

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Held at the Guildhall, on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at 7.30 p.m.

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

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

In Attendance: Dist. Cllr. A.T. Moulding.

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

2019/0001 APOLOGIES: Cllrs. D.R.H. Hull (noted and agreed that this was on grounds of ill-health), D.J. Moore, A.J.E. Seward and Cty./Dist. Cllr. Hall.

Prior to the commencement of the official business, the Town Mayor presented a certificate to Mr. Alan Geoffrey Enticott, the 2018 recipient of the Robin Cross Memorial Award for Citizen of the Year and then invited him to pass on the shield to his successor, Mr. Bryan Ball, who had been nominated in recognition of his services to St. John Ambulance, Axminster Allotment Society and many others.

The Town Mayor then congratulated Mr. John Jeffery, a former member of the Town Council and Town Mayor, who was named in the New Years Honours List as a recipient of the British Empire Medal, in recognition of his meritorious civil service in the local community. This service has included work with St. John Ambulance, Axminster Care Service, Axminster Carnival and many other organisations and Cllr. Walden said that Mr. Jeffery was a very worth recipient.

The Town Mayor thank the many members of the Light Up Axminster team for all that they had done to achieve such an improved provision of Christmas lighting in the town and also to the many businesses and private donors who had supported them.

2019/0002 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:

**CLLRS. ALDERSON, DOHERTY, HAYWARD, LEAT 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)

2019/0003 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2018:

Cllr. Hayward referred to item 2018/0479 and asked that it be corrected to state that he had made the proposal. Cllr. Mrs. Spiller said that in the same paragraph it appeared that there were two different costs mentioned in respect of the relief road. It was agreed that at the figure of 17.6 million pounds be accepted. She also pointed out that in paragraph 2018/0513 Mr. Ball should have been referred to as the second recipient of the award.

Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Young, proposed that these be approved and adopted subject to those corrections. Agreed.

2019/0004 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 17<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2018: Cllr. Walden said that since the meeting it had become apparent that no project for the Communities Together Fund had materialised which meant that it would be possible to remove the provisional sum of £6000 which had been allowed in the budget for match funding. Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Hayward, proposed that amendment to the precept (reducing it to £244558.60) be made. Agreed.

Cllr. Hayward observed that there had been no mention of funding in relation to the acquisition of a vehicle for the new lengthsman. Cllr. Walden said that this had been included in the figure for new assets.

Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Young, proposed that the amended minutes be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2019/0005 TOWN FORUM – LAND EAST OF AXMINSTER: a member of the public concerned at the impact on the local landscape of the proposed developments east of Axminster said that her researches had revealed that in 1477 this area had been approved as a Royal Deer Park in association with Weycroft Manor. She wondered why, in view of this, the land did not have any special protection and felt that it should be part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Town Mayor said that this information would be passed on the East Devon District Council and the Town Clerk urged the resident to contact them herself regarding her research.

A number of Councillors echoed this resident's views.

There was some uncertainty as to whether the master plan would be ready for presentation at the Strategic Planning Committee meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January and members and residents were advised to check the agenda on the East Devon District Website when it was issued.

2019/0006 REPORTS RECEIVED – POLICE: None.

2019/0007 COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT: in a written report, Cllr. Hall said that he was involved with the County budget setting process and reminded those present that the road outside the George Hotel would be resurfaced on 25<sup>th</sup> February. He intended to hold a meeting with the Neighbourhood Highway Officer and representatives from his ward parishes at the end of the month.

2019/0008 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS’ REPORTS: Cllr. Hayward asked who had authorised the auction of fixtures and fittings from the Knowle. Cllr. Moulding said that this had been approved by Senior Management and the proceeds were given to charities. In a written report, Cllr. Hall said that he was involved in the budget setting process. He reminded those present that the Axminster Strategic Master Plan would be discussed at the meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> January.

2019/0009 TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

2019/0010 TOWN MAYOR’S ENGAGEMENTS: the Town Mayor had attended various church services and had visited care homes in the parish over the Christmas period.

2019/0011 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2018: None.

2019/0012 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2018: Cllr. Walden confirmed that he had drafted a report for public circulation following the precept meeting but would alter it in the light of the discussions earlier. He reminded members that the budget was the precept budget and that a full budget would be decided before the year end.

2019/0013 MATTERS OF URGENCY – REINVESTMENT OF BOND: The Deputy Town Clerk had circulated information regarding re-investment of the matured bond. Cllr. Walden seconded by Cllr. Watson proposed that this money be reinvested in a new bond with the same financial organisation. Agreed.

2019/0014 MATTERS OF URGENCY – STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN: it was resolved that Cllr. Watson should represent the Town Council and that drafting of the response be delegated to Cllrs. Watson, Bournier, Hayward, Clarke and Young and then circulated to others for comment.

2019/0015 MATTERS OF URGENCY – STAFFING MATTER: Cllr. Mrs. Spiller said that she had a staffing matter which she wished to refer into committee. Agreed.

2019/0016 MINUTES OF RISK AND EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019: Cllr. Hayward pointed out that the standing orders as circulated were not complete. The Town Clerk said that the second section of the document would be circulated after the next meeting of the Committee.

