

MINUTES OF THE VIRUTAL ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN  
COUNCIL

Held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 7.00 p.m.  
Under Regulation 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020

Present:

Town Mayor: Cllr. A.L. Young  
Councillors: M.N. Adamson-Drage, C.A. Doherty, Ms. J.J. Farrow,  
Mrs. S.L.N. Leat, M. Mynard, Mrs. A. G. Sedgewick  
J.W. Walden

The Town Clerk (Miss H. Kirkcaldie), Deputy Town Clerk (Mrs. Z. Adamson-Drage) and  
Administrative Assistant (Mrs. S. Gay).

In attendance: Cty./Dist. Cllr. I.H. Hall and Dist. Cllr. Jackson.

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

2020/0138 APOLOGIES: Deputy Town Mayor (Cllr. D.J. Moore), Cllrs. C.W.C.Hall, D.R.H.  
Hull, M.D.G. Spurway. Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Farrow, proposed that the  
absences of Cllrs. Moore and Hull on the grounds of ill-health be approved. Agreed.

2020/0139 NOT PRESENT: Cllrs.: A.E. Bourner, M. Featherstone, Dist. Cllr. Moulding.

2020/0140 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: CLLRS. DOHERTY, FARROW AND MRS.  
LEAT AND 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. FARROW DECLARED AN INTEREST AS BEING A MEMBER OF AXMINSTER  
TWINNING ASSOCIATION AND A GOVERNOR OF AXMINSTER  
COMMUNITY PRIMARY ACADEMY AND AS A JOINT TENANT OF A TOWN  
COUNCIL ALLOTMENT AT WOODBURY PARK ALLOTMENTS

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.

2020/0141 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR: Cllr. Farrow, seconded by Cllr. Sedgewick,  
proposed that Cllr. Young be re-elected. There were no other nominations and this  
was agreed unanimously. Cllr. Young signed her Declaration of Acceptance of

Office.

2020/0142 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR: Cllr. Doherty, seconded by Cllr. Walden, proposed that Cllr. Farrow be elected as Deputy Mayor. There were no other nominations and the proposal was agreed unanimously.

2020/0143 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 20<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2020: As there were corrections to make to the early part of these minutes, Councillors asked that the minutes be re-presented for consideration at the next meeting.

2020/0144 PROPOSAL THAT EXISTING TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS REMAIN UNCHANGED BUT THAT TO EXPEDITE THE BUSINESS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL ALL MEMBERS BE ELIGIBLE TO SIT ON ANY COMMITTEES AS REQUIRED TO ENSURE QUORACY: This motion was proposed by Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Walden and carried.

2020/0145 PROPOSAL THAT EXISTING MEMBERSHIP OF OUTSIDE COMMITTEES SHOULD REMAIN UNCHANGED BUT THAT SHOULD IT BE NECESSARY TO FIND SOMEONE TO DEPUTISE IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCES THAT ANY DECISION REGARDING THIS BE DELEGATED TO THE TOWN MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR: This motion was proposed by Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Walden and carried.

2020/0146 PROPOSAL THAT REVIEW OF OTHER ITEMS SUCH AS STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS NORMALLY UNDERTAKEN AT THE ANNUAL MEETING BE DEFERRED UNTIL A LATER DATE: Cllr. Young proposed that the motion be amended to include a final phrase “unless any urgent amendments were needed” Cllr. Walden seconded the amended proposal which was carried.

2020/0147 REPORT ON AXMINSTER COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE: The Town Mayor reported that there had been 700 calls to the helpline so far. There were plenty of volunteers and around £2400 had been raised via the Gofundme appeal.

Following a report from the Town Clerk on the reply she had had regarding the grant application to the prompt action fund, she was instructed to re-apply in the name of the Town Council indicating that the money requested would be donated to A.C.E.R.

Regarding the Government funding for Businesses, the Deputy Clerk said that this was not available at Town and Parish Council level and any businesses would have to apply via the District or County Councils.

