

## **AGENDA ITEM No. 5**

### **BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING 8<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2022 BRIEFING NOTE**

#### **START TIMES OF COMMITTEE & COUNCIL MEETINGS**

##### **1. BACKGROUND**

Historically, Tavistock Town Council's Committee and Council Meetings had the following start times;

- Budget & Policy Committee – 6.30pm;
- Development Management & Licensing Committee – 6.15pm;
- Council Meetings – 6.45pm

When the pandemic started and virtual meetings commenced, in June 2020, the start times of all Committee and Council Meetings moved to 5.00pm.

##### **2. THE CURRENT SITUATION**

At the Council Meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021 Minute No. 296(b) made the following addition:

*the start time for Committee and Council Meetings be amended to 5.30pm subject to review prior to the next elections to the Council in 2023*

The intention was to enable a review of the arrangements prior to a new Council term commencing in 2023, and thereby afford an opportunity to recommend start times most likely to encourage democratic participation. In so doing it was acknowledged that the actual start time for Meetings is necessarily ultimately within the gift of the Council at the time of the Annual Meeting.

The start time of all Committee and Council Meetings has, in the interim, been at 5.30pm. Notwithstanding the general recognition that daytime meetings appreciably disadvantage the young and many of those in employment, it is very much the case that start times on the Calendar of Meetings fall into the political arena.

##### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

In accordance with the above Minute the Committee recommend Council and other meetings be convened, to commence in the 2023-24 Civic Year on one or other of:

- a) the basis applicable pre-pandemic (see above);
- b) the basis applicable post pandemic (see above);

c) such other basis as the Council may determine.

**Jan Smallacombe**  
**Assistant to the Town Clerk**  
**Tavistock Town Council**