

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL** held on **TUESDAY 20th JUNE, 2023 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 Hipse, Mrs A Johnson, A Lewis, U Mann, N Martin, Mrs B Moody, J Moody, T Munro, B Smith, P Squire, A Venning.

IN ATTENDANCE Town Clerk, Assistant to the Town Clerk.

Prior to the commencement of the Meeting there were a few moments of Quiet Reflection led by Major Pamela Smith of The Salvation Army.

COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

66. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor J Irvine.

67. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

68. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

a) RESOLVED THAT subject to the amendment of the note relating to Minute No 49(d) to include the words 'town/' to follow 'in the' on the second line the Minutes of the Meeting of Tavistock Town Council held on Tuesday 30th May, 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman (Appendix 1);

b) Matters arising – Minute no 43(b) refers: reference was made to upcoming arrangements for co-option to fill two vacancies on the Town Council, associated timelines and arrangements for publicity/applications.

69. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

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

ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION

70. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

i) The Council considered in-year financial reporting and assurance arrangements and received, considered and endorsed the Tavistock Town Council:

- o Year End Internal Audit Observations and Internal Audit Summary 2022-23 (Report of the Internal Auditor) (Appendix 2);
- o Annual Internal Audit Report 2022-23 (Appendix 3);

which indicated that the internal control objectives had been met.

ii) The Council then proceeded to review the Annual Governance Statement (section 1) (Appendix 4) section by section and, in relation to the System of Internal Control including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31st March, 2023, arising from which it was:

RESOLVED THAT

- a) with regard to the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31st March 2023, 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.

71. ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

i) The Council considered the relevant section of the "Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and Other Smaller Authorities, Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23 for the year ended 31st March 2023". More specifically the Accounting Statements 2022-23 (Section 2) as prepared by the RFO (Appendix 5).

RESOLVED THAT

- a) the Accounting Statements 2022-23 listed in Section 2 of the Annual Return be received and adopted as a reasonable statement of the activities of the Council;
- b) the Mayor be authorised to sign same on behalf of the Council.

With regard to the Unaudited Financial Statements of the Council (Appendix 6) it was further:

RESOLVED THAT the Unaudited Financial Statements of the Council for the year ended 31st March 2023 be received and noted.

- ii) In view of the requirements associated with the timeframe for the period for the exercise of public rights it was further:

RESOLVED THAT the period for the exercise of public rights of inspection in connection with the foregoing be 22nd June 2023 – 2nd August 2023.

72. GENERAL FINANCE

The Council considered the following:-

- a) Schedule of Payments

The Council received and considered copies of the monthly accounts as at 31st May, 2023 (Appendix 7) as listed on the Council's website;

- b) Budget Monitoring Report

The Council received and considered copies of the Budget Monitoring Report as at 31st May, 2023 (Appendix 8).

Noted That clarification was provided with regard to:

- the operation and purpose of cost code 4034 – public relations;
- periodic production of the Town Guide on a cost neutral basis.

73. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT & LICENSING COMMITTEE

The Council considered the following: -

- i) Development Management & Licensing Committee – Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 13th June, 2023 (Appendix 9).

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

ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

74. SERVICE REPORTS

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

i) General Manager's Report

Noted That:

- Market Road stabilisation works – an update regarding technical challenges associated with securing the effective operation of the coffer dam and mitigating actions being undertaken. When more information became available a further report would be made in connection with associated cost plan variances. There remained confidence that, subject to addressing the outstanding issues, and normal seasonal weather conditions, the project would proceed to time. Appreciation was expressed for the constructive approach of the main contractor.
- Guildhall Toilets – in response to a question it was reported that discussions were proceeding with the principal authority around asset transfer and associated prior works. It was noted any restoration/refurbishment works undertaken/funded jointly prior to transfer would be undertaken sensitively to minimise disruption to the public.

ii) Pannier Market Report

Noted That the Barclays Bank 'pod' being placed in the Pannier Market was welcomed as beneficial to the community.

iii) Works Department Report

Noted That a Member commended Works Department staff for the watering of new trees in accordance with the Arboriculture Association recommendations.

iv) Town Hall & Butchers' Hall Report

Noted That: distribution of the Town Hall brochure, which had recently been circulated to Members, was reported.

75. FINANCE AND OTHER MATTERS

The Council received, for information, the following: -

- a) Report of the Assistant to the Town Clerk (Appendix 14)
- b) Notes of the Town Hall & Markets Consultative Group Meeting held on 6th June, 2023 (Appendix 15);

Noted That the following amendment to Note 4(b) – the addition of the words ‘of prospective WiFi in the town’ to precede ‘could cover’.

- c) West Devon Borough Councillor Report - as provided by Councillor J Moody (Appendix 16);
- d) Notes of the Southern Links Committee Meeting held on 24th May, 2023 (Appendix 17);
- e) Updates
 - i) From representatives serving on outside bodies: no items brought forward;

- ii) From Members who had attended training sessions: Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) ‘Being a Good Employer’ training.

Noted That in response to a question the background to arrangements for the conduct of human resource matters, separation of roles/responsibilities, access to professional support/the associated policy framework and the related responsibilities of the Budget and Policy Committee were outlined.

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

No items brought forward.

URGENT MATTERS BROUGHT FORWARD AT THE DISCRETION OF THE TOWN MAYOR

77. SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

A Member made reference to an upcoming meeting of the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) - Larger Councils’ Committee which would include a discussion regarding sector involvement in/with the Shared Prosperity Fund. Suggestions were invited to inform the debate, either at the meeting of Council, or over the following 24 hours. In the ensuing discussion reference was made, in particular, to arrangements to support young people - both of a

capital (built projects) and revenue (service provision) nature, alongside the particular difficulties encountered by some especially disadvantaged/excluded categories.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

78. 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

79. PROPERTY, LEGAL & 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 the list of all those with debts to the Council dating from earlier than the last Quarter Day, and received relevant updates (Appendix 18).

Noted That concern was raised regarding the performance of debtor 'B' and the need to keep same under active review.

ii. Market Road – Project Budget

An oral update was provided in connection with contract progress, communications, technical challenges and anticipated future reporting on project budget matters.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

80. PROPERTY LEGAL & FINANCE MATTERS

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Oral updates were provided in connection with:

- a) Guildhall – arrangements, agreed in principle and awaiting finalisation with the other party;

b) Landlord Tenant Matter – the background to and context of the issue(s), past decisions of the Council currently in hand, progress to date, related milestones (including the next intervention point for decision by Council) and budget implications, alongside the importance attached to ensuring equity for both parties over the long term, and the weight properly attached to legal advice.

Noted That Councillor A Lewis left the Meeting during consideration of the above item.

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

The Meeting closed at 7.43pm.

Signed:

Dated:
CHAIRMAN