

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Held at the Guildhall, on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Town Mayor: Cllr. J.W. Walden  
Deputy Mayor Cllr. A.L. Young  
Councillors: C. A. Doherty,  
P.G. Hayward, Mrs. S.L.N. Leat, D.J. Moore,  
M. Mynard, Mrs. S.R. Spiller and B.R. Watson.

The Town Clerk (Miss H. Kirkcaldie) and the Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (Mrs. Z. Adamson-Drage).

6 Members of the public. 1 representative of the Press. 0 representative of the Devon and Cornwall Police.

2019/0127 APOLOGIES: Cllrs. G. Alderson, A.E. Bourner, S. E. Clarke, D.R.H. Hull, L.A. Rowe and A.J.E. Seward, also Dist. Cllr. A.T. Moulding and Cty./Dist. Cllr. Hall.

2019/0128 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:

CLLRS. DOHERTY, HAYWARD, LEAT, MOORE AND WATSON EACH 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. SHE ALSO DECLARED AN INTEREST AS BEING A MEMBER OF AXMINSTER TWINNING ASSOCIATION.

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, 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)

2019/0129 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2019: Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Mynard proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2019/0130 TOWN FORUM – PLASTIC FREE AXMINSTER: A member of the public expressed appreciation for the efforts of all those who had participated in the litter pick organised by the Plastic Free Axminster group.

2019/0131 TOWN FORUM – MONEYS FROM HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND: A members of the public sought clarification as to whether the £10 million money offered towards the construction of the relief road was to be a loan or a grant.

Cllr. Walden said that he had spoken to the local Member of Parliament at the weekend who had stated that it had always been intended as a “recoverable loan”. He said that there was conflict between central government and the developers regarding land value differences. One party viewing the land at agricultural value and the other at development value.

2019/00132 TOWN FORUM – PROPOSED RELIEF ROAD: a member of the public deplored the proposal to put an arterial road through a housing area because of the potential damage to those living there from the additional fumes. Cllr. Walden said that there were ways of mitigating this impact.

2019/0133 TOWN FORUM – SPEEDING IN LYME STREET: a resident stated that a recent police survey had revealed that 46 out of 60 motorists were exceeding the 20 m.p.h. speed limit. He asked what could be done to encourage the police to pay more attention to the seriousness of the problem. The Town Mayor asked the Town Clerk to find out how the results of the survey would feed into the setting up of a speed watch group.

2019/0134 TOWN FORUM – PARKING PROBLEMS: A member of the public raised the matter of lack of parking enforcement in the evenings. The Town Mayor said that this was policed on only two days a week. The Town Clerk will pass this concern on to County Councillor Hall. Cllr. Watson said that this was a matter which had been raised previously via the Traffic Management Committee. The resident asked whether parking enforcement was a power which the Town Council could assume.

2019/0135 TOWN FORUM –STATEMENTS FROM RETIRING COUNCILLORS: Cllrs. Hayward, Mrs. Spiller and Watson expressed their appreciation of the honour of serving as members of the Town Council and wished the next Council well in its endeavours for the town.

2019/0136 TOWN FORUM – TRIBUTES TO RETIRING COUNCILLORS: The Town Mayor thanked all his fellow Councillors for their support during the past two years and paid particular tribute to Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, a former Mayor, who had joined the Town Council in 1995 and Cllr. Watson, Chairman of the Planning Committee, who had joined the Town Council in 2003. The Deputy Mayor added to these tributes, commending Cllr. Mrs. Spiller as a role model to female Councillors.

2019/0137 REPORTS RECEIVED – POLICE: The Town Clerk said that the police website giving the crime reports had not been updated since the January figure of 44 was published.

2019/0138 COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT: Cllr. Hall’s report had been uploaded onto the web site.

2019/00139 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS: the reports from Cllrs. Hall and Moulding had been uploaded onto the website. Cllr. Hull had not been able to submit a report for reasons of ill-health. Cllr. Walden asked that the District Councillors be asked whether it is proposed to provide more charging points for electric vehicles so that there would be adequate provision for tourists. Cllr. Hayward said that this matter had been discussed in the planning committee earlier in the evening in the context of trying to future proof planning provision.

2019/0140 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

2019/0141 TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS: the Town Mayor had attended the grand opening of the Heritage Centre on 6<sup>th</sup> April and held a Civic Service on 7<sup>th</sup> April. He mentioned the forthcoming opening of the Community Waffle Shop.

2019/0142 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2019: Cllr. Walden said that the Town Clerk had received a response from the District Council confirming that the Axminster Regeneration Board had not been formally established. The Town Clerk said that she had heard no more from the District Council regarding any election meetings it might be holding.

2019/ 0143 MATTERS OF URGENCY: None.

2019/0144 MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2019: Cllr. Watson, seconded by Cllr. Hayward, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2019/0145 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 11TH MARCH 2019: None.

