

AGENDA ITEM No 5

MINUTES of the Virtual Meeting of the **TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL** conducted remotely via Zoom and Youtube on **WEDNESDAY 1st JULY, 2020 at 5.00pm.**

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs A Johnson (Mayor)
Councillor A Hutton (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors Ms L Crawford, J Ellis, Mrs M Ewings*, A Fey, A Lewis, Mrs U Mann, J Moody*, Mrs G Parker, G Parker, B Smith, H Smith, A Venning*, P Ward, P Williamson.

*denotes partial attendance

IN ATTENDANCE

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

Prior to the start of the Meeting the Mayor led the Council in Quiet Reflection, recognising the difficulties faced by the community during Covid 19, and the heartening community effort to help the most disadvantaged and vulnerable in the community.

425. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

426. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

427. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Tavistock Town Council held on Friday 20th March, 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman (Appendix 1).

428. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

No Public representations or questions had been received.

ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION

429. BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE

The Council considered the Minutes of the Meeting of the Budget & Policy Committee (Appendix 2) held on Tuesday 2nd June, 2020 (Minute No's 389 - 404 inclusive) the recommendations being reported by rote.

RESOLVED THAT

- a) the recommendations included in the foregoing report of the Committee be approved and adopted;
- b) consideration of Minute No's 405 - 406 be deferred to a later point in the Meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Pursuant to the provisions of Minute No 393(iv), it was further:

RESOLVED THAT a virtual Annual Meeting of Tavistock Town Council be held on Wednesday 22nd July, 2020 at 5.00pm, to make appointments and determine consequential matters for the remainder of the 2020-21 Civic Year.

Noted That

- i) Minute No 397(b) - the responses outlined had been submitted by the designated group;
- ii) Minute No 403, on behalf of the Council the Mayor extended condolences and sympathy to the family of the late Mr Ian Harley.

430. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019/20

The Council considered the relevant sections of the "Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and Other Smaller Authorities, Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 for the year ended 31st March 2020". More specifically:

- i) the completed **Annual Internal Audit Report 2019-20** (Appendix 3) which indicated that the internal control objectives had been met was reviewed and received;
- ii) **Annual Governance Statement 2019-20**
The Council reviewed the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) (Appendix 4) section by section and, in relation to the system of internal control:-

RESOLVED THAT

- a) with regard to the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31st March 2020, the answers to the questions listed in Section 1 of the Annual Return be as follows: questions 1-8 (yes), question 9 (n/a) and the Statement be endorsed;
- b) The Clerk and Mayor be authorised to sign same on behalf of the Council.

431. ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2019/20

The Council considered the relevant section of the "Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and Other Smaller Authorities, Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 for the year ended 31st March 2020" (Appendix 5). More specifically the Accounting Statements 2019-20 (Section 2) together with the unaudited statement of accounts of the Authority prepared by the Accountant to the Council (Appendix 6).

RESOLVED THAT

- a) the Accounting Statements 2019-20 listed in Section 2 of the Annual Return to received and adopted as a reasonable statement of the activities of the Council;
- b) the Responsible Finance Officer and Mayor be authorised to sign same on behalf of the Council.

With regard to the unaudited financial statements of the Council it was further:

RESOLVED THAT the unaudited financial statements of the Council for the year ended 31st March 2020 be received and adopted.

432. GENERAL FINANCE

The Council considered the following:-

a. Schedule of Payments

The Council received and considered copies of the monthly accounts as at 30th April and 31st May, 2020 (Appendix 7) and as listed on the Council website.

b. Budget Monitoring Report

The Council received and considered a copy of the Budget Monitoring Report (Appendix 8) as at 31st May, 2020.

433. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT & LICENSING COMMITTEE (DM&L)

The Council considered the following:-

- a. Development Management & Licensing Committee – Notes of the Informal Meeting of the DM&L Committee held on 17th March, 2020 (No's 1 - 9 inclusive) (Appendix 9);
- b. Development Management & Licensing Committee – Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th May, 2020 (Minute No's 380 - 388 inclusive) (Appendix 10);

- c. Development Management & Licensing Committee – Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th June, 2020 (Minute No's 407 - 415 inclusive) (Appendix 11);

The recommendations being reported by rote.

