

**MINUTES** of the Meeting of the **TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL** held on **TUESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> MARCH, 2024 at 6.30pm** at **THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, DRAKE ROAD, TAVISTOCK**

**PRESENT** Councillor A Hutton (Mayor)  
Councillor P Ward (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors Ms M Ewings, S Hipsey, J Irvine, Mrs A Johnson, U Mann, N Martin, Mrs B Moody, J Moody, T Munro, B Smith, P Squire, A Venning.

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

Prior to the commencement of the Meeting there was opportunity at **6.00pm** –

- for Members to receive an informal presentation from Mr G Ayling, Principal and Headmaster of Mount Kelly College, together with Messrs I MacQueen (Chairman of the Governors) and A Main (Governor) regarding future plans for the College.

**COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING**

**355. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor A Lewis.

**356. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Declaration of Interest was made at this point in the Meeting;

- Councillor A Hutton (Mayor) in respect of Planning Application No. 0522/24/FUL – Land to rear of Abbey Spring, Down Park Drive, Tavistock by virtue of being a near neighbour. Councillor Hutton left the Meeting during the consideration of this item, with the Deputy Mayor taking the Chair.

Further Declarations of Interest were made at Minute No. 362 below (Co-options)

**357. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of Tavistock Town Council held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman (Appendix 1).

### **358. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS & QUESTIONS**

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

### **ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION**

#### **359. GENERAL FINANCE**

The Council considered the following:-

i) Schedule of Payments

The Council received and considered a copy of the monthly accounts as at 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2024 (Appendix 2) as listed on the Council website;

ii) Budget Monitoring Report

The Council received and considered a copy of the Budget Monitoring Report (Appendix 3) as at 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2024.

#### **360. BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE**

The Council considered the Minutes of the Meeting of the Budget & Policy Committee (Appendix 4) held on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 the recommendations being reported by rote.

RESOLVED THAT subject to the consideration of Minute No's 342 - 344 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 326-332 and 334-341) be approved and adopted.

With regard to Minute No 333 it was:

RESOLVED THAT Tavistock Town Council:

- a) Endorse the extant Tavistock Town Council Strategic Plan for the period 2024-27; subject to future inclusion of a suitable reference to the anticipated impact of devolution and/or formation of the Devon and Torbay Combined Authority (as/when more information became available later in 2024);
- b) In accordance with the outcome of the recent Member Workshop sessions – Council endorse that the areas of young people, and of communications/community engagement; being identified as the two priority areas for review at this time;

- c) That, in view of resource/capacity draws work in connection with both areas be undertaken on a sequential basis and commencing with communications and engagement, pursuant to which:
- i. The General Manager prepare a baseline report for the next meeting of the Budget and Policy Committee; in order that, in due course,
  - ii. Consideration can be given to the terms of reference, and composition, of any working group as may be constituted to progress the topic if/as necessary.

Noted That:

- a) Minute No. 333 – Strategic Plan, during the associated discussion reference was made, in particular, to:
- what the Town Council might hope to achieve regarding young people, the breadth of suggestions made, what was being proposed, and how the Council saw its role?;
  - whether the Town Council could be an 'enabler/facilitator', rather than 'deliverer'. This might include financial assistance to help support existing specialist providers maintain/grow their offer and thereby achieve more with scarce resources;
  - that the Council would need to ensure that any measures were affordable and achievable;
  - that any planned Working Group might consider it appropriate to look at the facilities currently available in the town, then liaise with other stakeholders to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current provision, to then agree what shortfalls there might be and how they could collectively be addressed;
  - that it was unlikely that there was sufficient resource to run both Working Groups concurrently, so prioritisation of the two topics would be appropriate;
  - that the General Manager would be bringing forward a report to the next Budget & Policy Committee Meeting, with regard to the Council's current communication and community engagement position;
  - the perceived lack of co-ordination of the many sporting opportunities already available in the town, and whether the schools could be encouraged to provide a structured approach perhaps by separating out age groups;
  - that the Town Council would be commissioning a new website later in the year, for introduction early in 2025 and associated draws on resources.

