

AGENDA ITEM 2

MINUTES of the ANNUAL TOWN MEETING of the TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL held on TUESDAY 11th MARCH, 2025 at 6.30pm at TAVISTOCK TOWN HALL

The following were present:

Councillor P Ward – Mayor (Chairman)
Councillor S Hipsey – Deputy Mayor and Chairman of the Budget & Policy Committee

Councillors Ms M Ewings, A Hutton, Mrs J Hughes, Mrs A Johnson, U Mann, Mrs B Moody, J Moody, R Poppe, B Smith and A Venning

7 members of the Public

In Attendance: Town Clerk and Assistant to the Town Clerk

Apologies for Absence had been received from Councillor G Parker and from the Chairman from the Royal British Legion.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY SPEECH

The Mayor welcomed all present and gave a brief address, notes of which are attached to these Minutes (Appendix A).

The Mayor also welcomed Vicki Lloyd-Walsh who was in attendance to represent the Mayor's chosen Charity for his Civic Year, The New Tavistock Youth Café.

The Mayor outlined the Charity's 'Charlie's Project' which was the focus of his fundraising for the year. A quiz had been arranged for Thursday 20th March 2025, in The Bedford Hotel, to raise funds for the Project. All in attendance were encouraged to attend.

2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 19th MARCH 2024

The Minutes of the above Meeting were agreed as a true copy and signed by the Mayor.

3. STATEMENT ON COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

The Chairman of the Budget & Policy Committee (Councillor S Hipsey) reported on the financial affairs of the Council, notes of which are attached to these Minutes (Appendix B).

4. JESSIE ANN ALFORD CHARITY

The Town Clerk gave a report on the operation of the above Charity (Appendix C).

5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION

Councillor Ms M Ewings, Leader of West Devon Borough Council, provided an update on the current position with regards to the Government's plans for Local Government Re-organisation (Appendix D)

Questions raised with Councillor Ms Ewings;

Q1 – Can you please provide further details with regards to the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), details of which have just been released?

A1 – The PSPO was intended to deal with anti-social behaviour in the town, and was not intended to affect those who were quietly enjoying spending time in the public spaces of the town. The PSPO gave the Police powers to deal with those causing trouble.

The Police's aim was not to criminalise young people, but to protect people's right to quiet enjoyment.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chairman then invited general questions from the public. A member of the public put the following questions:

Q1 – Where was this Meeting advertised?

A1 (Town Clerk) – It was advertised on the large poster holder on the front of the Town Hall, on social media, on the Council's noticeboards and on the Council's website.

Q2 – I would like to thank the Mayor and Councillors Hipsey and Ewings for their presentations.

However, I believe that;

- there should be a Lectern so speakers have somewhere to place their notes to allow them to speak more freely; and
- the reports provided were boring, and that the Mayor and Chairman of the Budget & Policy Committee should be able to speak without notes and not read a prepared speech, presumably drafted by someone else. In future, can I please ask that the reports are not written.

Q3 – I agree with the previous remarks, and would also like to commend Councillor Mann for the work undertaken to draft the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Can I please ask for the gross figures on the Council's income and expenditure?

A3 (Town Clerk) – the Budget for income for this year is iro £2.1m, with the Precept coming in at just over £1m.

The Council's property letting provides an income of iro £ 400,000, with the Pannier Market providing income of just under £ 400,000.

This year's Precept had increased by £ 100,000, with the General Reserves being reduced to keep the increase in the Precept to a minimum. Had the Council decided to protect its Reserves, the increase would have been iro 20%.

It was confirmed that other regulatory burdens being considered by Parliament could result in a 1.6% increase in costs, and that there may be the potential to future proof costs by working with West Devon Borough Council and Devon County Council but the Council would need to see if this could be cost neutral to the Council Tax payer.

Noted That the Town Clerk undertook to include Budget figures at the 2026 Annual Town Meeting.

Q4 – Are there any Council Advocates for the Police now?

A4 (Town Clerk) – No, any previous Advocates had not been appointed by the Council.

There being no more questions, the Mayor thanked everyone for coming to the Meeting.

The Meeting ended at 7.35pm.

Signed..... Dated.....
Town Mayor