RESOLVED THAT the recommendations included in the foregoing reports of the Committee, items b-c refer, be approved and adopted.

Noted That the March Meeting took place in accordance with the emergency delegation introduced to address the Coronavirus pandemic.

ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

The following items had been circulated for information only:-

434. SERVICE REPORTS

The Council received and noted the reports of the General Manager; Town Hall/Butchers' Hall/Works Department; and the Pannier Market (Appendices 12-14 refer).

Noted That

i) General Manager's Report:-

- arising from the foregoing reference was made, in particular, to progress in connection with the Bedford Cottages Energy Efficiency Scheme which had been sent to the Conservation Officer at West Devon Borough Council for progression;
- the operational decision to cancel the Goose Fair 2020, due to the ongoing restrictions regarding social distancing and public safety following consultation with stakeholder representatives was endorsed;
- Appendix 1 - Drake's Statue

The Council considered the supplemental report of the Town Clerk in connection with the above. It was additionally clarified that, regarding action (a) as listed in the report, the plaque/information board was a collaboration between Tavistock Heritage Trust (THT) and the Council. THT was linking with Plymouth City Council and working with the colleges in the Town to

help inform appropriate wording to describe slavery in the context of Sir Francis Drake. It was anticipated the Town Council would need to source funding for production/installation and it was agreed that three Councillors (Ms/Mrs Crawford, Mann, Parker - whose names would go forward for formal appointment in due course) could act as conduits for the views of other residents of the Town.

Actions (b)-(c) represented a separate strand of work by THT and Rotary including a survey of students regarding how best slavery could be taught (including the impact of modern slavery) with a view to possible roll out within the national curriculum. Funding was being sought from national bodies and early indications were positive. Regarding action (f) the Borough Council was planning a wide ranging community engagement exercise in which the Town Council could participate, inter alia to 'build back better', involving a series of 'community conversations' where all, including minority groups, could engage, be heard and WDBC could better understand community needs. There would also be equality and diversity training for Councillors and staff at the second and third tiers.

The measures proposed, and the active collaboration of community based partner organisations which represented an ambitious programme for a community the size of Tavistock, were welcomed.

- ii) Town Hall/Butchers' Hall & Works Department Report
 - Events in the Town Hall to the end of September had already been cancelled and Butchers Hall was under review. It was recognised that, in accordance with Government guidance going forward, events later than this might also need to be cancelled in the interests of public safety. As much notice as possible would be given to those who had booked these events.
 - thanks were received for the Town Hall & Events Manager, from the Sensory Garden Committee, for the help provided.

iii) Pannier Market Report

- Thanks were conveyed to all staff involved in the reopening of the Market and their endeavours over a difficult period.

435. FINANCE AND OTHER MATTERS

The Council received, for information, the following:-

- a. Report of the Assistant to the Town Clerk (Appendix 15)

Noted That the extent of support the Town Council had already provided to its tenants was commended.

- b. County Councillor Report – noted (Appendix 16);

Noted That a Member indicated that he would forward an e-mail for onward transmission to the County Councillor with regard to issues identified with the recently approved development at Plymouth Road, Tavistock.

- c. Tavistock Matters – Notes of the Meeting held on 3rd June, 2020 – noted (Appendix 17);

- d. Project update:-

- i. Townscape Heritage Initiative;
- ii. Guildhall Gateway Centre Project

A Capital Team Meeting had recently taken place which would lead to revised work programmes being provided subsequent to social distancing measures being reduced. This would provide a more accurate understanding of timescales and help with budgeting for future works on both the THI Public Realm and Guildhall projects.

