

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Held at the Guildhall, on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Town Mayor: Cllr. A.L. Young  
Deputy Mayor Cllr. D.J. Moore  
Councillors: M.N. Adamson-Drage, C.A. Doherty, Ms. J.J. Farrow,  
M. Featherstone, D.R.H. Hull, Mrs. S.L.N. Leat, M. Mynard,  
A. Sedgewick, M.D.G. Spurway, P. Wales and J.W. Walden

The Town Clerk (Miss H. Kirkcaldie).

In attendance: Dist. Cllrs. S.L. Jackson.

12 Members of the public. 0 representative of the Press.

2019/0271 APOLOGIES: Cllr. A.E. Bournier and District Councillors Hall and Moulding.

2019/0272 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: CLLRS. DOHERTY, FARROW, HULL, LEAT, MYNARD AND SPURWAY 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.

CLLR. HULL DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING A MEMBER OF AN ORGANISATION WHICH HIRED THE SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRE.

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.

2019/0273 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 24<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2019: Having had it confirmed by her fellow Councillors that the minutes were accurate, Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Featherstone, proposed that the minutes be approved and adopted as Council policy. Agreed.

2019/0274 TOWN FORUM – SECTION 106 MONEYS: a spokesman for the Bowls Club explained that this season would be the Club's last viable year unless a new mat could be funded. Despite vigorous attempts it had not proved possible to obtain funds from other sources so an allocation from the Section 106 Moneys was crucial. He said that the club was open to members of all ages and for many it was a vital social forum.

2019/0275 TOWN FORUM – CLIMATE EMERGENCY: A member of the public asked whether Axminster was doing anything about the climate emergency as other local Town Councils were. The Mayor said that this would be placed on the next agenda and that there were ways in which the Town Council could play its part. She felt that a working party would be the way forward.

2019/0276 TOWN FORUM – OVERGROWN FOOTPATH: A member of the public raised her concerns about the overgrown state of the footpath between Weycroft and Wilhayes Lane. She said that it was overgrown with grasses which were swamping the space for wild flowers. It was pointed out that it was the landowner's responsibility to ensure that paths were kept in a usable condition. The area by Cloakham Lawn Sports Centre is its responsibility. The Town Clerk will contact the Chairman of that organisation.

CLLR. YOUNG PROPOSED THAT THE AGENDA ITEM RELATING TO SECTION 106 MONEYS BE BROUGHT FORWARD FOR DISCUSSION AT THIS POINT.  
Agreed.

2019/0277 UPDATE ON SECTION 106 RECREATION AND PLAY MONEYS: The Town Clerk said that at the meeting with District Council officers it had been agreed that the Carnival would be a good community event at which to carry out the public consultation on the eligible schemes. Cllr. Walden said that he was not happy that the vote for this was to be conducted at the Guildhall on Carnival Night and said that a stall on the Minster Green would be a better location.

The Mayor said that wherever the pitch took place it would be well advertised.

2019/0278 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12<sup>TH</sup> JUNE – 2019/0218 PLANNING APPLICATION 19/1074/MOUT: Cllr. Farrow commended the response submitted by a local resident and said that the Town Council should throw its weight behind the comments made.

2019/0279 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12<sup>TH</sup> JUNE – 2019/0237 PROPOSED CRIME WRITERS' WEEKEND: Cllr. Young said that she had spoken to the organiser and encouraged him to make this a town-wide event.

2019/0280 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24<sup>TH</sup> JUNE – 2019/0260 REQUEST FOR DOG BIN AT TRINITY HILL NATURE RESERVE: Cllr. Walden said that one vehicular entrance is on land cared for by the Forestry Commission and one by East Devon but both bodies encourage visitors to remove all waste generated which is why neither litter bins nor dog bins are provided by them. He felt that the Town Council should support this policy.

2019/0281 MATTERS OF URGENCY: None.

2019/0282 MINUTES OF PLANNING WITH TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2019: the accuracy of the minutes having been

confirmed, Cllr. Mrs. Leat, seconded by Cllr. Doherty, proposed that these be approved and adopted as Town Council policy. Agreed.

2019/0283 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING WITH TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 10<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2019: None.

2019/0284 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING WITH TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 24<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2019: the accuracy of the minutes having been confirmed, Cllr. Mrs. Leat, seconded by Cllr. Young, proposed that these be approved and adopted as Town Council policy. Agreed.

2019/0285 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING WITH TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 24<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2019: None.

2019/0286 EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2019: Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Doherty, proposed that these minutes were an accurate record of the meeting and that they be approved and adopted as Town Council policy. Agreed.

2019/0287 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2019: None.

2019/0288 FINANCIAL MATTERS – APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS FOR JUNE: Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Leat, proposed that these payments be approved. Agreed.

2019/0289 FINANCIAL MATTERS – REPORTING OF ANY ITEMS APPROVED FOR EXPENDITURE BY TOWN MAYOR OR COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN:

i Card Reader – the Town Clerk explained that this would provide service users, such as allotment holders, with a wider range of payment options. The price would be around £30. The Town Mayor had approved this purchase.

ii Purchase of Payroll Manager Software – the Town Mayor said that she had approved this expenditure to facilitate handling of the monthly payroll procedures in light of the increase in staff numbers. The cost will be £72

2019/0290 FINANCIAL MATTERS – RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER’S REPORT: the written report from the Responsible Financial Officer stated that she had submitted the annual return to the external auditor. She was working on drafting a Risk Management Policy and enquired about risk assessment training for all staff. Arrangements were in hand for liaison with an adjoining authority regarding contingency and emergency planning. The tractor insurance is due for renewal as per the listed agenda item.

