

AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BUILDINGS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD AT 7.00 p.m. ON MONDAY, 30th SEPTEMBER 2019 AT THE GUILDHALL

1. PRESENT: Cllr. A.L.Young (Town Mayor), Cllr. J.J. Farrow, Cllr. Mrs. S.L.N.Leat, Cllr M. Mynard, Cllr. M.D.G. Spurway, Cllr. P.G.W. Wales, Cllr. J.W. Walden and the 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. YOUNG DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST AS BEING AN EMPLOYEE OF A COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE WHICH OWNS PROPERTY ADJACENT TO THE VALLEY PATH

CLLR. WALDEN DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS CHAIRMAN OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL GOVERNORS.

2. APOLOGIES: Cllr. D.J. Moore (Deputy Mayor), Cllr. A.E. Bourner, Cllr. Doherty, Cllr. D.R.H. Hull, and the Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer.

3. PRESENTATION ON DIGITAL MAPPING OPTIONS BY PEAR TECHNOLOGY: the National Association of Local Councils has been promoting the use by Parish Councils of digital mapping systems by paying £55,000,000 for access to the base data compiled by the Ordnance Survey via a mechanism know as the Public Sector Mapping Agreement. Each Council must sign up to that that agreement and then to a further software/support package from a provider of choice, such as Pear Tree or Parish On-line. Once that step has been taken the Parish can then map assets such as seats, dog bins, street lights. There are additional packages which deal with allotment management and cemetery management. Ordnance Survey updates its system on a six weekly basis but these are usually passed on to Parish Councils via their provider on an annual basis. It should be possible to access information from other authorities such as County and District relating to matters such as verge ownership. The provider would be able to digitise information already held by a Parish, such as cemetery plot data. Some costs would be one-off set up costs and others would be annual service fees. The initial cost for set up, inclusive of all packages such as allotments and cemetery, would be in the region of £3500. Cllr. Young thanked the speakers for their presentation. This will be put on the Agenda for the next meeting of the Town Council.

4. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 27TH AUGUST 2019: these were signed by the Chairman.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF ABOVE MEETING: referring to Items 6a ,6b and 6c, the Town Clerk said that she had not been able to progress these. Regarding item 6d, she said that she had signed the Town Council up for a three-year long-term agreement with the insurers and added the new photocopier to the list of insured assets.

6. PUBLIC FORUM:- the Town Clerk said that she had had a telephone call from a member of the public who had indicated that if she was unable to attend the meeting in person she would set out her concerns in an email. No email had been received between receipt of the telephone call and the time the Town Clerk had left her office to welcome the speakers.

7. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

a) Insurance – this had been covered under matters arising.

Items b) and c) relating to the external auditor's report and progress against budget were deferred in the absence of the Responsible Financial Officer.

d) Defibrillator Cabinet at Fire Station: Councillors considered a suggestion from a member of the public that the Town Council should fund the cabinet for a defibrillator at the above location. Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Farrow, proposed that this be done subject to it being the same style/model as the other ones funded by the Town Council. Agreed.

8. PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – GUILDHALL:

i) Update on Works Required: - the Town Clerk reported that the new back doors were to be installed later in the week. She said that there was a defective gutter on the south-west side of the brick building and Cllr. Wales pointed out that there appeared to be some water ingress on the ceiling of the Churchill Room. The Town Clerk will contact a roofing contractor.

ii) Update on Contractors contacted by Surveyor – the Town Council said that she had learned the previous week that the Surveyor had announced his retirement with effect from the end of September. She was looking into the best means of keeping up the momentum for those projects for which contact with some contractors had been made so far. In respect of future projects she would make contact with such local surveyors which she had been able to identify and ask them to meet her.

