

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Held at the Guildhall, on Monday 13th August 2018 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Town Mayor: Cllr. J.W. Walden
Deputy Mayor Cllr. A.L. Young
Councillors: A.E. Bourner, S. E. Clarke, C. A. Doherty, P.G. Hayward,
D.R.H. Hull, Mrs. S.L.N. Leat, L.A. Rowe, A.J.E. Seward,
Mrs. S.R. Spiller, B.R. Watson, Cty./Dist. Cllr. Hall and Dist.
Cllr. Moulding.

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

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

2018/0286 APOLOGIES: Cllrs. G. Alderson, D.J. Moore, M. Mynard,

2018/0287 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:

CLLRS. DOHERTY, HAYWARD, HULL, LEAT 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. HULL AND WALDEN EACH 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, AXMINSTER TWINNING
ASSOCIATION AND AS BEING SAFEGUARDING LEAD FOR AXMINSTER
YOUTH CLUB.

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)

CLLR. HULL DECLARED AN INTEREST AS BEING A GOVERNOR OF THE ROYAL
DEVON AND EXETER HOSPITAL.

2018/0288 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS: it was resolved, proposed Cllr. Walden, seconded Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, that Cllr. Young be a member of the Cemetery Committee.

2018/0289 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9TH JULY 2018: Cllr. Rowe asked that these be corrected to show that she had not been present. Cllr. Bourner, seconded by Cllr. Leat, proposed that the minutes be approved and adopted subject to that correction. Agreed.

2018/0290 REPORTS RECEIVED – POLICE: The Town Clerk said that the police website indicated that 58 crimes had been reported in June.

2018/0291 COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT: Cllr. Hall said that he had been working in connection with his membership of the Development Management Committee and the Adoption and Fostering Committee.

2018/0292 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS’ REPORTS: Cllr. Hall said he had attended the consultation and public meeting regarding the urban extension Masterplan meeting and was looking into matters relating to problem gambling.

Cllr. Moulding did not have anything to add to his list of engagements which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr. Hull said that he too had attended the Masterplan meeting but felt that it had been compromised by the inadequacies of the venue which had been too small to accommodate then numbers attending. He had continued to press the Chief Executive of East Devon District Council regarding the lack of response from the National House Builders.

2018/0293 TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS: The Town Mayor reminded those present that there would be road closures in connection with the Carnival in September

2018/0294 TOWN MAYOR’S ENAGEMENTS: the Town Mayor had undertaken the following engagements:

Attended the public session of the Axminster Masterplan Meeting. He extended an invitation to his fellow Councillors to join him at a breakfast he was hosting on 7th September for the Twinning Association.

2018/0295 TOWN FORUM – ANTISOCIAL AND RECKLESS DRIVING: A resident set out his concerns regarding the lack of a police presence to deter the current widespread incidence of reckless and dangerous driving and expressed fears that the lack of police intervention would result in its escalation. Another resident expressed the view that antisocial behaviour was becoming normalised. Cty. Cllr. Hall and the Town Mayor said that the various authorities were aware of the problems. There was discussion regarding the use of mobile speed detection cameras, community police watch and other possible solutions. The Deputy Mayor urged the public to use online reporting of matters which concerned them so that the police could build up a picture of public concern.

2018/0296 TOWN FORUM – MASTER PLAN CONSULTATION: a member of the public

said that he had found the event disappointing, with little consultation. He felt that it was a “box ticking” exercise. He questioned the need for a further 800 houses in the town. Cllr. Young agreed, saying that there was no point in building houses which local people could not afford. Cllr. Walden said that the extra houses were needed to enable the transformation of Axminster from a small market town to a town equipped for the 21st century.

2018/0297 TOWN FORUM – COMMEMORATION OF THE END OF THE GREAT WAR: in response to question from a resident, the Town Mayor said that no request for funding in support of events to mark the end of the First World War had been received from the Royal British Legion. A member of the audience said that the branch had commissioned its own silhouettes.

