

AGENDA ITEM No. 3a

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL** held on **TUESDAY 6th FEBRUARY, 2024 at 6.44pm** 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 Hipsey, J Irvine, Mrs A Johnson, U Mann, N Martin, Mrs B Moody, J Moody, B Smith, P Squire, A Venning.

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

Prior to the commencement of the Meeting there was opportunity at **6.25pm** –

- for Members to pay tribute to former Councillor Dick Eberlie who had recently passed away, and to observe a Minute's Silence in his memory; and
- for a few moments of Quiet Reflection led by Corps Officer Theresa Conway of The Salvation Army in Tavistock.

COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

301. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors A Lewis and T Munro.

302. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made at this point in the Meeting, (however please see Minute No. 307 below).

303. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED THAT subject to the addition of 'the inclusion of' at Minute No. 261a – 2nd bullet point) to now read 'Reservations were expressed regarding the inclusion of Civic Events attendance...' the Minutes of the Meeting of Tavistock Town Council held on Tuesday 19th December, 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman (Appendix 1).

Noted That in response to a question (Minute No 259 refers), it was reported that no update had been received from either the Conservation Officer or County Archaeologist as to whether or not either had been provided with the relevant information to allow them to assess the proposal for on-street parking charges in Tavistock.

304. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS & QUESTIONS

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

ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION

305. TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET & PRECEPT 2024–2025

The Council considered the previous deliberations and recommendations of the Budget & Policy Committee (Minute no 278 only) together with a Schedule of Fees and Charges (previously circulated) and an updated Budget Summary and associated appendices (Appendices 2 - 4) to reflect the current tax base.

a) **Tavistock Town Council - Schedule of Fees & Charges 2024-25**

RESOLVED THAT the Schedule of Fees & Charges for the Financial Year 2024-25 be approved and adopted.

b) **Tavistock Town Council Budget & Precept 2024-25**

RESOLVED THAT the draft Tavistock Town Council:

i) Budget 2024–2025, as submitted;

ii) Precept 2024–2025 as submitted, in the sum of £999,718.00 (representing a 1.23% increase (equivalent to a rise of 4.81p per week) per Band D property equivalent);

be approved and adopted.

306. GENERAL FINANCE

The Council considered the following:-

i) Schedule of Payments

The Council received and considered copies of the monthly accounts as at 31st December, 2023 (Appendix 5) as listed on the Council website;

ii) Budget Monitoring Report

The Council received and considered a copy of the Budget Monitoring Report (Appendix 6) as at 31st December, 2023.

iii) External Audit Report

The Council received and noted the External Audit Report and Certificate 2022/23 (Appendix 7), which reported that the information submitted was in accordance with proper practices and no matters of concern had come to their attention.

Noted That appreciation was conveyed to the Finance Team and, in particular, the Council's Accountant for his diligence, over more than 20 years, in supporting the financial probity of the Council.

307. BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE

The Council considered the Minutes of the Meeting of the Budget & Policy Committee (Appendix 8) held on Tuesday 16th January, 2024 the recommendations being reported by rote.

RESOLVED THAT subject to the consideration of Minute No's 289 - 290 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 No's 275-277 and 279-288) be approved and adopted.

Noted That: the relevant provisions of the Tavistock Town Council Members Code of Conduct were brought to the attention of the Meeting, in particular, para 7.2.

- a) the following Declarations of Interest were made at this point, in respect of;
Minute No. 279 'Grants';
 - i. Councillor Mrs A Johnson in respect of the Grant Application from the Dartmoor Search & Rescue Team – Tavistock, by virtue of a close family association and linkages to the application; and
 - ii. Councillor Ms M Ewings in respect of the Grant Application from The New Tavistock Youth Café, by virtue of being a Trustee of the organisation; and
 - iii. Councillor U Mann in respect of Citizen's Advice and Tavistock Scrapstore, by virtue of association with both organisations; and
 - iv. Councillor B Smith in respect of The Lions Club of Tavistock Grant Application by virtue of his close association with the organisation.

The foregoing Members (excepting Councillor Mrs Ewings who remained in the room but did not speak or vote) left the room during consideration of the above item.

Furthermore, and having applied the tests listed those other Members, who had previously declared an interest in the foregoing applications – Councillors A Hutton, P Ward, N Martin, B Moody and J Moody noted same and remained in the room.

The vote was taken en bloc with no debate.

- b) Minute No. 282 Goose Fair 2023: Councillors A Hutton and B Smith declared an interest in this matter by virtue of their involvement with the organisation concerned.

308. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT & LICENSING COMMITTEE (DM&L)

The Council considered the following: -

- i) Development Management & Licensing Committee - Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 9th January, 2024 (Appendix 9) (Minute No's 265 - 274 inclusive) the recommendations being reported by rote;
- ii) Development Management & Licensing Committee – Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 29th January, 2024 (Appendix 10) (Minute No's 291 – 300 inclusive) the recommendations being reported by rote.