- e. Updates from Council representatives serving on outside bodies:-

- Kingdon House – the Council’s representative confirmed that progress was being made on the safe re-opening of the facility, and that grant funding had been obtained from West Devon Borough Council, which had had a significant impact. This was in addition to the furloughing of some staff;

- World Heritage Site Partnership – as had been reported at an earlier Council Meeting, the Council’s representative explained that concerns had been raised within the last Conservation Report to UNESCO, with regard to planning processes in the UK and the response was outlined;
- Tavistock Football Club – the Council’s representative expressed appreciation to individuals who had supported care of the grounds and buildings during lockdown. It was hoped that games would re-start shortly, but there were challenges regarding how best to maintain hygiene and the loss of income during both the lockdown and the previous wet winter;
- Tavistock BID Company – the Council’s representative reported that the Board of Directors had been meeting weekly, and that the BID Manager and Council’s General Manager had been working closely prior to Phase 2 of the re-opening of Tavistock on 15th June. Meetings would now return to monthly. Traffic Management Plans had been put in place, and discussions on operational matters would be ongoing between the BID Manager and General Manager;
- Tavistock & District Chamber of Commerce – the Council’s representative reported that she had attended a recent virtual Meeting where members had explained how they were adapting their businesses, which in some cases had improved them. Some frustrations with the newly implemented parking restrictions had been expressed, but there had also been understanding of the need to keep people safe.

436. RECORD OF ATTENDANCES

The Record of Attendances was received (Appendix 18) and considered.

Noted That:-

- the Mayor was commended on her attendance record which it was submitted demonstrated leadership and commitment;
- Member performance against training targets would be picked up in the forthcoming Corporate Service Plan;

- there was no minimum attendance level (nor any permitted under the Regulations) for Members to receive the Councillors' Basic Allowance.

437. TO RECEIVE SUCH COMMUNICATIONS OR REPORTS AS MAY BE SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MAYOR

The Mayor reported that she had received a letter from the new High Sheriff of Devon, Gerald Hine-Haycock, inviting Members to put forward the names of those individuals and organisations in Tavistock who had provided outstanding service to the community during the pandemic.

The Mayor had already written to Mr Hine-Haycock congratulating him on his appointment.

Noted That the ATTC undertook to forward a copy of the letter to all Members.

438. URGENT MATTERS BROUGHT FORWARD AT THE DISCRETION OF THE TOWN MAYOR

The Mayor did not have any urgent matters to be brought forward, however, with her consent, the following issues were referenced by Members:-

- the reported views of the police and other agencies in connection with the impending re-opening of licensed premises in Tavistock;
- that in the interests of safety it was not anticipated that the Street Pastors would be in a position to re-commence patrols in the short term.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

439. 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 item of business.

The Meeting then temporarily adjourned at 6.41pm.

The Meeting reconvened at 6.51pm attendance by Councillors and authorised Officers at the Confidential reconvened part of the Meeting was accessed via Zoom.

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs A Johnson (Mayor)
Councillor A Hutton (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors Ms L Crawford, J Ellis, Mrs M Ewings, A Fey, A Lewis, Mrs U Mann, J Moody, Mrs G Parker, G Parker, B Smith, H Smith, P Ward, P Williamson.

IN ATTENDANCE

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

DECLARATION On entering the Confidential section - each Councillor present was asked to declare to the Mayor that there were no other persons present, nor would be present, who were not entitled to be (hearing or seeing), and/or recording the Meeting. All Members made a positive Declaration.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM REQUIRING A DECISION

440. PROPERTY, LEGAL AND FINANCE MATTERS

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

i. **DEBTORS**

The Council considered and noted a list of all those with debts to the Council dating from earlier than the last quarter day, and received updates accordingly (Appendix 19).

Noted That following a question regarding assistance to commercial tenants the Council received an overview of assistance already given and summary of current position. The matter was being kept under review and would form part of the budget setting discussion in the autumn.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS
CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

441. 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 considered confidential Minute No's 405 - 406 inclusive of the Meeting (Appendix 2 refers) of the Budget & Policy Committee held on Tuesday 2nd June, 2020. There were no recommendations arising for consideration/determination.

442. LEGAL UPDATES

(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).

There were no updates, arising from questions it was:

Noted That

- i) appreciation was expressed to those Members who had been active in helping the Council in a difficult period, also to those staff who had had to adapt to different/challenging ways of working during the pandemic;
- ii) reference was further made to
 - a. private sector long lease rationalisation and associated timescales;
 - b. a longstanding problem premises and arrangements introduced prior to determining next steps.

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

The Meeting closed at 7.20pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....

CHAIRMAN