- b) The Council received an update in connection with an email received, as provided by Plymouth University NHS Trust, with regard to work being undertaken in connection with the possible replacement of the (now failed) X-Ray machine at Tavistock Hospital.

**361. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT & LICENSING COMMITTEE (DM&L)**

The Council considered the following: -

- i) Development Management & Licensing Committee - Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 (Appendix 5) (Minute No's 316 - 325 inclusive) the recommendations being reported by rote;
- ii) Development Management & Licensing Committee – Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2024 (Appendix 6) (Minute No's 345 – 354 inclusive) the recommendations being reported by rote.

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

Noted That Councillor A Hutton declared an interest (Minute No 356 above refers)

**362. CO-OPTION – TAVISTOCK SOUTH EAST & NORTH WARDS**

Two applications had been received for co-option to the vacancy arising in the Tavistock South East Ward (from Mr R Poppe and Mr G Parker), and one application had been received for the vacancy arising in Tavistock North Ward (Mr T Gibbins) (Appendices 7 – 9).

The Council received a presentation from each of the three applicants who were all in attendance, along with an opportunity to ask questions.

By the consent of all three applicants, it was decided to proceed on the basis that all three would be eligible to represent either Ward if selected (although one did express a primary interest in the North Ward).

Following a vote by ballot, appreciation was expressed to the candidates and it was:

RESOLVED THAT Mr R Poppe and Mr G Parker be co-opted to serve as Councillors on Tavistock Town Council. The decision with regard to which candidate would represent which Ward was deferred to a later date.

Noted That –

- Councillors A Hutton (Mayor) and P Ward (Deputy Mayor) Declared an Interest in the item above by virtue of their relationship with one of the candidates, and left the Meeting during the consideration of this matter. At the request of the Meeting Councillor B Smith (Chairman of the Development Management & Licensing Committee) took the Chair for the duration of the item;
- arrangements would be made for the successful applicants to sign their Declaration of Acceptance of Office and other necessary tasks, to enable them to join the next Meeting of Council.

### **ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

#### **363. SERVICE REPORTS**

The Council received, for information, the reports of the General Manager, Pannier Market/Town Hall/Butchers' Hall and Works Department (Appendices 10 - 13).

- i. General Manager's Report;
- ii. Pannier Market Report;  
Noted That Pannier Market and Town Hall staff were thanked by a Member for their help during the 'Stop the Meters' campaign.
- iii. Works Department Report;  
Noted That it was reported that the recent Whitchurch Down Consultative Group ½ day training session, which had involved working with partnership groups, had been well received. Appreciation was conveyed to the General and Works Managers for arranging this event.
- iv. Town Hall & Butchers' Hall Report.

#### **364. FINANCE & OTHER MATTERS**

The Council received, for information, the following:-

- a) Report of the Assistant to the Town Clerk (Appendix 14)  
Noted That a 'double-hatted' Councillor reported that they had attended the recently delivered WDBC Planning Training in their other capacity;
- b) Notes of the Town Hall & Markets Consultative Group Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2024 (Appendix 15);