2018/0298 TOWN FORUM – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN: A member of the public felt that the Town Council had failed to exercise management responsibility in respect of the Neighbourhood Plan. He said that the document was crucial in giving local people power over developers and was the real masterplan for the area. Cllr. Walden reiterated that the consultants were working on the plan and that resignation of the Chairman of the Steering Group had had an inevitable effect in slowing progress down.

2018/0299 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9th JULY 2018 – 18/0276 WORKING PRACTICES: Cllr Hayward reported that the initial meeting of the working party had been held. He asked that the matter be put on the November meeting for discussion.

2018/0300 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11th JULY 2018 – 18/0255 JUBILEE FIELD SECTION 106 RELATED MATTERS: The Town Clerk had circulated a letter from the head of planning at District Council setting out the reasons for the delay in responding to questions regarding Section 106 matters.

2018/ 301 MATTERS OF URGENCY – RENEWAL OF ONE YEAR BOND: Resolved, proposed Cllr. Hayward, seconded Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, that the Responsible Financial Officer find out further information in the light of the recently announced change in interest rates and report back to the next Buildings and Finance Committee.

2018/0302 MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9th JULY 2018: Cllr. Hayward seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Leat, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0303 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 9th JULY 2018: None.

2018/0304 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13th JULY 2018: Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Young, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0305 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 13th JULY 2018: None.

2018/0306 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CEMETERY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD ON 23RD JULY 2018: Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, seconded by Cllr. Hull, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2018/0307 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CEMETERY COMMITTEE HELD ON 23RD JULY 2018: in response to a question from the Town Mayor, Cllr. Mrs. Spiller said that advice was being sought from appropriate specialists regarding the level to which the Irish yews should be reduced for easy maintenance.

2018/0308 MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30TH JULY 2018: Cllr. Walden pointed out that no decision had been recorded against application 18/1519. The Town Clerk stated that the application had been approved.

Cllr. Doherty, seconded by Cllr. Bourner, proposed that these be approved and adopted subject to the insertion of that decision. Agreed.

2018/0309 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 30TH JULY 2018: None.

2018/310 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BUILDINGS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE DATED 30TH JULY 2018: Deferred to next meeting as not all Councillors had received the minutes.

2018/0311 FINANCIAL MATTERS – JULY PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED:

Cllr. Seward, seconded by Cllr. Doherty, proposed that the payments in the sum of £13506.56 be approved. Agreed.

2018/0312 FINANCIAL MATTERS – BANK RECONCILIATION FOR JUNE: agreed that this be signed.

2018/0313 FINANCIAL MATTERS – TO REPORT MATTERS APPROVED BY TOWN MAYOR OR COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN: None.

2018/0314.FINANCIAL MATTERS - RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT: Mrs. Adamson-Drage said that negotiations to transfer to a new bank are still on-going. Lloyds Bank will be closed for 3 weeks from mid-September but that some interim measures to cover this period had been arranged with the Post Office and when they re-open the way of operating would be different. Mrs. Adamson-Drage is still looking into the possibilities of business rates relief. Additional information requested by the external auditor has been supplied. Electricity contracts are being reviewed. The website providers have set up a secure “members only” page on the website which should eliminate the problems the some members have had in receiving documents emailed by the Town Clerk.

2018/0315 FINANCIAL MATTERS – GRANT APPLICATION RECEIVED: proposed Cllr. Walden, seconded Cllr. Mrs. Spiller and resolved that this application from Yarty Party be rejected on grounds of non-compliance with remit of the Town Council's Grants Policy.

2018/0316 FINANCIAL MATTERS - PARISHES TOGETHER FUNDING: this had just been re-launched as the Communities Together Fund. It is now open to community organisations to bid for the funding as well as Town and Parish Councils and any organisation making a bid would be expected to put up 20% match funding. Mobile speed detection devices and mobile flashing signs were considered to be possible options.

