

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday 8th June 2020 at 7.00 p.m.
Under Regulation 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020

Present:

Town Mayor: Cllr. A.L. Young
Deputy Town Mayor: Cllr. Ms. J.J. Farrow
Councillors: M.N. Adamson-Drage, C.A. Doherty, M. Featherstone,
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: Dist. Cllr. Jackson

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

2020/0186 APOLOGIES: Cllrs. D.J. Moore and M.D.G. Spurway and Cty./Dist. Cllr. I.H. Hall. Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Farrow, proposed that the absence of Cllr. Moore on the grounds of ill-health be approved. Agreed.

2020/0187 NOT PRESENT: Cllrs.: A.E. Bourner, C.W.C. Hall, and Dist. Cllr. A.T. Moulding.

2020/0188 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: CLLRs. DOHERTY, FARROW AND MRS. LEAT 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.

CLLR. ADAMSON-DRAGE DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING THE SPOUSE OF THE DEPUTY-CLERK

CLLR. SEDGEWICK DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING THE SPOUSE OF THE RECTOR OF AXMINSTER

2020/0189 MINUTES OF EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 26th MAY 2020:

Cllr. Farrow pointed out two minor spelling/grammatical corrections. Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Farrow, proposed that the minutes be approved for accuracy subject to those corrections. Agreed. Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Farrow, proposed that the minutes be adopted as policy. Agreed.

2020/0190 PROPOSAL TO PERMIT REMOVAL OF TREE ON TOWN COUNCIL PROPERTY AT EXPENSE OF A LOCAL RESIDENT:

following discussion, Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Adamson-Drage, proposed that permission be granted to remove the remains of a partially felled sycamore tree on Town Council owned land and that consideration be given to planting a replacement tree of a more suitable species at a later date in that vicinity, in line with the Town Council's environmental commitments. Agreed.

2020/0191 MEMORIAL TO COUNCILLOR HULL: following discussion, Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Walden, proposed that a request be made to the appropriate department at the District Council to seek a map showing all plots of land in Axminster owned by them so that a suitable site could be identified for a community garden in memory of Cllr. Hull and a request made to the District Council for the land to be transferred to the Town Council. Agreed.

2020/0192 FINANCIAL MATTERS – APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE MADE IN MAY:

CLLR. YOUNG DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST AS BEING THE RECIPIENT OF ONE OF THE PAYMENTS AND TOOK NO PART IN THIS ITEM OF BUSINESS.

Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Featherstone, proposed that the payments as listed be approved. Agreed.

2020/0193 FINANCIAL MATTERS – APPROVAL OF REVISED POLICY ON SMALL GRANTS:

the Responsible Financial Officer outlined the revisions she had made. In the course of discussion, Cllr. Sedgewick suggested that it would be helpful to compile a list of Frequently Asked Questions to give applicants guidance in completing the application forms. Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Farrow, proposed that the revised small grants policy be adopted. Agreed.

2020/0194 FINANCIAL MATTERS – APPROVAL OF REVISED POLICY ON LARGE GRANTS:

the Responsible Financial Officer said that she had not completed work on this but stated that in the course of her researches it was clear that grants were not made to private enterprise, which was contrary to the wishes expressed by some Councillors. Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Sedgewick, proposed that this point be brought forward for further discussion before the Responsible Financial Officer did any further work. Agreed. Cllr. Walden asked that clarification be sought regarding the position of companies limited by guarantee, as some of these were charitable in nature.

2020/0195 FINANCIAL MATTERS – RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT: the

Deputy Clerk said that she had been working with the Internal Auditor and had agreed the final year end figures. She will present the parts one and two of the Annual Return for consideration at the July meeting of the Town Council.

2020/0196 FINANCIAL MATTERS – GRANT FOR TOTALLY LOCALLY: Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Sedgewick, proposed that a grant of £250 be made to Totally Locally. Agreed.

2020/0197 FINANCIAL MATTERS – PROPOSAL TO TRANSFER ASSETS PURCHASED THROUGH THE PARISHES TOGETHER SCHEME INTO THE SOLE OWNERSHIP OF AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL: Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Walden, proposed that assets purchased through the Parishes Together scheme should be transferred into the sole ownership of Axminster Town Council. Agreed. The Town Clerk will inform the Insurers that this is being done and ask what the cost of adding these assets to the insure list would be.

2020/0198 REPORT ON AXMINSTER COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE: The Town Mayor said that there had been relatively few cases of Corona Virus in the parish. She added that the implementation of the support system had been so easy because the community already had existing organisations able to deliver most of the support required.

2020/0199 TOWN FORUM – AXMINSTER REGENERATION: Dist Cllr. Hayward, the new Portfolio Holder for Economy, Asset Management and Regeneration, stated that he was keen to convene the Axminster Regeneration Board and wished to engage with the Town Council and other organisations to see what residents wished to put in place. It was agreed that a special meeting would be called devoted solely to that topic.

2020/0200 TOWN FORUM – FLORAL DISPLAYS: Cllr. Walden paid tribute to the team of volunteers who had undertaken the planting and watering of the new floral displays.

2020/0201 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26TH MAY 2020: None.

2020/0202 MATTERS OF URGENCY: None.

2020/0203 MINUTES OF AMENITIES COMMITTEE WORKING PARTY MEETING HELD ON 10TH MARCH 2020: No corrections having been raised, Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Sedgewick, proposed that they be adopted as a true record of the meeting. Agreed. Cllr. Walden, seconded by Cllr. Adamson-Drage proposed that they be adopted as Town Council policy. Agreed.

2020/0204 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 11TH MAY 2020: None.

2020/0205 CORRESPONDENCE: Various relating to COVID 19 or proposed road works.

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. Walden seconded the proposal. Agreed

CLLR. WALDEN LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

2020/0206 STAFFING MATTERS: Cllr. Young proposed that the first matter raised be referred to the Employment Committee. Agreed.

REGARDING REMUNERATION OF STAFF FOR INCIDENTAL EXPENSES INCURRED AS A RESULT OF WORKING AT HOME, CLLR. ADAMSON-DRAGE DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST AS BEING THE SPOUSE OF THE DEPUTY CLERK AND TOOK NO PART IN THIS ITEM OF BUSINESS.

Following initial discussion of this matter, it was referred to the Employment Committee.

CLLR. ADAMSON-DRAGE RE-JOINED THE MEETING.

2020/0207 TENANCY MATTERS: Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Featherstone, proposed that the existing tenant of the Constables' Room could take on the tenancy of the Uniform Room at the same rental per unit area. The service cost per month would be as for the Constable's Room on a pro rata basis with electricity charges on top. Agreed. In the course of further discussion the Town Clerk was asked to find out the cost of putting both rooms on the same electrical circuit.

2020/0208 INSURANCE MATTER: the Town Clerk gave members details of an incident which she hoped could be resolved after discussion with the residents affected but which might need to be referred to the insurers.

Signature Date.....