

AGENDA ITEM 2

MINUTES of the ANNUAL TOWN MEETING of the TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL held on TUESDAY 19th MARCH, 2024 at 6.30pm at TAVISTOCK TOWN HALL

The following were present:

Councillor P Ward – Deputy Mayor (Chairman)

Councillors S Hipsey, Mrs A Johnson, Mrs U Mann, Mrs B Moody, J Moody, T Munro, R Poppe, B Smith and A Venning

9 members of the Public

1 member of the Press

In Attendance: Town Clerk, General Manager and Assistant to the Town Clerk

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Ms M Ewings, A Hutton (Mayor) and G Parker

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY SPEECH

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

2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 14th MARCH 2023

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

3. STATEMENT ON COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

The Vice Chairman of the Budget & Policy Committee (Councillor U Mann) 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. UPDATE ON TOWN AND OTHER POLICING MATTERS

An oral update was provided by Sgt. Tom Ottley (Neighbourhood Sergeant for Tavistock), which highlighted the three main causes for concern currently;

- Anti-social behaviour;
- Drugs;
- Road Safety

Sgt Ottley also confirmed that;

- there had been an increase in police staff in the area;
 - with an additional 5 patrol teams being introduced;
 - plus
 - 2 specialist Officers to deal with domestic violence issues; plus
 - 3 additional CID/Investigating Officers
- over the coming year staff alignment (Neighbourhood teams), would be taking place with staff working the same shifts (6 Officers/1 Sergeant);
- in his opinion, CCTV in the town could be a benefit, although he was aware of the cost implications of this;
- the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for The Meadows would soon be due to review. It was suggested however that the implementation of the PSPO had worked for that area, but had displaced the alcohol issues to other areas within the town. This included anti-social behaviour. He supported town wide application;
- Tavistock would be having a Public Enquiry Office at Abbey Rise. There were also plans to deliver monthly Police engagement sessions at the Policing Museum;
- Performance March 2023 – March 2024;
 - the Police were now making progress on forensic work to help identify the perpetrators involved in the recent dog attacks on sheep locally;
 - 1, 340 crimes had been recorded in the year, which was up by 0.9%;
 - there had been a reduction in burglaries and drug crime;
 - there had been a noticeable increase in shop lifting, which had led to an increase of 142%, however having spoken to shop keepers it appeared that previously there may have been under-reporting of these crimes. Now that more accurate data was available, this would become one of Sgt. Ottley's focuses over the coming year;
 - there had been an increase in driving offences over the year, which included both drink/drug driving, plus driving standards, which was deemed unacceptable;
 - anti-social behaviour over the past year equated to 6.3 incidences per 1, 000 of the population, which was much lower than many other areas.

Questions raised with Sgt. Ottley;

Q1 – Is there any data available with regards to road accidents caused as a direct result of pot holes?

A1 – There is no specific tick-box for pot holes, but there is one for road condition, so there will be some data available somewhere

Sgt. Ottley was thanked for making the time to attend the Meeting, and provide this useful information.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

Q1 – Mr Pete Squire has resigned from Tavistock Town Council and I have heard he was asked to resign for bringing the Council into disrepute. Is this true, and if so, why?

A1 (Town Clerk) – No such matters have been considered by the Town Council, and 'no' it is not correct. This is not a matter either raised with, or by, the Town Council.

Q2 – If it was not the Town Council, was it someone external and are they allowed to do so?

A2 (Town Clerk) – I would suggest you ask Mr Squire who is seated beside you. There is a Monitoring Officer at West Devon Borough Council who has responsibilities for such matters. However this is not a matter can appropriately be discussed further, as it relates to the circumstances of an identified individual.

Noted That – Mr Squire confirmed that the Town Council had not been responsible for his decision to resign from that Council.

Q3 – this is not a question, but I would like to express gratitude to the Town Councillors for the time, effort and experience they put into their role, which can be a very difficult one.

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

The Meeting ended at 7.15pm.

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