2018/0317 FINANCIAL MATTERS – TELEPHONY CONTRACT: the Responsible Financial Officer had been looking into changing to an internet based telephony contract. Following discussion, it was resolved that she provide comparisons with the present set up and look into the prices offered by alternative providers.

2018/0318 TOWN COUNCIL INSURANCE: Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, proposed that this be renewed with the existing provider on a one year contract in the sum of £2652.49 Agreed.

2018/0319 CORRESPONDENCE FROM DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL REGARDING PIPPINS: In response to a letter from an officer at Devon County Council asking whether the Town Council intended to take on more formal responsibility for the building, Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Hull, proposed that a letter be sent stating that the Town Council was still interested but could not make a decision without having full details as to the possible financial outlay involved which would be exposed. Cllr. Walden circulated a list of the present users of the building. Agreed.

Cllr. Hull said that a commitment should be sought that the County Council would bear the cost of providing a safer entrance to the site as he did not feel the Town Council should take on the building without that commitment.

2018/0320 MASTERPLAN FOR URBAN EXTENSION EAST OF AXMINSTER: Those Councillors who had attended reported on the closed-session meeting, hosted by the consultants appointed by East Devon District Council, for stakeholders. Others reported also on the public consultation exhibition held in the afternoon and early evening. It was felt that both events would have benefited by being held in a larger venue. In response to a question from Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, Cllr. Hayward stated that he had raised the issues of both Weycroft Bridge and the junction of Lyme Road and the A35. He said that the £10 million government grant was for addressing those problems but the fact remained that the middle section would have to be funded by development and it was becoming apparent that, in order to do so, present thinking was that at least 800 houses would need to be built and he feared that this number would only escalate as time went on.

Cllr. Walden proposed that the Town Clerk should send a summary of the discussion to the Planning Consultants who had hosted the meeting. Agreed.

2018/0321 DISTRICT COUNCIL POSITION REGARDING PLANNING VIABILITY ISSUES: Cllr. Hayward said that he felt that there was a trend for developers to renege on their original Section 106 obligations and that the residents of Axminster were losing out as a result. He deplored the fact that representatives from the Town Council are precluded from seeing the viability information on which requests for reductions in these obligations are based. He said that in the latest example, relating

to the development at Cloakham Lawns, the decision reached by the District Council had resulted in Axminster losing out on 120 affordable houses. Following further discussion, it was resolved, proposed Cllr. Walden, seconded Cllr. Hayward, that a letter be sent asking the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Development Management Committee meeting to attend the next meeting of the Town Council.

Cllr Young pointed out that the problem lay in existing national legislation and that central Government needed to be lobbied to put in place legislation which reflected and to deal with problems which are replicated nationwide. To this end, the housing representatives of all parliamentary parties will be copied into the correspondence.

Cllr. Walden proposed that Cllr. Hayward draft a letter on behalf of the Town Council, including the invitation to the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Development Management Committee mentioned above, to the Chief Executive of East Devon District Council, to be circulated to his fellow Councillors by email prior to dispatch.

Cllr. Hayward asked what powers the District Council had as community builders. He said that there is a gap between the numbers of houses being built and the number of people on the waiting list. He felt that the deficit between the number on the waiting list and the number of houses being built refuted developers' claims that no one would take the affordable houses being built.

2018/0322 CASE FOR EMPLOYING AND ADDITIONAL HANDYPERSON: resolved, proposed Cllr. Hayward, that this be deferred to the meeting of the Buildings and Finance meeting.

2018/0323 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING REPORT: the Town Clerk said that she had spoken to the website contractor who had said that the site would be live this week but she had not been able to view any of the information she knew had been uploaded. She will try to make further contact with him when he returns from abroad.

2018/0324 CORRESPONDENCE:

- a. Letters Received
- b. Meetings
 - i. East Devon L.A.G. 6th September, Seaton
- c. Reports Received - the following reports are available for consultation in the office:
 - i. East Devon L.A.G. Minutes from 19th July 2018

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.

THERE WAS NO FURTHER BUSINESS DUE TO THE LATENESS OF THE HOUR.

Signed Date.....