

## AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PIPPINS COMMITTEE

Held at Axminster Guildhall on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at 6.00 p.m.

1. PRESENT : Cllrs. J.W. Walden, C.A. Doherty, L.A. Rowe, A.J.E. Seward, B.R. Watson, A.L. Young and the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk.

In attendance Cllr. D.R.H. Hull.

No member of the press.

1 Member of the public.

2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS: the following were elected agreed:- Chairman – Cllr. Walden, proposed Cllr. Watson, seconded Cllr. Doherty, Vice-chairman Cllr. Rowe, proposed Cllr Walden, seconded Cllr. Seward.

3. APOLOGIES : Cllrs. P.G. Hayward.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

CLLR. WALDEN SAID THAT HE WAS AN OCCASIONAL VOLUNTEER AT THE YOUTH CLUB.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM:: Cllr. Walden signed the minutes of the previous meeting. There were no matters arising.

6 . PUBLIC FORUM: a member of the public drew Councillors' attention to the Community Café held on the first Wednesday of each month and the benefits it afforded those who attend.

Cllr. Hull sought an explanation of who was in charge of bookings at the centre.

Cllr. Walden said that from the start, as there was no staff capacity at the Town Council, bookings had been taken by him but were subsequently taken on a voluntary basis, on behalf of the Town Council, by two individuals who worked from the centre itself but had evolved into something much bigger than had been envisaged. He said that once staff capacity allowed it would be taken back into the Town Council offices in its entirety. He stressed that he had made it clear to the volunteers that any other items relating to Pippins had to be referred to the Town Mayor, the Town Clerk or the Deputy Town Clerk before any action was taken. The same applied to anything undertaken by any of the user groups so that the Town Council could give consent. He expressed his gratitude to the volunteers for what their input. He referred to the clearance of some rubbish and overgrown vegetation from the area adjacent to the garage where the gravel was being leveled up.

7. FINANCIAL UPDATE: The Town Clerk circulated a summary version of the detailed receipts and payments relating to Pippins over the past financial year which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting.

The Deputy Town Clerk apologized that she may have given a more optimistic report on the position previously as income was being double-reported but this had now been corrected. She pointed out that the expenditure figures do not include staff time or that of volunteers. The Town Clerk added that some of the receipts related to the prior year.

The Town Mayor said that it may be necessary to adjust hire charges and tenancy charges to ensure that running of the building was cost neutral at least. He said that there needed to be parity with the Guildhall.

The Deputy Town Clerk said that she understood that the building was operating at full capacity at the moment and there was no likelihood that the income would expand. She was also looking into small business rate relief and long-term utility contracts.

The Town Mayor will look into two hirers whose had not settled bills of long-standing but small

amounts.

8. UPDATE ON POSITION REGARDING DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL LEASE: quotations based on works recommended in the survey had been received. He intended to sit down with the Town Clerk and go through that information, along with an assessment of how much the Town Council had put in, how much the volunteers had put in in terms of painting and exterior works, details of the various community user-groups so that a presentation can be made to Devon County Council which illustrates the community benefit which flows from the building in the hope that this will be reflected in any offer made to the Town Council by Devon County Council in terms of lease or purchase price terms. The Town Council would have sight of, and approve, the document prior to its submission to Devon County Council. Any offer made by the County Council would be crucial in assisting the Town Council to make a decision as to whether to continue or discontinue its involvement with Pippins.

In respect of the tree roots and the damage they are causing to the car park surface, Devon County Council had indicated that it did not wish to take any action and that it was the responsibility of the Town Council under its Tenancy at Will. As the Town Council had resolved to do nothing until the situation regarding its long-term responsibility for Pippins had been decided, no further progress can be made with this matter.

9. IMPACT OF GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS: The Town Clerk said that one of the tenant organisations had been issuing privacy notices to hirers relating to matters which were not its concern but that of the Town Council. It had been pointed out to them that these should be withdrawn and that the Town Council was in the process of making its own arrangements based on templates supplied by the National Association of Local Councils which were specific for Council business. Cllr. Young added that the notice issued highlighted the fact that information was being shared with someone with whom, from a Town Council stand-point, it should not be shared.

10. QUOTES FOR WORKS SET OUT IN SURVEYOR'S REPORT: Cllr. Walden said that in preparing the report for submission he felt it appropriate to remove from the quotes received items which related to the garage as this would be demolished in the longer term as part of a proposed highway scheme therefore the Town Council would not want to spend any money on it as it would not be a good use of public funds. The Town Clerk said she disagreed given the strategic location of the garage in terms of the equipment stored there. Cllr. Walden said that there were other locations which would be better in the long term.

11. BOOKING ARRANGEMENTS: Cllr. Walden said that consideration should be given to extending the hours being offered to the new administrative assistant to enable that person to take on responsibility for the bookings at Pippins. Members felt that this would be a sensible way forward.

12. MAINTENANCE MATTERS:

a) Internal – the hinge safety guard had been replaced and the door serviced. The Town Clerk had checked with the firm that had done the service that there was no safety need for work on the door arm despite there being some play on it. The problem with the hot water boiler related to the use of an incorrect fuse for the type of appliance.

b) External – Cllr. Walden said that the equipment stored at the back of the garage could not be removed. Other options for storing the tractor and water bowser will be considered..

c) Grounds – effect of erupting tree roots on car park surface had been considered earlier in the meeting. A formal request would have to be submitted if an organization wished to construct a buggy park and, should the Town Council and Devon County Council have no objection in principle then the organization would have to apply for appropriate permissions.

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