Cllr. Hayward proposed that standing order 3v be amended to set the quorum for full Town Council at 8. The Town Clerk said that she would need to check with National Association of Local Councillors that this would be acceptable as this order was one of the mandatory sections and it may not be possible to change the wording. Cllr. Mrs. Spiller seconded the proposal, which was approved subject to confirmation from N.A.L.C.

Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Mynard, proposed that these minutes be approved and adopted. Agreed.

2019/0017 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RISK AND EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 7<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019: None.

2019/0018 FINANCIAL MATTERS – NOVEMBER PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED:

CLLR. HAYWARD DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST AS A RECIPIENT OF ONE OF THE CHEQUES FOR RE-IMBURSEMENT OF EXPENDITURE AND LEFT THE ROOM FOR THE DURATION OF THIS ITEM OF BUSINESS

Cllr. Watson, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Leat, proposed that this expenditure be approved. Agreed.

2019/0019 FINANCIAL MATTERS – DECEMBER PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED:  
Cllr. Bourner, seconded by Cllr. Watson, proposed that these payments be approved. Agreed.

2019/0020 FINANCIAL MATTERS – BANK RECONCILIATION FOR NOVEMBER:  
agreed that this be signed.

2019/0021 FINANCIAL MATTERS - PAYMENTS AUTHORISED BY MAYOR OR COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN: None.

2019/0022 COMMUNITIES TOGETHER FUND: it had not proved possible to agree a proposal for this fund in time for the deadline.

2019/00023 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT: The Deputy Clerk said that she had been working on refining the budget and looking at forthcoming capital projects and examining options for fund re-investment.

2019/0024 FINANCIAL MATTERS – GRANT REQUESTS: None.

2019/0025 RESPONSE TO LETTER FROM DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL REGARDING CONSULTATION ON FUTURE OF PIPPINS: Cllr. Hayward, seconded by Cllr. Walden, proposed that the following points set out in the briefing document from the Mayor be approved:

- i. That Axminster Town Council did not wish to submit an expression of interest in partnership with another group
- ii. That Axminster Town Council would send representatives to the proposed meeting
- iii. That the Town Council would consider financial support for the user groups under the

grant system. Agreed.

It was agreed that the Town Council be represented by the Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Town Clerk.

2019/0026 DATE FOR EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING REGARDING STATUS OF GUILDHALL: this was set for the evening of Monday 4<sup>th</sup> February.

2019/0027 COUNCIL POSITION ON DISCLOSURE AND BARRING: following discussion it was resolved, proposed Cllr. Walden, seconded Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, that Axminster Town Council rescind the decision made in June 2017 to follow the line taken by East Devon District Council in respect of Disclosure and Barring checks for Councillors. Agreed.

2019/0028 LETTER RE CURBING OF SUBSTANDARD HOUSE-BUILDING: Resolved that the content of the letters drafted by the Town Mayor and Town Clerk respectively be combined and the names of specific developers removed.

2019/0029 RESPONSE TO DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION ON HERITAGE STRATEGY: Cllr. Hayward presented his views on this document, which he described as a “toothless tiger”. Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, proposed that the response be delegated to the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the planning Committee. Agreed.

2019/0030 PUBLICITY IN RUN-UP TO ELECTIONS IN MAY: Cllr. Young expressed the view that intending candidates needed to be clear about the degree of commitment needed as being a Councillor was about much more than attending one meeting per month. Cllrs. Watson and Mrs. Spiller endorsed this view. It was agreed that a meeting for prospective candidates be arranged.

2019/0031 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING: The Town Clerk had arranged a meeting of the Steering Group at the end of January.

2019/0032 GUILDHALL PIANOS: Following further background information from Cllr. Mrs. Spiller, it was resolved that contact be made with the former Chairman of the now disbanded Friends of the Guildhall to advise him about the current position regarding these and that in the meanwhile a valuation be sought.

2019/0033 UPDATE ON SECTION 106 PROJECT RECREATION AND PLAY PROPOSALS: resolved that a public consultation meeting be arranged once the list had been sorted out by East Devon District Council.

2019/0034 CORRESPONDENCE :

- a. Letters Received
  - i. D.A.L.C. – request for nomination for Royal Garden Party.  
RESOLVED THAT MR. H.J.A. JEFFERY BE NOMINATED.
- b. Meetings
  - i. Highways meeting 25<sup>th</sup> January.  
CLLR. WATSON WILL ATTEND
  - ii. L.A.G. Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> January
- c. Reports Received - the following reports are available for consultation in the

office:

- i. East Devon L.A.G. Minutes

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.

2019/0035 STAFFING MATTERS: Cllr. Mrs. Spiller asked that recent incidents of vandalism be reported to the local action group. It was resolved that as a precaution new high security padlocks be obtained which could not be copied without authority.

It was agreed that the Town Council would meet the full cost of any necessary additional cover during staff sickness or leave.

2019/0036 QUOTATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION: approval was given for the purchase of a glass washer for the bar which was needed as a matter of urgency.

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