on 24th April.

2018/0115 TOWN MAYOR'S ENAGEMENTS: the Town Mayor had undertaken the following engagements:

Attended the Young Farmers Breakfast.

2018/0116 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS: the following were among meetings or engagements Cllr. Moulding had attended since his last report:

Attended meetings to discuss the Housing Infrastructure Fund and the Delivery of the Relief Road

Attended Strategic Partnership Think Tank

Attended meeting regarding Health and Well-being Services at Seaton Town Hall

Attended meeting of Budget Working Party

Attended service at Sidmouth Parish Church to commemorate 100 year centenary of the RAF

Attended DCC Civic Service at Uffculme

Cllr. Hall's report had been circulated as per minute 2018/0113 above.

Cllr. Hull said that the questions he had raised regarding housing matters would be dealt with after the May meeting of the District Council.

2018/0117 POLICE REPORT: the number of crimes over the past 12 months had been 212 compared with 176 in the previous comparable 12 month period.

2018/0118 TOWN FORUM – ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE: a member of the public provided details of BMX track provision and added that skateboard provision was not really suitable for bicycle-motocross use. The Town Mayor said that approval was awaited from the District Council for the advert inviting applications for accrued Section 106 Moneys for Axminster.

2018/0119 TOWN FORUM – OLD COURTHOUSE GARDEN: in response to a series of questions from a member of the public it was explained that there was a difference between the Public Entertainment Licence for which both the past and present tenants of the Arts Cafe had applied to the District Council and the Licence Agreement between the Town Council and the tenant as to which area within the garden the proprietors were permitted to serve refreshments.

2018/0120 TOWN FORUM – RESIGNATIONS OF CLLRS. GODBEER AND MOULDING: a member of the public expressed regret at these resignations and paid

tribute to all that each Councillor had done for the well-being of the Axminster and its residents during their periods of office.

2018/0121 TOWN FORUM – FUTURE OF PIPPINS: a member of the public suggested that a recent four-page report on activities taking place at Pippins would make it more difficult for the Town Council not to assume responsibility for the building and noted that no decision had been made to date. The Town Mayor said that quotations for the building works outlined in the structural report were still awaited. Once these were obtained the Town Council would take a view and liaise with Devon County Council. He said that there may be other ways to take the site forward for community benefit.

2018/0122 TOWN FORUM – ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR: Cllr. Young said that the police would be holding a public meeting at the Guildhall on 28th April at which the public would have an opportunity to raise with them matters of concern regarding policing in the town.

2018/0123 TOWN FORUM – OLD COURTHOUSE GARDEN: A member of the public raised her concerns regarding the serving of alcohol by the new tenants at the Arts Cafe. She was informed that the previous tenants had had a public entertainments licence and that the new tenants would take over that licence by arrangement with the Licensing Authority. Such applications are advertised and are open to public comment. The tenants had a different licence with the Town Council in terms of what part of the garden they could use in connection with the business. The Town Council would be granting some extensions to this area by prior agreement for specific events.

2018/0124 TOWN FORUM – RETIREMENT OF LONG-SERVING COUNCILLORS: A resident paid tribute to Cllrs. Godbeer and Moulding who had both served on the Town Council for many years and retired recently.

2018/0125 TOWN FORUM – TOWN COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PIPPINS: A member of the public expressed the view that the number of groups operating from Pippins would make it increasingly difficult for the Town Council to decide against taking it on on a long-term basis. Cllr. Walden said that no decision had been taken yet as quotes for required work were still awaited. Once these are received a document will be prepared setting out how the building is used as a community building and, if agreed by the Town Council, will be submitted to Devon County Council so that the County Council can price up the various tenure options were the Town Council to take on the building either outright or with some form of lease. Once that information is available the Town Council can discuss the way forward. He said that it was always open to any other organisation or group of organisations to submit a bid to take on the building.

2018/0126 MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12th MARCH 2018: Cllr. Hayward seconded by Cllr. Alderson, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0127 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING:
Dated 12th March 2018 – None.

2018/0128 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUILDINGS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 26TH MARCH 2018: Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr.

Young, proposed that these minutes be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0129 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUILDINGS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 26TH MARCH 2018: Cllr. Mrs. Spiller referred to item 12 regarding grant applications and suggested that the policy and procedures be revised as there were ambiguities.

2018/0130 MINUTES OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6TH APRIL 2018: Cllr. Young seconded by Cllr. Doherty, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0131 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETING: Dated 6TH April 2018 – any matters would be discussed in committee.

2018/0132 MINUTES OF RISK MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5TH FEBRUARY 2018: these were not available.

2018/0133 CASUAL VACANCY: The Town Mayor expressed his regret at the resignations of Cllrs. Godbeer and Moulding and said that the town had benefited greatly from their dedicated service over a combined total of more than 50 years.

Cllr. Walden said that notification had been received that a bye-election had been requested. Once the candidates are known each will be invited to submit a personal statement for the website.

2018/0134 INSTALLATION OF CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION IN TOWN CENTRE: an approach had been received from Devon and Cornwall Police regarding installation of C.C.T.V. in town centres in East Devon towns.

Following discussion, it was proposed that a presentation be made to the Town Council at a public meeting.

2018/0135 MATTERS OF URGENCY: None.

2018/0136 FINANCIAL MATTERS – PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED:

CLLR. HAYWARD DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST IN CHEQUE 6677 AS BEING THE RECIPIENT AND LEFT THE ROOM FOR THIS ITEM.

Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, seconded by Cllr. Doherty, proposed that the payments be approved. Agreed.

2018/0137 FINANCIAL MATTERS – BANK RECONCILIATION FOR FEBRUARY: proposed Cllr. Hayward, seconded Cllr. Watson that this be signed by the Town Mayor. Agreed.

2018/0138 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) Advertisement for Employment Opportunity.

2018/0139 FINANCIAL MATTERS - FUNDING REQUESTS:

a) Youth Club –

CLLR. WALDEN DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST IN THIS APPLICATION AS SAFEGUARDING LEAD FOR THIS ORGANISATION AND HANDED THE CHAIR TO THE DEPUTY MAYOR. HE REMAINED IN THE CHAMBER DURING THE DISCUSSION.

Clarification will be sought regarding the precise sum being requested by Axminster Youth Club. Proposed Cllr. Young, seconded Cllr. Doherty, it was agreed that if the sum was £1000 for premises rent and £1400 for the services of a Youth Worker then this should be approved. Anything different would require a new, clearer, application for consideration.

b) Axminster Christmas Together –

CLLR. HAYWARD DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS HAVING COMPLETED THE APPLICATION FORM ON BEHALF OF THE ORGANISATION OF WHICH HE WAS A FOUNDER-MEMBER AND ABSENTED HIMSELF FROM THE CHAMBER FOR THE DURATION OF THIS DISCUSSION.

Proposed, Cllr. Seward, seconded Cllr. Doherty, that £120 be granted towards insurance costs for this event. Agreed.

CLLR. HAYWARD RETURNED TO THE CHAMBER

c) Light Up Axminster –

This application was for £500 to cover costs for celebration of the Royal Wedding. Cllr. Hayward seconded by Cllr. Seward, proposed that this be approved. The Town Clerk and the Deputy Mayor expressed concerns about the constitution which had been submitted as the organisation did not appear to be registered as a charity. Cllr. Seward proposed that clarification be sought but that the application be supported. Agreed.

The Responsible Financial Officer said that applications for the current financial year had not yet been received from Axe Valley Ring and Ride and East Devon Citizens' Advice Bureau. She was asked to remind them that they now needed to apply at the start of the financial year.

Items such as the Church Clock Agreement are stand alone matters and not subject to this grant application process.

2018/0140 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT: Mrs. Adamson-Drage said that she was working on the Annual Return. Utility costs were rising. She hoped that the paperwork required to update the current bank mandate and to facilitate the change of banks had been completed and that the transfer proceedings could start. She was intending to look at the possibility of obtaining business rates relief on some

of the Town Council buildings.

The Mayor asked what the position was regarding the General Data Protection Regulations. The Town Clerk said that she, the Responsible Financial Officer and the Deputy Mayor would be attending a training session later in the month. Cllr. Hayward said that there was a requirement that each organisation appoint a Data Protection Officer with expert knowledge of the legislation and this expertise would most likely need to be brought in. He said that the fines for non compliance with the requirements of the legislation were huge and that many small bodies like parish councils had been caught up in it. He said that any fines would be the responsibility of the Councillors not the staff.

Cllr. Hayward proposed that the Town Council should request an extension to the end of June for submission of the Annual Return. Agreed.

2018/0141 GUILDHALL WORKING PARTY: the Town Mayor explained to Councillors that since the formal lease between the Town Council and the Guildhall Management Committee had expired it had been continuing on a “roll over” basis. He was keen to revert to a more formal position in view of the amount of expenditure needed on the upkeep of the building. He said that there were three options to consider, a new lease with different conditions via a deed of variation; direct management of building by the Town Council or management by a completely separate body as is done in Seaton and Lyme Regis. It was agreed that the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Deputy Town Mayor should contact the Town Council solicitors for advice.

Cllr. Mrs. Spiller said that before these options were considered the detail of the constitution needed to be clarified.

It was agreed that the working party comprise Cllr. Hayward, Cllr. Doherty, Cllr. Clarke and Cllr. Moore.

2018/0142 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE: Cllr. Walden said that although Cllr. Moulding would remain on the Steering Group in his capacity as a District Councillor, he would no longer act as Chairman. Cllr. Young volunteered to take on this role with support from Cllr. Moulding.

2018/0143 CORRESPONDENCE:

- a. Letters Received –
 - i. Together Drug and Alcohol Service.
 - ii. Various road closure notices.
- b. Meetings L.A.G. Meeting 26th April
CLLR. SEWARD WILL ATTEND THIS.
- c. Reports Received - the following reports are available for consultation in the office:
 - i. East Devon L.A.G. Minutes
 - ii. Healthwatch Devon.

The Mayor said that he would contact the developer at Cloakham regarding the loss of daffodil bulbs from the bank as a consequence of the recent road works and request that replacements be planted in the re-shaped bank.

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.

2018/0144 STAFFING MATTER: the hours to be worked by the proposed administrative assistant had been approved in approving the minutes of the Employment Committee.

Cllr. Mrs. Spiller asked how an additional person could be fitted into the existing office space. Cllr. Young said that an outline suggestion had been prepared by the staff, although some costs will be involved. It was suggested that other options should also be considered.

Cllr. Young said that she felt it may be necessary to re-advertise the post of Cemetery Caretaker job share as she did not feel the package offered would attract many applicants. Cllr. Mrs. Spiller said that the matter would need to wait until the closing date for the applications had passed.

2018/0145 INSURANCE MATTER: the Town Clerk gave details of an incident in which Council property sustained damage.

Signed Date.....