

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL** held on **TUESDAY 7th FEBRUARY, 2023 at 5.43pm** at **THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, DRAKE ROAD, TAVISTOCK**

PRESENT

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

Councillors Ms L Crawford, Ms M Ewings, A Fey,
Mrs A Johnson, Mrs U Mann, P Peers, B Smith, H Smith,
P Squire, A Venning, P Williamson.

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 Father Cyracius Uzochukwu of Our Lady of the Assumption and St Mary Magdalene Catholic Church, Tavistock.

COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

363. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

364. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Declarations of Interest were made;

- Councillor Mrs A Johnson declared an interest in respect of each of the following items:
 - Agenda Item 8(b) – Notice of Motion: by virtue of employment with a related body;
 - Development Management & Licensing Committee (10th January 2023) Minute No. 336(b) Planning Application No. 4365/22/FUL for Knoll Park, Mount Tavy Road, Tavistock, PL19 9JL by virtue of close family association.
- Councillor P Williamson in respect of Agenda Item 8(b) – Notice of Motion: by virtue of running a camping and touring business within the Dartmoor National Park area.

365. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of Tavistock Town Council held on Tuesday 3rd January, 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman (Appendix 1).

366. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

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

ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION

367. GENERAL FINANCE

The Council considered the following: -

a) Schedule of Payments

The Council received and considered copies of the monthly accounts as at 31st December, 2022 (Appendix 2) as listed on the Council's website;

b) Budget Monitoring Report

The Council received and considered a copy of the Budget Monitoring Report (Appendix 3) as at 31st December, 2022.

368. BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE

The Council considered the Minutes of the Meeting of the Budget & Policy Committee (Appendix 4) held on Tuesday 24th January, 2023, the recommendations being reported by rote.

RESOLVED THAT subject to consideration of Minute Nos. 358-362 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 Nos. 348 - 357) be approved and adopted.

Noted That:

In respect of Minute No. 351 – Market Road Riverbank;

- It was requested (and agreed) that, should the Environment Agency provide modelling documentation with regard to the potential for flooding in Market Road, that this be shared with the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group (Minute No. 351(d) refers) for reference/inclusion as appropriate;
- Issues and constraints associated with the potential to secure external funding for the works proposed were outlined.

In respect of Minute No. 352 – Rural Services Network (RSN) Survey the Councils representative/lead Member undertook to prepare and submit the Council's response to the Survey including that agreed in connection with Item 7 with regard to critical transport (rail infrastructure).

In respect of Minutes No. 356 (a) – King’s Coronation a Member advised support for events provided by WDBC would be up to £500 for eligible projects. In the ensuing discussion reference was made, variously, to:

- Ongoing discussions with the Tavistock BID Co regarding potential to collaborate on activities in/around Bedford Square/Guildhall Car Park and the associated deployment of resources;
- The much more low-key approach being adopted by the Palace in deference to both the Platinum Jubilee, and marking of the passing of the Late Queen Elizabeth II, including related themes of community and volunteering which the Council could support should community groups wish to develop them.

369. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT & LICENSING COMMITTEE

The Council considered the following: -

- i) Development Management & Licensing Committee – Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 10th January, 2023 (Appendix 5).
- ii) Development Management & Licensing Committee – Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 23rd January, 2023 (Appendix 6).

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

Noted That posters detailing the upcoming ‘Community Conversation’ event in the Town Hall were distributed by a Steering Group Member, same to be held on Wednesday 22nd February 2023 at 6.30pm, and requesting colleagues display them in a prominent position.

368. OTHER ITEMS

a. On-Street Parking Charges

The Briefing Note of the Town Clerk was received and considered (Appendix 7).

