

AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BUILDINGS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD AT 5.30 p.m. ON MONDAY, 25th FEBRUARY 2019 AT THE SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRE, CHURCH STREET

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1. PRESENT: Cllr. J.W. Walden, (Town Mayor), Cllr. A.L.Young (Deputy Mayor), Cllr. Bourner, Cllr. A.J.E. Seward (for part of meeting), the Town Clerk and the Deputy Town Clerk. 0 member of the public, 0 representative of the press.

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. BOURNER DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING A MEMBER OF AXMINSTER GUILDHALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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.

2. APOLOGIES: Cllr. P.G. Hayward, Cllr. D.R.H. Hull, Cllr. Mrs. S.L.N.Leat.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: these were signed.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 28TH JANUARY 2018: The following matters were raised:

a) 4b – there had been no progress regarding sub-meters.

b) 4c– disposal of the pianos was being progressed.

c) 4g - further quotations regarding Fire Risk Assessments were still to be obtained.

d) 4g – piano. The Town Clerk was awaiting the response to a letter she had been instructed to send to Mr. Steer on this matter.

e) 4g– further quotations regarding Fire Risk Assessments were still to be obtained.

f) 4g – the notice in the notice boards at the Old Courthouse was awaiting attention.

g) 4g – the notice in the notice boards at the Old Courthouse was awaiting attention.

h) 4j – the order for the back door had been placed.

5. PUBLIC FORUM:- None.

6. FINANCIAL MATTERS: the Responsible financial officer said that the new 32 day savings deposit account had been opened.

7. PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – GUILDHALL:

The Town Clerk reported that site visits had been made by two contractors and that the consultant surveyor would be seeking further quotations from others in the light of comments received.

Consideration of the Proposals for office lay out – deferred.

8. PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – OLD COURTHOUSE: the electrical inspections had been carried out. The Handyman had adjusted the exit mechanism at the emergency exit from the former Museum..

9. PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – CEMETERY – a spare shutter had been found for the damaged window and it had been agreed that the other windows should remain as they were.

10. PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – AMENITIES:

- i. Additional storage for equipment and location thereof- the Town Clerk gave further information regarding the unit which had been discussed at the full meeting of the Town Council. Cllr. Walden made members aware of a possible alternative site. Cllr. Young raised several questions about that site for which answers will be sought.
- ii. Tree works – quotations are awaited for agreed works and reports from the separate site inspections were expected in due course.
- iii. Clearance of Vacant Plots – the Deputy Clerk said that there were several vacant plots on the largest site but many had become overgrown and had various detritus on them. There was discussion regarding how best to approach clearing these plots and what equipment would be best to use. There was discussion regarding the suitability of the tyres on the tractors for doing this work. Further information was requested.

11. PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – PIPPINS: following the Town Council's decision not to pursue its expression of interest in the building only necessary maintenance is being done.

12. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS: members reviewed the remaining section of Model Standing Orders. Resolved, proposed Cllr. Walden, seconded Cllr. Young, that the changes suggested by the Clerk and Deputy Clerk be approved apart from the section dealing with Handling Staff Matters which it was felt needed to be clarified to ensure that they were in alignment with the Grievance and Disciplinary Policies. Cllr. Young and the Clerk and Deputy Clerk will undertake this work prior to the next Town Council meeting.

The Clerk and Deputy Clerk said that they were concerned regarding banking arrangements over the Election period given the time it had taken to put recent banking arrangements in place.

Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Young proposed that the following arrangement be put in place as a temporary measure: That in the event of there being no existing councillor signatories re-elected Standing Orders and Financial Regulations be suspended 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.

The Deputy Town Clerk will check how long it would take to remove existing Councillor signatories who ceased to be elected/co-opted members of the Council.

Sections 4, 5, 6 and 7 of Financial Regulations were reviewed and amended.

13. UPDATE ON BANKING ARRANGEMENTS: two additional signatories have been added.

14. MATTERS OF URGENCY – CIVIC REGALIA: the Town Clerk had circulated a discussion document regarding options for refurbishment or replacement/updating of the Mayoral Regalia.

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It was resolved that the suppliers be asked to quote for updating the names on the existing chain as far as the space allowed, refurbishment and alteration of the existing chain or replacement of the existing chain by a new chain.

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.

15. QUOTES FOR PROPOSED WORKS – DIGITAL MAPPING SOFTWARE PROGRAMMES: the Deputy Clerk had circulated details regarding the costs from two providers, one at £575 p.m. and one at £300 p.a. plus a £20 set up fee. There was also the option of a Public Service Mapping agreement which would be cost free. She was asked to find out details as to whether any or all of these options would be compatible with the system operated by the District Council.

16. QUOTES FOR PROPOSED WORKS – INSTALLATION OF NOTICE BOARDS: the Town Clerk reported that she was awaiting a quote for installation of the second notice board and a sight of the contractors public liability insurance cover.

17. QUOTES FOR PROPOSED WORKS – OFFICE COMPUTERS: having considered the information circulated, Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Seward, proposed that the choice be narrowed down to the I5 or the I7 and that the advice of the consultant be followed as to which would be most appropriate for the Council's needs and that two computers then be ordered. Agreed.

18. TENANCY MATTERS – PIPPINS: anomalies had come to light in the pattern of room usage. A letter will be sent to the tenants indicating which rooms should be used for which purpose.

19. TENANCY MATTERS – FORMER TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICE: there was discussion regarding the rent. This was agreed on a sliding scale for the next 3 years. The Town Clerk will speak to the in-coming tenant.

Signed Date