2019/0291 POLICY FOR CUTTING OF AMENITY GRASS: Cllr. Farrow said that this was a much more complicated matter than she had realised and that she needed to undertake further research. She proposed, seconded by Cllr. Walden, that a working party be set up. This was agreed with the membership to be Cllrs. Farrow, Featherstone and Walden.

2019/0292 VISIT TO DOUVRES LA DELIVRANDE TO COMMEMORATE THE 75<sup>TH</sup>

ANNIVERSARY OF D. DAY LANDINGS: Cllr. Farrow said that Axminster had been represented by herself, Cllr. Walden, Mr. and Mrs. Hillyard and Mr. and Mrs. Godbeer, all members of the Twinning Association. Events had included a church service, laying of wreaths at the British Cemetery and a visit to Juno Beach where 14,000 Canadians had landed on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1944. She said it had been a very moving occasion.

2019/0293 ARRANGEMENTS FOR OPERATION LONDON BRIDGE: the report from the working party had been circulated to members. The Town Mayor said that it was important that the town be prepared for the death of important senior national figures as this could happen very suddenly. Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Walden proposed that Axminster Town Council approves the proposals for action as set out in the report from the working party meeting. Agreed. Cllr. Adamson-Drage said that it was important to review this plan annually.

Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr Doherty, proposed that a budget of £1000, which can be reviewed at a later date if necessary, be set to purchase the requisite items with the money to be taken from reserves as no allowance was made at the time the budget for the current year was set. Agreed.

The Town Council will liaise with other appropriate organisations in the town.

2019/0294 FUTURE PLANS - VOLUNTEERS: a working party will be set up to liaise with the volunteers.

2019/0295 FUTURE PLANS – PLASTIC FREE AXMINSTER: the Town Mayor paid tribute to all those members of the community who were carrying out litter picks in selected areas of the town, much to its benefit. Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Mynard, proposed that the litter collection barrow belonging to the Town Council be made available to the Plastic Free Axminster group. Agreed.

CLLR. FARROW DECLARED AN INTEREST AS BEING A MEMBER OF PLASTIC FREE AXMINSTER.

2019/0296 CORRESPONDENCE :

- a. Letters Received.
  - i. A resident – various regarding Jubilee Field.
- b. Meetings
  - i. Care Service A.G.M. 23<sup>rd</sup> July.
- c. Reports Received - the following reports are available for consultation in the office:
  - i. Health Watch Voices

The 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. Doherty seconded the proposal. Agreed.

CLLR. ADAMSON-DRAGE DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM AS BEING THE SPOUSE OF A MEMBER OF STAFF AND LEFT THE CHAMBER FOR THE NEXT ITEM OF BUSINESS.

2019/0297 STAFFING MATTERS – FLEXIBLE WORKING: there was discussion regarding the fact that some staff already worked on a flexible basis. Cllr. Young felt that this option should be available to all staff. Cllr. Walden said that this should not result in the public coming to find that the offices were closed at times they were scheduled to be open. Cllr. Young said that contracts could be revised and reworded to cover that point and that the Town Council had an obligation to treat all staff equally and appropriate caveats could be built into the revised contracts.

Cllr. Farrow, seconded by Cllr. Walden, proposed that this be approved in principle with the wording of the contracts to be finalised at a later date. Agreed.

CLLR. ADAMSON-DRAGE RETURNED TO THE CHAMBER.

2019/0298 STAFFING MATTERS – APPOINTMENT OF LENGTHSMAN: Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Farrow, proposed that recommendation of the Employment Committee be accepted and Mr. Bennett be offered this position. Agreed.

2019/0299 STAFFING MATTERS – EQUIPMENT FOR NEW LENGTHSMAN: quotes were still be sought for some of the larger items of equipment needed in connection with this position, such as a van.

2019/0300 QUOTATIONS RECEIVED – ELECTRICAL WORKS AT OLD COURTHOUSE: this would be covered under the item relating to tenancy matters.

2019/0301 QUOTATIONS RECEIVED – UPDATING OF OFFICE COMPUTERS AND COPIERS: insufficient further quotes had been received to progress this matter.

2019/0302 QUOTATIONS RECEIVED – CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION: insufficient further quotes had been received to progress this matter. Cllr. Walden questioned the need for further cameras outside and was informed that this had been recommended on security grounds at a meeting of the Buildings and Finance Committee at the time the defective condition of the older of the existing was being discussed. Cllr. Walden then suggested that proximity sensitive lights might be worthy of consideration for those times when it was dark.

2019/0303 TENANCY MATTERS - SEAGULL PROBLEM: a report had been received from a tenant regarding in incident when a person had been harassed by a swooping seagull in the garden. Following discussion Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Leat, proposed that a notice asking people not to feed the birds be obtained and positioned on the gate. Agreed.

2019/0304 TENANCY MATTERS – FORMER MUSEUM: the Town Clerk outlined the pros and cons of having this area let to one tenant as opposed to several. She said that the Courtroom would lend itself to sub-division, with the former museum office becoming a kitchen available to all tenants. She had spoken to the Consultant Surveyor regarding the options with a view to achieving maximum flexibility and was awaiting a response from him. If the former Museum is in multiple tenancy then

recent experience has shown that it is essential that some kind of sub-metering is installed.

Cllr. Young proposed that, in the meantime, the individual interested in taking on the whole of the former Museum be offered an initial 6 month tenancy so that that the person could see whether the venture envisaged would be viable and would give the Town Clerk time to consider the options for sub-division put forward by the surveyor should it be necessary to implement them at some future time. Cllr. Mynard said that it would be prudent to ascertain what crafts were envisaged. Cllr. Hull supported Cllr. Young's proposal which was carried.

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