

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL** held on **TUESDAY 15th SEPTEMBER, 2020 at 5.00pm** conducted remotely via Zoom and YouTube

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

Councillors Ms L Crawford, J Ellis, Mrs M Ewings, T Fey, G Parker, Mrs G Parker, A Lewis, Mrs U Mann, J Moody, B Smith, H Smith, A Venning*, P Ward, P Williamson
*attended only part of the Meeting due to technical difficulties.

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

64. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor P Squire.

65. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

66. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of Tavistock Town Council held on Tuesday 28th July, 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman (Appendix 1)

Noted That arising from consideration of the above reference was made to the outcome of enquiries pursuant to Minute No 20, no orders being issued.

67. PUBLIC REPRESENTATION AND QUESTIONS

No Public representations or questions had been received.

ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION

68. BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE

The Council considered the Minutes of the Meeting of the Budget & Policy Committee (Appendix 2) held on Tuesday 8th September, 2020, the recommendations being reported by rote.

RESOLVED THAT

a) Subject to the amendment of the recommendation included in Minute No. 55(c) to read:

'c)

- i. the approval of the use of the logos for Tavistock Town Council, Historic England and Tavistock Heritage Trust;
- ii. the approval of the language on the information panel, acknowledging Tavistock Town Council's role in the erection of the Panel, via the next Budget and Policy Committee;

the recommendations included in the foregoing report of the Committee (Minute No's 48-58 refer) be approved and adopted

b) consideration of Minute No's 59 - 62 be deferred to a later point in the Meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

In the discussion arising from the foregoing reference was made variously to:

- recent submission of a grant application to Viridor;
- anticipated appointment by Tavistock Heritage Trust of a Guildhall Visitor Centre Manager;
- the amendment of the record to reflect "Mrs Wedd's Arboretum"
- future reporting regarding an information panel.

Noted That

- i) Councillor A Venning joined the Meeting during consideration of these Minutes;
- ii) Councillor G Parker indicated he had attended part of the public session of the above Meeting, but had not

appeared in the list of 'Observers' for the time he was in attendance.

69. GENERAL FINANCE

a) Schedule of Payments

The Council received and considered a copy of the monthly accounts as at 31st July, 2020 and 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 31st July, 2020.

In the discussion arising particular reference was made to

- The findings of the recently published report by Sir Tony Redmond into the effectiveness of local audit and related matters which would be considered by Government in due course;
- Organisational financial reporting arrangements based upon the sector standards set out by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance.

70. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT & LICENSING COMMITTEE

The Council considered the following, the recommendations being reported by rote: -

a) Development Management & Licensing Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 11th August, 2020 (Appendix 4) (Minute No's 28 - 38 inclusive);

b) Development Management & Licensing Committee – Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 1st September, 2020 (Appendix 5) (Minute No's 39 - 47 inclusive)

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

c) The Tavistock Conservation Area Boundary, the Appraisal and Management Plan' consultation – in view of the timescales involved it was:

RESOLVED THAT the Council's Development Management & Licensing Committee be granted delegated authority to respond direct to the Local Planning Authority on this matter.

Noted That

- Councillor A Venning left the Meeting during consideration of the above item;
- Appreciation was expressed to and by the Chairman of the Development Management & Licensing Committee in connection with the drafting of a recent planning appeal submission in connection with planning application no 3799/19/FUL.

71. WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

The Council considered the report of the Town Clerk in connection with the above (Appendix 6).

In the discussion arising particular reference was made to:

- The relationship between the report and that previously submitted to the Budget and Policy Committee;
- The suggestion that, to mitigate cost and resource implications arising under the regulations and provide consistency of practice, videos of Committee and Council Meetings could in future remain available until the next scheduled Meeting (ie approval of the Minutes). In the alternative it was mooted that one cycle was felt to be too soon and whether a case of 'disproportionate burden' could be argued;
- notwithstanding the above concerns, it was acknowledged that there should be a set time period for videos to remain, and that they shouldn't remain available indefinitely;
- the extent and quality of work by staff to date, was acknowledged.

RESOLVED THAT

- a) Subject to (c) below the Tavistock Town Council Website Accessibility Statement and associated Improvement Plan be adopted and endorsed and the statement be published on the Council Website;
- b) The Assistant to the Town Clerk be authorised to undertake routine and administrative updates to the above documents ((a)

above refers) and such consequential (non-major) monitoring and changes as necessary to improve compliance with the Regulations;

- c) Clarification be sought from the Regulator (Improvement Plan refers) to ascertain what might represent an appropriate retention period for video's whilst minimising the potential for onerous or burdensome work if claims are received;

Noted That

- in response to a question it was acknowledged that practice elsewhere in the County was unlikely to be a helpful guide as Tavistock was the only Council known to have (setting apart Meetings arising under the Coronavirus Regulations), facility for recording and publishing video stream of physical meetings;
- prior to introduction of the Regulations the practice of principal authority video retention - typically in the range 3-18 months.

ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

The following items had been circulated for information only: -

72. SERVICE REPORTS

The Council received and noted the reports of the General Manager, Town Hall/Butchers' Hall & Works Dep't, and the Pannier Market (Appendices 7 – 9 refer).