2019/0146 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUILDINGS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2019: Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Young, proposed that these be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2019/0147 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUILDINGS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2019 – STORAGE FACILITIES: the Town Clerk said that a short term option had been identified and information circulated to members. Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Young proposed that this option be approved.

2019/0148 FINANCIAL MATTERS – MARCH PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED:

Cllr. Watson, seconded by Cllr. Mynard, proposed that the payments as listed be approved. Agreed.

2019/0149 FINANCIAL MATTERS – BANK RECONCILIATION FOR FEBRUARY 2019: agreed that this be signed.

2019/0150 FINANCIAL MATTERS - PAYMENTS AUTHORISED BY MAYOR OR COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN: None.

2019/0151 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT: The Deputy Clerk reported that the V.A.T. returns had been submitted. She had been making preparations for the annual return.

2019/0152 FINANCIAL MATTERS – GRANT REQUESTS: the following grants, duly proposed, seconded and agreed, were approved:

CLLR. WALDEN ABSTAINED FROM VOTING IN RESPECT OF THE GRANTS FOR THE JOB CLUB AND THE YOUTH CLUB AS HE VOLUNTEERS WITH BOTH ORGANISATIONS.

Axe Valley and West Dorset Ring and Ride - £1000

Job Club - £765

Axminster New Youth Club - £800

2019/0153 FINANCIAL MATTERS – YEAR END DEBTORS: the Deputy Town Clerk said that there were various debtors outstanding for more than 12 months. She said that some of these were not likely to be received. This matter was deferred pending a more detailed list.

2019/0154 FINANCIAL MATTERS – OPERATIONAL BUDGET: the Deputy Town Clerk said that over and above the precepted budget, there were two items which the Town Council had indicated that it intended to fund from reserves or by other means, particularly long-term storage. She said that until the size of the building and its location were decided it was hard to make a firm decision. She said that one possibility was to take money from the Town Building Fund.

Cllr. Walden felt that detailed discussion was better referred to the next Council.

2019/0155 STANDING ORDERS: following discussion and in the light of the shortage of nominated candidates for the Town Council, the Town Clerk pointed out that it would be prudent to reduce the quorum from the 8 set out in the document circulated to Councillors to one third of the full number of 15 seats on the Council as set out in the Model Standing Orders set out by the National Association of Local Councils.

Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Hayward, proposed that the quorum be altered as above in Standing Orders 3v and 24b. Agreed.

2019/0156 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS: Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Moore, proposed that the Financial Regulations as reviewed and revised by the Buildings and Finance Committee and circulated to Councillors be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2019/0157 PROVISIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR PERIOD AROUND ELECTIONS:  
Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, proposed that as a temporary measure, in the event of there being no existing councillor signatories re-elected, standing orders and financial regulations be suspended following the Town Council elections but only for as long as is necessary to enable new signatories to be approved by the Council's bank and that during this time the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer/Deputy Clerk be authorised to sign cheques and authorise online payments to the value of £2000 – with invoices/counterfoils signed in green by any two councillors. Agreed.

2019/0158 WEBSITE INFORMATION: the Town Clerk said that as it was now known there would be no elections there would be no need for candidates to submit pre-election profiles.

2019/0159 MATTERS IT MAY BE PRUDENT TO DELEGATE TO OFFICERS ON A TEMPORARY BASIS OVER AND BEYOND THE ELECTION PERIOD: Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Young, proposed that, where appropriate officers respond to consultations such as planning and take such administrative actions as are necessary until the appropriate committees are formed at the Annual Meeting. Agreed.

2019/0160 DISPOSAL OF GUILDHALL PIANOS: the Town Clerk said that there had been no progress with this matter.

2019/0161 UPDATE ON SECTION 106 PROJECTS: the Town Clerk explained that staff at East Devon District Council were still gathering information from those who had put forward the various suggestions. As soon as the requisite details were in place, details of approved schemes would be presented to the public and a vote would take place.

2019/0162 CORRESPONDENCE :

- a. Letters Received
  - i. E.D.D.C. – various re elections.
  - ii. E.D.D.C. - Future High Streets Fund.
- b. Meetings
  - i. L.A.G. meeting date change
- c. Reports Received - the following reports are available for consultation in the office:
  - i. Health Watch Voices

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. Cllr. Watson seconded the proposal. Agreed.

2019/0163 STAFFING MATTERS – LENGTHSMAN POST: the Town Clerk updated members regarding the re-advertisement of this post. She felt that certain aspects of the post, particularly the hours, needed to be reconsidered. Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, seconded by Cllr. Mynard, proposed that this be deferred to the next meeting. Agreed.

2019/0164 QUOTATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION: None.

2019/0165 TENANCY MATTERS: Councillors confirmed approval of the extension for a further three months of the short-term agreement for use of the former Courtroom at the Old Courthouse. Cllr. Hayward will discuss the terms of the leases with the Town Clerk.

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

