AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Held at The Guildhall on Monday, 27th January 2020 at 2.15 p.m.

1. PRESENT: Cllr. Mynard, Cllr. Wales, Cllr. Young, Cllr. A.T. Moulding, (District Council), Cllr. I.L. Hall (County and District), Mr. D. Ashford, (Neighbourhood Highway Officer, Devon County Council), and.

 0 member of the public.

1. APOLOGIES: Ms. J. Collins (Parking Services Manager, East Devon District Council), Mr. S. Morgan (Axminster Chamber of Commerce), Miss H. Kirkcaldie, (Town Clerk). No representative of the police.
2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: The minutes of the previous meeting held on 30th September 2019, having been approved by the full Town Council were signed.
3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:
4. PUBLIC FORUM:
5. MATTERS SUGGESTED FOR DISCUSSION:

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING : the minutes of the meeting held on 20th May 2019 having been approved and adopted by the Town Council, were signed by the Chairman.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON 20th MAY 2018 : these would be covered under agenda items.

6. PUBLIC FORUM – None.

7. MATTERS SUGGESTED FOR DISCUSSION:

a) Parking Related Issues:

i) Lack of Parking Enforcement Presence – it was reported that there were several instances for example in Castle Street, when vehicles were parking on yellow lines and causing problems with the free flow of traffic. The response received was that there were insufficient staff and areas which were of higher priority than Axminster.

ii) Pavement Parking - The Town Clerk said that she had read recently that the Government was investigating the nationwide introduction of fines for pavement parking. This is another problem which is widespread in the town especially in residential areas where the streets are very narrow and the relationship of parking allocations to houses is poor.

iii) Residents Parking – Cllr. Hall said that he had discussed this will the responsible officer at County Hall who felt that it was up to the Town Council to put forward a case based on consultation with residents Sidmouth had undertaken such a consultation. Members of the Committee felt that it would need to be a whole town exercise otherwise the problem would simply be displaced. Cllr. Young questioned whether the motive behind the views expressed by residents stemmed purely from concerns regarding access for emergency vehicles or whether there was also an element of wanting to park outside their own homes. Mr. Ashford said that the fees from parking permits would fund its policing. Cllr. Hall said that the Neighbourhood Plan was pressing for a more realistic allocation of parking spaces for each property. Better public transport and more opportunities for car sharing or car pools were also deemed worthy of consideration. Cllr. Mynard said that it was unlikely to be economic to run a town bus in a town as small as Axminster.

**b) Various Road Safety Concerns:**

i) Speeding In Lyme Street/Lyme Road – Mr. Ashford said that the School Crossing Patrol Officer would be retiring in October and no one had come forward to take over from him. Consideration is being given to the installation of an automatic crossing which might help towards traffic calming in conjunction with the existing gateway feature. Cllr. Moulding said that he had received requests to move the bus stop by the Lamb further back up Lyme Street as it could cause obstruction of the traffic movements at the gateway feature. Cllr. Hall wondered if there had been any comments from the bus drivers. Regarding a suggestion that there be a priority system put in place to manage traffic in the narrow section of Lyme Street between South Street and Coombe Lane, it was felt that this could result in obstruction of the access to South Street.

ii) Central Hand Rail for Mary Knoll Steps – requests had been received for the provision of a rail to assist those using these steps. Following lengthy discussion which centred on the unknown ownership of the land, Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Wales, proposed that no rail be provided.

iii) Condition of Station Yard – Councillors were aware of the dire condition of this area which is the responsibility of South West Rail. The Town Clerk had endeavoured to make contact with this body regarding the dangers posed by the potholes but had received no response. Cllr. Mynard had also made similar attempts. It was agreed that the Member of Parliament’s offer to pursue the matter on the Town Council’s behalf be taken up.

iv) Inadequacy of Signage at Emergency Road Closures – this matter had been raised by a member of the public following the emergency closure of a section of Lyme Street to rectify a burst sewer. Cllr. Young said that the nature of an emergency is that things have to be done in a hurry and it is not possible to put full signage in place immediately. Not all members of the committee supported the views expressed by the member of the public.

v) Danger to Pedestrians from Rear of Caravans – the Handyman had expressed the view that there was a risk to pedestrians should the rear section of a caravan override the pavement when turning right from Lyme Street to Victoria Place. Members felt that there was no realistic solution to this problem.

vi) Brown Tourist Signage –

CLLR. MOULDING DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST AS BEING A MEMBER OF AXMINSTER HERITAGE

Cllr. Moulding suggested that the Town Council should hold a round table meeting between the Heritage Centre, the Tourist Information Centre and other interested parties.

In response to concerns raised regarding the cost of placing brown signs on the A35 he indicated that there was some money available from the Heritage Centre which had been earmarked for that purpose as part of the funding received as a lottery grant.

8.NEIGHBOURHOOD HIGHWAY OFFICER’S REPORT: Mr. Ashford said that approval had been given at the most recent Highways and Traffic Orders Committee meeting for double yellow lines in a turning head area in Old North Street and for a bus stop in Millwey Avenue. There is a possibility that a different mechanism for considering traffic orders will be brought into effect in the future. Loup Court is on the list for future consideration.

9. OPERATION OF PUBLIC INFORMATION PORTAL TRIAGE SYSTEM: Mr. Ashford reported on the most effective way to report highway problems, which is via the Public Information Portal on the Devon County Council website. This can be accessed by searching online for Report A Problem, Devon Highways. There is a comprehensive range of matters which can be reported with opportunities to give written and photographic report.

The way such reports are then considered by officers and orders for works has been changed following a pilot scheme in west Devon. Site visits are made by the contractors and work orders identified and discussed with the Neighbourhood Highway Officer and the Parish Councils. There is particular emphasis on safety defects which meet specified criteria but that does not mean that matters which are not safety defects will be ignored.. Councillors said that residents were keen to see a change of policy regarding the treatment of roadside weeds partly on aesthetic grounds but principally because there is a perception that failure to act stores up problems which become much more expensive to solve. Cllr. Hall will find out if it is possible to get this policy reviewed.

10. ANY FURTHER MATTERS OR ITEMS OF URGENCY: None.

11 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS: 27th January 2020, 25th May 2020 and 29th September 2020

Signed .................................................................................. Dated ....................................