- c) Notes of the Goose Fair Wash-Up Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 (Appendix 16);
- d) Devon County Councillor Report – Report from County Councillor Mrs D Sellis (Appendix 17);
- e) The following updates or feedback were brought forward.
  - i. Representatives on outside bodies;
    - o Tavi Rail – it was reported that:
      - the group’s AGM had recently taken place, with the Town Council’s representative having been elected Vice Chairman;
      - Network Rail had advised that the funding was now in place for the Tavistock – Plymouth line which was scheduled to be delivered by 2029;
      - the Council’s representative was planning to attend the Okehampton Annual Town Meeting to speak to the Network Rail representative;
    - o Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) Larger Councils’ Committee – the Council’s representative reported that they had attended an event where:
      - the Devolution Devon & Torbay initiative had been discussed, which had elicited similar views to those of the Council’s Budget & Policy Committee;
      - there had been a guest speaker (the Clerk from Falmouth Town Council) who had explained the transition to a Unitary Authority in Cornwall, which had been considered helpful;
      - that DALC would be providing a report on the meeting, especially with regard to the Devolution Devon & Torbay session;
    - o Tavistock BID Company – the Council’s representative:
      - thanked colleagues for their efforts during the ‘Stop the Meters’ campaign, however he explained that the decision of Devon County Council was not due to take place until Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2024 when the DCC Cabinet met, although Cabinet members had been advised not to proceed with the proposal by its Officers;
      - advised that two Members of Tavistock Town Council planned to attend this Meeting to hear the decision;
      - suggested that perhaps the BID Company could review parking issues in the town, and consider how these might be addressed;
      - stated that now would be a good opportunity to try and repair the relationships between the parties involved;

- in particular thanks were conveyed to the BID Manager, who was considered to have been very impressive during the campaign, and reference was made to social cohesion in Tavistock during the campaign period;
- o West Devon Borough Council – a Member provided an oral update on matters pertaining to WDBC, in the absence of a written report from a colleague;
- o WHS Partnership Board – the Council’s representative on the Board reported:
  - attendance at a meeting the previous week where an update had been given on the developing issues in Camborne;
  - a Heritage Fair in The Guildhall which was planned for the coming weekend, where it was hoped to recruit additional volunteers;
  - Cornwall would be hosting a WHS Conference in 2024, where the theme would be ‘Advantages of being in a WHS Site’.
- ii. Feedback from Members following attendance at any training sessions – none brought forward.

**EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**365. 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**

**366. BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE CONTINUED**

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

The Council received and considered Minute No’s 342 - 344 of the Meeting of the Budget & Policy Committee (Appendix 4 refers) held on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, the recommendations being reported by rote.

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

**367. PROPERTY, LEGAL & FINANCE MATTERS**

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

**i. DEBTORS' REPORT**

The Council considered and noted a list (Appendix 18) of all those with debts to the Council dating from earlier than the last Quarter Day and received updates accordingly.

The following Property update was provided:

Retail Unit – it was reported that;

- There appeared to be a breach, by the tenant, of the terms of the lease for the property and it had not yet been possible to secure the necessary evidence to confirm the position (either way) from the tenant;
- accordingly, proceedings been initiated to secure compliance with the terms of the lease, but if necessary, forfeiture;
- the background and related communications on various matters, including relating to - the operation of the lease, applicable terms, monies owed, rent review, payment arrangements, tenant actions and requests were outlined.

The tenant had been advised that such matters as were appropriate could be discussed, but necessarily subject to any current breaches being satisfactorily addressed so as to put the landlord tenant relationship back onto a normal footing.

**CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

**368. PROPERTY, LEGAL & FINANCE MATTERS**

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**i) LANDLORD TENANT MATTERS**

Insurance Claims –

- i) it was reported that an insurance claim had now been settled in favour of the claimant;
- ii) Purported insurance claim - Garden Lane, it was reported that the Town Council had been approached in connection with a claim following a fall in Garden Lane. However, the



Council did not own, manage or maintain the land in question. Accordingly it had reiterated to the claimant's insurance company that it was not liable, and that it should make enquiries of the residents of the properties fronting the lane as to any maintenance responsibilities.

Noted That;

- a Member reported that some frontagers were aware of responsibilities attaching to their properties in this regard, having been made aware of same by their Solicitors when purchasing a property;
- a Member raised a query with regard to a recent letter which had appeared in the local press, which had seemed to suggest that Tavistock Town Council was responsible for the condition of the roads in the town which (with the one exception of Market Road), in fact fell to the responsibility of the Highway Authority (Devon County Council).

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

The Meeting closed at 8.13pm.

Signed:

Dated:

CHAIRMAN