

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Held at the Guildhall, on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Town Mayor: Cllr. A.L. Young

Councillors: C.A. Doherty, Ms. J. Farrow, M. Featherstone, D.R.H. Hull,  
Mrs. S.L.N. Leat, M. Mynard, M.D.G. Spurway and J.W. Walden

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

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

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

2019/0246APOLOGIES: Cllr. D.J. Moore (Deputy Mayor), A.E. Bourner.

2019/0247 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.

2019/0248 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2019: Having had it confirmed by her fellow Councillors that the minutes were accurate, Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Walden, proposed that the minutes be approved and adopted as Council policy. Agreed.

2019/0249 CO-OPTION OF ADDITIONAL MEMBERS: three members of public had applied for co-option and their details had been circulated to Councillors. Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Mynard, proposed that they be co-opted. Agreed. Mrs. A. Sedgwick and Mr. P. Wales will represent Town Ward and Mr. Adamson-Drage will represent Raymonds Hill Ward. Mrs. Sedgwick was present and having signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office took her place at the table.

2019/0251 TOWN FORUM: no points were raised from the floor.

2019/0252 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS – SECTION 2: the Responsible Financial Officer had circulated copies of the information for inclusion in Section 2 of the Annual Return along with the internal auditor’s comments and supplementary report.

She said that she concurred with the internal auditor that risk management needed to be more robust and should be considered by the full Town Council not by a committee.

Referring to the figures on Section 2, she said that the internal auditor was satisfied that these were correct and explained what they showed and provided an explanation for the fact that the difference in staff costs was greater than 15% in comparison to the previous year. For the benefit of newer Councillors she explained that in Local Government Finance assets were not depreciated.

Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Walden, proposed that Section 2 be approved. Agreed.

2019/0253 PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS GENERAL: the Town Clerk reported that all fire extinguishers apart from those in the Cemetery Workshop had been serviced.

2019/0254 PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS - GUILDHALL: the Town Clerk had been unable to contact the Consultant Surveyor for a progress report on the various proposed works. In respect of additional external security surveillance, Cllr. Walden proposed that a third firm be invited to quote.

2019/0255 PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – OLD COURTHOUSE MUSEUM: the remedial electrical work will be undertaken at the start of July. Tenancy matters would be discussed in Committee.

2019/0256 PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – THE SENIOR CITIZENS’ CENTRE: the Handyman had investigated the area beneath where there was a dip in the flooring. He had found no rot. Quotations for replacing the floor covering will be sought. Following discussion, Cllr. Walden proposed that where possible the Senior Citizens’ Centre be offered use of the Guildhall at no cost for any functions during the time the works were undertaken to mitigate any loss to the services they offer to the public. Agreed.

There were no further property matters relating to the Old Courthouse.

2019/0257 PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS - CEMETERY: Cllr. Featherstone said he could provide contact details for a contractor who might be able to quote for repairs to the buttresses.

2019/0258 PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – TREE WORKS AT WOODBURY LANE ALLOTMENTS: Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Spurway, proposed that works to a sycamore and birch tree specified as being in need of remedial work in the medium term be brought forward for completion during the current financial year and that a note be made in the accounts that this had been done because of the impact on the amenities budget in the following year. Agreed.

2019/0259 PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – TREE OBSTRUCTING VALLEY PATH: a sapling which had grown out across the path and was resting on the chainlink fence

adjacent to the railway will be cut back. Concerns were also expressed regarding the condition of some of the trees on the no-mans-land between the mill leat and the railway boundary fence.

Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr .Doherty, proposed that the sapling be cut back by two members of staff provided there was no undue risk. Agreed.

2019/0260 PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – REQUEST FOR DOG BIN AT TRINITY HILL NATURE RESERVE: a resident who had approached East Devon regarding the lack of a dog bin at this location had been referred to the Town Council.

Councillors felt that as this land was managed by the District Council the onus of such provision should lie with them. Cllr. Farrow felt that if provision was to be made then two bins should be provided, one at each access point.

Dist. Cllr. Jackson was invited to comment and said that it would be preferable if litter bins were provided as arising from such bins were processed at the waste to energy plant whereas those from dog bins had to be sent to landfill.

Apprised of this fact, Councillors felt that all dog bins should be replaced by litter bins.

2019/0261 PROPERTY RELATED MATTERS – TREE AT NORTH STREET ALLOTMENTS: a small self-seeded sycamore sapling will be removed.

2019/0262 UPDATE ON BANKING ARRANGEMENTS: Cllrs. Spurway, Mynard and Featherstone stated that they had not been contacted yet by the bank.

2019/0263 MATTERS OF URGENCY – OPERATION LONDON BRIDGE: following staff training regarding this matter, a working party comprising Cllrs. Young, Doherty and Farrow, along with the two Clerks will discuss what arrangements needed to be put in place. The Deputy Clerk pointed out that expenditure would be involved which had not been allowed for in the budget.

2019/0264 MATTERS OF URGENCY – WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS: Cllr. Young said that in view of the imminent employment of a lengthsman the roles played by the volunteers may change and proposed that a working party be set up to discuss this. Members will be Cllrs. Walden, Mynard, Sedgwick and Young.

2019/0265 MATTERS OF URGENCY – PROPOSED CLOSURE OF COLYTON FIRE STATION: Cllr. Young said that Cllr. Walden had raised this matter but she proposed that it be put on the August Agenda as the consultation document had not yet been published and Councillors would need time to read it.

2019/0266 MATTERS OF URGENCY: Notification from the Rector had been received regarding a public meeting about future plans to make the Minster more of a community venue. These will be put on the website and social media.

2019/0267 FUTURE PLAN CONSIDERATION: nothing was raised under this item.

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.

2019/0268 QUOTES RECEIVED FOR VARIOUS WORKS – CLOSED CIRCUIT

TELEVISION: the Town Clerk is in the process of obtaining additional quotes for increased security around the Guildhall.

2019/0268 QUOTES RECEIVED FOR VARIOUS WORKS – NEW PRINTER/SCANNER,

COMPUTERS AND SUPPORT PACKAGE: although the principle of obtaining and installing this upgraded technology had been agreed, there was prolonged discussion regarding whether it should be bought outright, lease in its entirety or a combination of the two. The Responsible Financial Officer had circulated a briefing note setting out her recommendations.

Cllr. Walden proposed that a representative from the firm supplying the technology attend a meeting so that Councillors who so wished could pose questions. This was agreed and the Town Mayor will try to arrange such a meeting.

2019/0269 QUOTATIONS RECEIVED – EQUIPMENT REQUIRED FOR NEW

LENGTHSMAN: there was some discussion regarding what would be needed in the way of a vehicle. Cllr. Walden suggested that Mr. Jeffery’s views be sought. Cllr. Young thought those of the Handyman would be useful.

No other quotations were available for consideration.

2019/0270 TENANCY MATTERS: the Town Clerk outlined the present position which was that the prospective in-coming tenant wished to scale back her requirements at this stage. It was agreed that the Town Clerk should get costings for the creation of a corridor within the main courtroom to eliminate the situation where several tenants might need to go through that room to reach rest room facilities and the emergency fire escape.

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