2020/0148 TOWN FORUM - CONGRATULATIONS: A member of the public congratulated the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on their elections.

2020/0149 TOWN FORUM -PROPOSED ROAD WORKS: A member of the public asked that if there were any road works proposed for the junction of Lyme Street and George Street, these be publicised in the press.

2020/0150 TOWN FORUM – BENCHES ON MINSTER GREEN: In response to a member of the public, the Town Mayor said that the benches on Minster Green had been made available to the public again following the announcement from the Prime Minister.

2020/0151 TOWN FORUM – SUPPORT FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES: Cty. Cllr. Hall urged the Town Council to match fund the £1000 grant he was making to Totally Locally in support of its campaign to kick start local businesses emerging from the effects of the Corona Virus lock down. He reminded members that Totally Locally was grounded in the need to have a more sustainable way of life to protect the environment. The Town Mayor confirmed that a letter had been received from Totally Locally but too late to be put on the agenda. Following discussion of its contents, the Town Clerk was asked to find out how many local businesses were covered, how one could take out membership of the group, what links there were with the national organisation of the same name and whether any funding was passed up from the local to the national group.

2020/152 TOWN FORUM – DEATH OF FORMER RECTOR: Cllr. Walden paid tribute to a former Rector of Axminster, Barrie Swift, whose death had been reported. Among many other ways in which he had contributed to the well-being of the town, Cllr. Walden highlighted his role in bringing about the Flamingo Pool.

2020/0153 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2020: these will be raised once the minutes have been approved at the next meeting.

2020/0154 MATTERS OF URGENCY: None.

2020/0155 MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2020: No corrections having been highlighted, Cllr. Mrs. Leat, seconded by Cllr. Mynard, proposed that they be adopted as a true record of the meeting. Agreed. Cllr. Mrs. Leat, seconded by Cllr. Mynard, proposed that they be adopted as Town Council policy. Agreed.

2020/0156 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 20<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2020: None.

2020/0157 FINANCIAL MATTERS – APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS FOR FEBRUARY 2020

THE TOWN MAYOR DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST AS BEING THE RECIPIENT OF A PAYMENT FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES AND ABSENTED HERSELF FROM THE DISCUSSION FOR THIS ITEM OF BUSINESS AND THE SUBSEQUENT ITEM OF BUSINESS FOR THE SAME REASON.

Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Doherty, proposed that the payments for February 2020 be approved. Agreed.

2020/0158 FINANCIAL MATTERS – APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE FOR APRIL 2020: Cllr. Walden seconded by Cllr. Doherty, proposed that the payments for April 2020 be approved. Agreed.

THE TOWN MAYOR REJOINED THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

2020/0159 FINANCIAL MATTERS – REPORT ON PROGRESS AGAINST BUDGET FOR

PRIOR FINANCIAL YEAR: The Responsible Financial Officer's report highlighted those areas of income and expenditure which differed significantly from the budget. No questions were raised by members.

2020/0160 FINANCIAL MATTERS - RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT:

The Responsible Financial Officer had continued her work on the Annual Return. She had been working also on revisions to the Grants policy and had been told by the bank that the application for a business debit card was being processed..

2020/0161 FINANCIAL MATTERS – UPDATE A.G.A.R. 19-20 PROCEDURES: no further information had been received from the external auditors. As things stood, there were limits to the work which the internal auditor could do.

2020/0162 FINANCIAL MATTERS – REPORT ON EXPENDITURE MADE ON BEHALF OF AXMINSTER GUILDHALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: the Responsible Financial Officer stated that £5500 had been paid out on behalf of the Guildhall Management Committee as it did not have access to online banking. This sum covered salaries and other items.

2020/0163 CORRESPONDENCE: this had mainly been related to the situation regarding Corona Virus.

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

2020/0164 STAFFING MATTERS: Following discussion, Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Farrow, proposed that the outdoor staff should return to work on 13<sup>th</sup> May, with revised arrangements regarding working procedures to be observed in the light of the COVID 19 situation. Agreed.

Signature ..... Date.....