

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL** held on **TUESDAY 12th APRIL, 2022 at 5.30pm** at **THE COURTROOM, THE GUILDHALL, TAVISTOCK**

PRESENT Councillor A Hutton (Mayor)
Councillor Mrs U Mann (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors Ms L Crawford, J Ellis, Ms T Eperon,
Ms M Ewings, Mrs A Johnson, Mrs G Parker,
B Smith, H Smith, P Squire, A Venning,
P Ward, P Williamson.

IN ATTENDANCE Town Clerk, General Manager, Assistant to the Town Clerk.

Prior to the commencement of the Meeting there were a few moments of Quiet Reflection led by the Mayor.

COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

380. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors A Fey, A Lewis and J Moody.

381. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made at this point in the Meeting.

382. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of Tavistock Town Council held on Tuesday 1st March, 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman (Appendix 1).

383. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

No Public representations or questions had been received prior to the Meeting.

ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION

384. GENERAL FINANCE

The Council considered the following:-

a) Schedule of Payments

The Council received and considered a copy of the monthly accounts as at 28th February, 2022 (Appendix 2) as listed on the Council website;

b) Budget Monitoring Report

The Council received and considered a copy of the Budget Monitoring Report (Appendix 3) as at 28th February, 2022.

Noted That;

- it was confirmed that the Neighbourhood Development Plan had not been overspent and that a balancing transfer would be made from the Localism Budget which represented the funding head for the NDP;
- it was agreed that a review of the use of coloured paper for Agendas would be brought to the next Budget & Policy Committee Meeting, to assess the differential in costings v white paper.

385. BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE

The Council considered the Minutes of the Meeting of the Budget & Policy Committee (Appendix 4) held on Tuesday 29th March, 2022, the recommendations being reported by rote.

RESOLVED THAT subject to consideration of Minute No's 360 - 369 being deferred to a later point in the Meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the recommendations included in the foregoing report of the Committee (Minute No's 353 - 359) be approved and adopted.

Noted That;

- Update - it was reported that a £7,700 Arts Council England (Let's Create Jubilee Fund) Grant had been received via the Devon Community Foundation to support the delivery of community activities associated with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations. Receipt of the Grant was welcomed and appreciation expressed to those who had sourced it;
- Correction - Minute No 358, oral report (first bullet point) should read 'there would *not* be a road closure on Duke Street'.

386. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONDUCT OF COUNCIL BUSINESS

A discussion took place regarding agreeing, in principle, the location for Committee and Council Meetings for the Civic Year 2022 -23.

During the discussion particular reference was made to:

- suitability of venues regarding the layout/comfort of seating arrangements;
- the extent to which different venue layouts led/did not lead themselves to full participation in Meetings;
- the extent of a perceived hierarchy subsisting when Meetings were held in The Guildhall by virtue of internal layout and design;
- the extent to which Councillors could/not see one another when meeting in different locations;
- circumstances appertaining to some individuals;
- that, whether the Council Chamber, Guildhall, or a combination were to be used improvements to address certain concerns were possible in each location;
- the final determination of the future location of Meetings being reserved to the Annual Meeting of Council on the 10th May 2022

Arising from the foregoing it was AGREED, in principle, that the Council Chamber be used, subject to final determination by the Annual Meeting of Council, for Meetings of the Council and its Committees 2022-23.

Noted That

- a) Councillor Ms L Crawford requested it be recorded she abstained from voting on the above item;
- b) The General Manager undertook to assess any adjustments which might be required to the layout of the Council Chamber, once it had been established if any Councillors required any special arrangements to be made.

387. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT & LICENSING COMMITTEE

The Council considered the following: -

- i) Development Management & Licensing Committee - Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 14th March, 2022 (Appendix 5) (Minute No's 343 - 352 inclusive) the recommendations being reported by rote;
- ii) Development Management & Licensing Committee – Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 5th April, 2022 (Appendix 6) (Minute No's 370 - 379 inclusive) the recommendations being reported by rote.

Noted That – regarding comments in connection with arrangements for responses on behalf of the Town Council to consultations issued by other bodies, most especially principal authorities, particular reference was made to:-

- Lack of consistency as to when town/parish council views were actively sought and accompanying challenges regarding timescales sufficient for response from corporate bodies;
- That online Consultation Surveys, as issued by both principal authorities, often did not lend themselves to a response being given by a Council or other organisation, but were framed to receive individual responses;
- In the case of the particular consultation referred to this had not been sent to the Town Council and the timescale for response did not enable it to be considered formally, it had therefore been circulated to individual Councillors to respond as Members of the Public;

In response to the foregoing the Clerk undertook to invite the representative body for the sector, the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) to:

- o ascertain if a common approach could be adopted by principal authorities in Devon to timely, active and targeted engagement with Town/Parish Councils on matters affecting their communities; and
- o ensure that, in any event, Consultation formats were such as to enable organisational responses from other statutory bodies.

RESOLVED THAT the recommendations included in the foregoing reports of the Committee be approved.

388. JUNIOR LIFE SKILLS GRANT APPLICATION

The Council considered the Notes of the Grants Panel Meeting held on 31st March, 2022 (Appendix 7), with regard to the Grant Application listed above.

RESOLVED THAT;

- a) a Grant of £740 be made to cover the cost of venue hire for the Junior Life Skills event; and
- b) the Grants Panel review the Grants Policy for such matters, prior to the next Grant Application period.

ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

389. INSURANCE

The Council received the Report of the Town Clerk (Appendix 8) regarding the Council's future insurance cover and advising of a substantial unbudgeted increase in the Council's insurance premium. This combined with increasing (uncapped) energy costs, and general inflationary increases, made for major pressures upon the revenue budget both in year and potentially going forward.

Noted That an additional Policy would be required to cover Goose Fair, which it was estimated would cost iro £1,500.

390. SERVICE REPORTS

The Council received the reports of the General Manager, Town Hall/Depot and Butchers' Hall and the Pannier Market (Appendices 9 - 11).

Noted That;

- the Community & Compliance Officer was commended on her work on helping secure the Grant towards the delivery of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee (Minute No. 385 above refers);
- an update was provided in respect of the planned works to remove the fallen tree in Dolvin Road Cemetery, and alleviate the damp issues in 1 Market Road, Tavistock

391. FINANCE AND OTHER MATTERS

The Council received, for information, the following: -

- a) Report of the Assistant to the Town Clerk (Appendix 12)

Noted That

- the Assistant to the Town Clerk was commended for her efforts in the delivery of the recent Civic Ball, which had been considered a great success;
 - a discussion would be undertaken at the forthcoming Pre-Annual Meeting, regarding future reporting arrangements in respect of Councillors' attendance at Civic Events;
 - West Devon Borough Council was the Local Housing Authority and, as such, properly led on housing for the homeless and other categories of potentially vulnerable persons.
- b) Town Hall & Markets Consultative Group – the Notes of the Meeting held on 8th March, 2022 were noted (Appendix 13)
- c) Devon County Councillor Report (Appendix 14)
In particular reference was made to concerns regarding highway maintenance.
- d) West Devon Borough Councillor Report – in the absence of the requested Report from Councillor J Moody, Councillor Ms M Ewings provided a verbal update including reference to tree planting, power generation and grants by the Borough Council to international emergency appeals.

In response to concerns regarding the adequacy of, and public health issues associated with, frequent failure by the Borough Council to meet acceptable service standards for refuse collection in its capacity as waste collection authority, and to expedite the will of the Meeting:

- o the Town Clerk undertook to write to the Borough Council regarding the concerns raised and seeking details of the plans the Borough Council had put in place to rectify same;
 - o Councillor Mrs Ewings undertook to progress the matter with the Borough Council, including the inadequacy of the current on-line reporting system.
- e) Updates
- i. From Representatives on outside bodies;
Peninsula Rail Group – it was reported:
- that a meeting had recently taken place, and that 80% of the land required to reinstate the Tavistock – Plymouth Railway Track had been secured;

- a budget of £50,000 had recently been announced to look into the feasibility of reinstating the line;
- that it was hoped Tavistock Town Council would become involved in getting the trains back to Tavistock and that a Councillor would join the partnership group;

Tavistock Ukrainian Group – a Member advised that a meeting had been held on 11th April, 2022, and that the Ukrainians already living in Tavistock were looking forward to welcoming refugees arriving from the current crisis

- ii. From Members who had attended training sessions – no feedback brought forward.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

392. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and having regard to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was: -

RESOLVED THAT the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting for the following items of business.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION

393. BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE (CONT'D)

(**CONFIDENTIAL** by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)

The Council received and noted Minute No's 360 – 369 of the Meeting of the Budget & Policy Committee (Appendix 4 refers) held on Tuesday 29th March 2022, the recommendations being reported by rote.

RESOLVED THAT subject to:-

- a) Minute No 361 – the revised Option 1, as outlined by the General Manager, being adopted - namely to agree release of the match Council funding contingent on a 2 year surface warranty from the contractor supplemented by a warranty from the tenant (as agreed by the tenant), to maintain the surface in useable condition for a further 8 years (ie 10 years minimum of use);

b) Minute No 363 deferral to the decision being made at Minute no 394 below;

the recommendations included in the foregoing report of the Committee be approved and adopted.

Noted That – Councillor A Hutton Declared an Interest in Minute No. 361 by virtue of membership of the organisation involved;

394. TAVISTOCK HERITAGE TRUST - REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING FACILITY

The Council considered the Report of the Town Clerk (Appendix 15) in connection with the above together with accompanying correspondence from the organisation concerned.

In the ensuing discussion particular reference was made to:

- The importance of arrangements as agreed between the parties for the timely sharing of financial and other information to support informed decision making;
- Various operational issues, also the background to existing arrangements;
- The importance of operating within the agreed budget envelope, most particularly in view of the current existential challenges to the revenue budget.

RESOLVED THAT subject to the replacement of the words 'Mayor and Deputy Mayor' with 'the Members of the Advisory Forum', the recommendation in the foregoing report be approved and adopted.

395. PROPERTY, LEGAL & FINANCE MATTERS

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i. DEBTORS

The Council considered and noted a list (Appendix 16) of all those with debts to the Council dating from earlier than the last quarter day and received updates accordingly.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

396. PROPERTY, LEGAL & FINANCE MATTERS

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- a) Property matters – it was reported that the Council was awaiting a response from its Solicitors regarding two outstanding matters as between landlord and tenant.

The Press and Public were re-admitted to the Meeting.

The Meeting closed at 7.30pm

Signed:

Dated:

CHAIRMAN