During the ensuing discussion, particular reference was made to:

- The need for the Council to be pro-active on this matter - to protect the interests of both the business sector, and community at large from an ill-advised and potentially damaging proposal;

- the lack of detail from Devon County Council regarding the criteria adopted in developing the proposal, the timeline for next steps and failure to engage with Tavistock Town and West Devon Borough Councils, as well as businesses/residents in the town;
- concerns regarding (should the proposal proceed) the adverse impacts of displacement into residential areas;
- that the installation of meters or other payment devices would have a detrimental effect on the visual amenity of the heritage aspects of the Tavistock Conservation Area and World Heritage Site and impede movements arising from their design and scale.
- the campaign that the Tavistock BID Company had commenced to oppose the initiative, which included a petition, as well as a 'Go Fund Me' page to help raise funds for its campaign;
- concerns regarding the adverse effect the implementation of on-street parking charges in Tavistock would have on the economic vitality of the town centre;
- the County Council's reported assertion that income derived from parking charges would be utilised to support the local bus services in the town, thereby helping to protect those services. It was suggested that full details of this statement be provided to show the obligations requiring how this funding would be raised and used in Tavistock, especially in view of the lack of County Council funding for other services (eg youth services in the town in comparison to the funding which Okehampton received);
- that had Devon County Council sought S106 funding from the Plymouth Road development, these funds could have been used to support local bus services rather than having to introduce parking meters in the town.

RESOLVED THAT Tavistock Town Council

- a. convey to the Highway Authority (Devon County Council) its fundamental opposition to the proposals to introduce on-street charging for parking in Tavistock, the potentially serious consequential impact upon economy, community and heritage, together with substantial concerns regarding the lack of information and engagement from DCC;
- b. authority be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to agree an amount to be contributed to the BID Company's funding campaign to support rigorous opposition to the proposal;
- c. That Devon County Council be further requested to engage in a meaningful and constructive manner with the concerns of the community including, in order for Community/Town

Council to properly understand the nature of and reasons for the proposed introduction of charging for on-street parking in Tavistock, by providing the following information as a matter of urgency:

- i) The evidence held on which the decision has been based to proceed with proposals to change/review the existing arrangements consistent with s45 Road Traffic Act 1984 and other factors listed in s2 of the Impact assessment as considered by the County Council on 25th October, 2022;
- ii) The evidence held which demonstrates compliance with and need against the factors listed in s3 of the Impact assessment as considered by the County Council on 25th October, 2022;
- iii) Confirmation of:
 - o which DCC subsidised bus services (and associated frequencies as applicable) to/in Tavistock are presently classified as under threat and why;
 - o linking to the foregoing any legal restrictions preventing use of non highway generated income eg (but not limited to) Council Tax, other local authority fees and charges, government grants etc on bus services; together with
 - o the income generated County wide from highway related fees and charges including on-street parking and the total cost to DCC of bus service subsidies from its own income (ie excluding government grants or other external funding);
 - o how any additional income received from on-street parking in Tavistock (if introduced) will be used to extend and improve bus services to the town;
 - o if funding were an issue, why DCC did not seek S106 monies from recent substantial residential developments to support that service.

- d. A commitment from DCC that the foregoing will be provided to the Town Council well in advance of any consultation for on street charges for parking in Tavistock being introduced.

Noted That

- the views of the County Councillor for the area were noted, including that the proposal was in part to make up shortfalls in Devon County Council Budgets;
- all Members were encouraged to attend the virtual Devon County Council Briefing, led by Councillor John Hart, on

Thursday 9th February 2023 at 7pm. The log-in details had been distributed by the Assistant to the Town Clerk that day.

a) **Notice of Motion**

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor P Squire, and read for the benefit of those residents listening online, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 9 as follows, namely that:-

'Tavistock Town Council joins with the thousands of Devon residents shocked and appalled by the effective ban on Wild Camping on Dartmoor arising from a recent court decision.

This Council supports Dartmoor National Park in its rightful and spirited defence of wild camping, a right enjoyed by generations of local people and visitors.

This Council condemns the loss of this right and calls on Government to enact urgent legislation to reinstate wild camping and protect the rights of people to fully enjoy Dartmoor.