8 . PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – OLD COURTHOUSE

i) General Update on Repairs – the contractor had been asked to carry out the additional roofing works needed while the existing scaffolding was in place.

ii) Museum – nothing to report.

iii) Senior Citizens' Centre – the floor has been completed, though there area one or two snagging issues to sort out. A letter of thanks will be sent to the Handyman for his diligence in undertaking this work. The outflow from one of the toilet sinks has

iv) Arts Cafe – nothing was raised.

v) Constable's Room Conclusion of Tenancy – the Town Clerk will arrange for the whole of the former Museum premises to be cleaned.

vi) Former T.I.C. – nothing to report but the Town Clerk will check that there has been no water ingress in the recent heavy rain.

vi) Garden Maintenance – the plants beside the path will be pegged back and planting ordered for the former dyers garden. Complaints had been received regarding dog-fouling problems. Following discussion it was agreed that a combination padlock be purchased so that the last tenant out could lock the gate each day. The Town Mayor said that a sign would be wise to advise visitors that the garden would be closed. Tenants will be advised to check the garden prior to locking the gate.

8. PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – CEMETERY

i) Tree Works – The Town Clerk was still awaiting confirmation of a start date for these works.

ii) Planting of Cherry Trees – this related to a suggestion from Cllr. Hull in support of the need to plant more trees. However, following discussions he had withdrawn the suggestion in view of the problems caused by tree roots.

iii) Digital Mapping Programmes – nothing further to add following the presentation.

9. PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – AMENITIES:

- i. Trees on Valley Path – the Town Clerk said that she was awaiting responses to enquiries she had directed to various rail authorities on the advice of Devon County Council Public Rights of Way department. Cllr. Farrow said that there was a section of fence which is in poor repair. The Town Council's concerns will be referred back to the County Council.
- ii. Section 106 Projects – a working party meeting, at which officers from East Devon would be present to offer advice, will be arranged to liaise with the member of the public who was seeking a fun trail to discuss possible locations. Cllr. Young said that she thought it was to enliven the walk home from the Primary Schools. The Town Clerk said that she understood that the East Devon District Officers had to be satisfied regarding various safety aspects of the proposals.

Regarding other projects, the Town Clerk said that each had to supply to various information to the Section 106 Monitoring Officer in order to release the funding.

- iii. Brown Signage to Promote Axminster – at an earlier meeting Dist. Cllr. Moulding had suggested that a meeting with representatives of the Town Council, the Heritage Centre and the Chamber of Commerce be held to establish what is wanted so that it could be costed. Once this had been established, then the interested parties would be invited to make a grant application to the Town Council. Cllr. Young volunteered to attend such a meeting. Cllr. Walden said that the Town Council did not have the capacity to take on this project and proposed that the interested parties work out a costed scheme and gain the necessary permissions and then come back to the Town Council for a grant. There was general agreement that this was the way forward.
- iv. Trees at North Street – Cllr. Walden asked that the vegetation by the gate be cut back.
- v. Community Orchard – in the absence of Cllr. Hull, this matter was deferred.

10. MATTERS OF URGENCY – REWAL OF SAVINGS BOND: Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Farrow, proposed that the bond be renewed for a 1 year period at a rate of !.85% with the same provider. Agreed.

11. FUTURE PLAN CONSIDERATION: Cllr. Young reminded members of the forthcoming Environment Day being organised by the Town Council for 19th October and gave details of what had been put in place so far. She urged members to attend. Cllr. Leat had concerns regarding the need to get more young people involved. Cllr. Young said that there were many things going on which would be attractive to younger age groups for example Extinction Rebellion. Cllr. Leat said that consideration had to be given to what other towns were doing as local residents might be looking to the Town Council to be doing such things as well. Cllr. Young said that this was just the start and that other things would follow from this event.

Cllr. Walden said that he would be holding a meeting for volunteers on 21st October at 7.00 p.m.

Cllr. Mrs. Leat 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. Hull seconded the proposal. Agreed.

12. QUOTES FOR PROPOSED WORKS: None of these matters could be progressed

13. TENANCY MATTERS: the Town Clerk was awaiting confirmation from the Solicitor of the identification which the parties to the lease would need to provide.

14 STAFFING MATTERS - STAFF ABSENCE: the Town Clerk said that the Lengthsman would be returning to work on light duties over a phased period. He would be attending a training session on testing portable electric appliances. Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Leat, proposed that the necessary equipment for conducting such tests be purchased. Agreed.

Signed Date