Noted that in the discussion arising from consideration of the above particular reference was made to recently amended Government Guidance regarding Coronavirus in connection with assemblies and the impact this could have on Council activities.

73. FINANCE AND OTHER MATTERS

The Council received, for information, the following: -

- a) Report of the Assistant to the Town Council (Appendix 10);

Noted That Councillor A Lewis left the Meeting at this point.

- b) Town Hall & Markets Consultative Group Meeting
Notes from the Meeting held on 13th July, 2020 (these were not available - it was therefore confirmed by the General

Manager that these would be brought to the next Meeting of Council);

- c) Tavistock BID Company Ltd – Minutes of the Meetings held on 19th February and 17th March, 2020 (Appendices 11 and 12);

Noted That the next virtual BID Meeting was scheduled for 16th September, 2020 and would include discussions with regard to preparatory arrangements for a 3rd term of the Tavistock BID Company.

- d) West Devon Borough Councillor Report (Councillor S Hipsey) – (Appendix 13).

Noted That in the discussion arising reference was made to:

- the number of planning/enforcement breaches recorded for Tavistock, and the length of time some breaches had appeared on the list (the Chairman of the DM&L Committee undertook to afford opportunity for colleagues to raise the issue at the next Committee Meeting);
- the ongoing closure of The Meadowlands Swimming Pool in Tavistock, and extent of any progress with regard to re-opening;
- that when a return to physical meetings took place representatives from other councils would be able to attend the meeting in the normal way.

- e) Project Update - there was nothing to add to the information provided to the Budget & Policy Committee at its Meeting held on 8th September, 2020 on either the Tavistock Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme or Guildhall Gateway Centre Project.

- f) Updates from

i– Representatives on outside bodies

- DALC – comment was invited from Members on the Government’s White Paper on ‘Planning for the Future’;
- WHS Partnership – work was being undertaken with the Local Planning Authority to co-ordinate activity in connection with Supplementary Planning Documents;

- Oke Rail Forum – a meeting was scheduled for 8th October, the first one since the start of lockdown. Comments were invited from colleagues;
- Kingdon House – the venue was slowly starting to re-open, with some keen to get back to full utilisation of the facility;
- Chamber of Commerce – the Deputy representative confirmed that the planned face to face meeting scheduled for 17th September had been cancelled due to a change in Government guidance. This would now be a virtual meeting, as previously and Members could attend at no cost.

ii Those Members who had attended training since the last Meeting reported:

- NALC Rebuilding Communities after COVID – a Member, who had attended this virtual training, reported that an update would be brought forward at a later date.

74. TO RECEIVE SUCH COMMUNICATIONS OR REPORTS AS MAY BE SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MAYOR (DISCRETIONARY GRANT)

The Mayor reported that both Tavistock and Okehampton Town Councils had been allowed to apply for a Discretionary Government Grant from West Devon Borough Council due to a change in policy. Tavistock Town Council had been awarded a grant in the maximum available sum of £25,000 which was welcome.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

75. 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.

The Meeting then temporarily adjourned at 6.28pm.

The Meeting reconvened at 6.39pm 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, 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, Head of Human Resources South West Councils (SWC).

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 ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION

76. ORGANISATIONAL JOB EVALUATION SCHEME

(**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)

In the interest of expediting the business of the Council, the Chairman agreed to take Budget & Policy Minute No. 62 (and Agenda Item 15ii together) at this point in the Meeting.

The Council considered the report of the Town Clerk and Head of South West Councils (Appendix 14) in connection with the above. In that regard it was noted that at Item 4 of the introductory summary of the report (Resources) the figure listed should read £1,668.00 not £1,180.00.

In the discussion arising particular reference was made to the operation of, and principles underlying, the application of job

evaluation schemes in general, and the Tavistock Town Council Scheme in particular. The Council then proceeded to consider the report in detail arising from which it was:

RESOLVED THAT the report be endorsed and the recommendations set out therein be adopted in accordance with the operation of the Tavistock Town Council Job Evaluation Scheme.

Noted that Council Officers left the meeting during the detailed consideration of the above.

77. 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 58 – 61 inclusive of the Meeting (Appendix 2 refers) of the Budget & Policy Committee held on Tuesday 8th September, 2020 (excluding Minute No 62 – see above) the recommendations being reported by rote:

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

Noted That

- Officers re-joined the Meeting;
- Councillor Mrs M Ewings declared a prejudicial and pecuniary interest in Minute No. 59 by virtue of having helped a Council tenant apply for a grant from West Devon Borough Council, and being a tenant of a Town Council owned property and was temporarily removed from the Meeting during consideration thereof.
- A Member drew attention to the availability of personal correspondence, as between them and another Member, by request.

78. PROPERTY, LEGAL, STAFFING AND FINANCE MATTERS

(**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)

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 15).

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

79. PROPERTY, LEGAL AND FINANCE MATTERS

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a) Rent Deferment Scheme Report (Appendix 16)

The Council received and noted the report detailing those tenants who had taken advantage of the Council's Rent Deferment Scheme, and the rental amounts outstanding under the Scheme.

b) Legal updates – no updates were brought forward.

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

The Meeting closed at 8.23pm

Signed:

Dated:

CHAIRMAN