This Council asks the Leader and Managing Director of Dartmoor National Park to write in the strongest terms to Members of Parliament for the Tavistock Town Area & the relevant Secretaries of State and the Prime Minister urging them to act to restore the right to wild camp on Dartmoor."

RESOLVED THAT, subject to the following amendments, the Motion be approved;

- i. the deletion of 'enact urgent legislation to' in paragraph 3;
- ii. the deletion of 'the Leader and Managing Director of Dartmoor National Park' in paragraph 4, and replacement with 'Dr Kevin Bishop, Chief Executive (National Park Officer)'.

ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

370. SERVICE REPORTS

The Council received, for information, the reports of the General Manager, Pannier Market, Works Department and Town Hall & Butchers' Hall (Appendices 8-11 refer). In the discussion arising:

- a) Pannier Market Report

Noted That the Market Reeve and Town Hall & Events Manager were commended for assistance in providing information for the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group and support with its events.

b) Works Department Report

Noted That the General Manager was thanked for the reinstatement of the football goal posts on Whitchurch Down, which it was hoped would be completed shortly. Observations were however expressed with regard to the area being used as an informal golf driving range, and issues this might pose to walkers and passing cars.

371. FINANCE AND OTHER MATTERS

The Council received, for information, the following: -

- a) Report of the Assistant to the Town Clerk (Appendix 12);
- b) Notes of the Whitchurch Down Consultative Group Meeting held on 6th December, 2022 (Appendix 13);
- c) Devon County Councillor update as provided by Councillor Mrs D Sellis (Appendix 14);

Noted That reference was made to:

- the recent flooding problems in the Bannawell Park open space, and the impact this had had on dog walkers, and children trying to access the play area. It was also noted that Town Council staff had been required to clear the area on a regular basis in recent months.

In response to questions it was reported that a Devon County Council inspection had taken place earlier in the day identifying issues in connection with scheme design and installation.

- opinions following hedgerow work and associated tree/growth removal along the A390 highway in Gulworthy Parish.
- d) West Devon Borough Council update as provided by Councillor D Turnbull (Appendix 15);

Noted That a Member drew attention to the reference to the 'Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan', as detailed within

the report, and confirmed that the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group would be keeping watch on this initiative to see how Tavistock might benefit from it.

e) Updates

i) From representatives serving on outside bodies: A Member, appointed to the Museum Trust advised:

- that thanks had been conveyed to the Town Council for the Grant which had recently been allocated to the Museum to support the purchase of secure cabinets, which would allow for an increase in the number of items which the Museum could securely display around the town; and
- that the Museum Trust would be seeking re-accreditation towards the end of 2023, and that a local Accreditation Mentor had been appointed.

ii) From Members who had attended training sessions: none received.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

373. 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

374. 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 person or persons other than the Council).

The Council received and considered Minute Nos. 358 - 362 of the Meeting of the Budget & Policy Committee (Appendix 4 refers) held on Tuesday 24th January, 2023.

RESOLVED THAT the recommendations included in the foregoing report of the Committee (Minute Nos. 358-362) be approved and adopted.

Noted That;

Minute No. 360 – Market Road Retaining Wall:

- Council was reminded that a Special Meeting of Council might be required on/around 22nd/23rd March 2023 to consider/confirm the award of the Contract for these works;

Minute No. 361 – Bannawell Park Flooding:

- It was reported that two meetings had already taken place between the General and Works Managers and play park providers, to commence plans to utilise the S106 monies available for the purchase of play park equipment for use in that particular park. Future meetings with other providers would take place to progress this matter.

375. DEBTORS

(**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 and noted the list (Appendix 16) of all those with debts to the Council dating from earlier than the last Quarter Day, and received relevant updates.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

376. 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).

No matters brought forward.

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

The Meeting closed at 7.20pm.

Signed:

Dated:

CHAIRMAN