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

Noted That;

- Minute No. 294(b) – attention was drawn, by a Member, to Planning Application 0086/24/FUL and the visual appearance of the remediation measures proposed.
- Minute No. 298:- arising from consideration of same appreciation was expressed to the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group for a recent presentation, together with Plan progress which was outlined with particular reference to website content, Design Guide and upcoming consultation arrangements.

309. ON-STREET PARKING CHARGES

The Council received and noted a letter from Devon County Council (Appendix 11), received in response to the Town Council's letter of the 18th December, 2023.

In the discussion arising reference was made, inter alia, to:

- the assertion by the County Council that the Town Council's concerns had been addressed in correspondence on the 10th November, and in person on the 11th September at a meeting with the Clerks of the affected communities;
- a small action group which had been formed to keep the matter 'alive', now that the public Consultation period had closed. The aim of the group being to keep attention focused on, and seek engagement with the public, media and stakeholders. The Group planned to reach out to the other affected communities, and to help co-ordinate views;
- the County Council Cabinet Meeting scheduled for 13th March, 2024 when the matter was expected to be discussed and a decision reached. The action group was looking to take direct action by attending outside County Hall and carrying out a peaceful protest. More information would be brought forward following the group's meeting on 7th February;
- everyone was encouraged by the Action Group to write to the County Council, the local press and the local MP.

ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

310. SERVICE REPORTS

The Council received, for information, the reports of the General Manager, Pannier Market/Town Hall/Butchers' Hall and Works Department (Appendices 12 - 15).

i. General Manager's Report

Noted That:

- following a query raised, it was reported that no response had yet been received in respect of the Grant Application to Historic England (Betsy Grimbal's Tower refers). The General Manager undertook to follow this up;
- thanks were conveyed to the General Manager for the new lighting which had been installed on the front elevation of the Town Hall.

- ii. Pannier Market Report;
- iii. Works Department Report;

Noted That:

- following a query raised, it was confirmed that the start date for the installation of new play equipment in the Bannawell Play Area would be March 2024, with a known completion date of September.
- iv. Town Hall & Butchers' Hall Report.

311. FINANCE & OTHER MATTERS

The Council received, for information, the following:-

- a) Report of the Assistant to the Town Clerk (Appendix 16)

Noted That:

- it was confirmed that the Council's Property Services provider would be reviewed once a long-term matter had concluded and draft specifications for the future provision had been agreed by Council in due course;
 - Members' attention was drawn to;
 - the Strategic Plan Meeting scheduled for 13th February 2024; and
 - that the co-options to the vacant Councillor vacancies were planned to take place at the Council Meeting on 12th March 2024.
- b) West Devon Borough Councillor Report – Report from Borough Councillor U Mann (Appendix 17);
 - c) Devon County Councillor Report – Report from County Councillor Mrs D Sellis (Appendix 18);

Noted That reference was made to:

- An apology for absence from the County Councillor;
 - white lining works which had recently been undertaken around the area which appeared to have been completed on a 'random' basis, as various key areas in the town had not received attention;
 - roadworks which had recently been completed near Westbridge Cottages, with the welcome completion of the works 10 days early.
- d) The following updates or feedback were brought forward.
 - i. Representatives on outside bodies;

- Okehampton Rail – concerns were reported in connection with the recent transportation of railway carriages through the centre of the town, and the highways safety issues this caused;
 - Tavi Rail – it was reported that the group’s AGM was due to take place on 22nd February 2024, in The Robing Room at The Guildhall.
- ii. Feedback from Members following attendance at any training sessions – none brought forward.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

312. 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

313. BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE CONTINUED

(**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 No’s 289 – 290 of the Meeting of the Budget & Policy Committee (Appendix 8 refers) held on Tuesday 16th January, 2024, the recommendations being reported by rote.

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

314. PROPERTY, LEGAL & FINANCE MATTERS

(**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).

i. DEBTORS’ REPORT AND OTHER PROPERTY MATTERS

The Council considered and noted a list (Appendix 19) of all those with debts to the Council dating from earlier than the last Quarter Day and received updates accordingly.

The following Property updates were provided;

Cattle Market Lease – it was reported that the new Lease was now available for sign-off;

South West Water - 4 Pannier Market – it was reported that a more suitable solution was being investigated with regard to this issue including escalation of an extant complaint with the utility provider;

Fallen Tree – this matter was being progressed via the Council's Insurers;

Letting Services – as mentioned earlier in the Meeting (Minute No. 311(a) above refers), the re-tendering for the Council's Letting Services would be undertaken after a long-term tenancy matter had concluded.

ii. **TOWN HALL BAR STOCK AUDIT**

The Council considered and noted the Bar Stock Audit Report (Appendix 20)

Noted That an error had been identified in the Report. The closing stock figure under the 'Liquor Result' heading should read £ 4,433.20, not £ 44,389.20 as stated.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

315. PROPERTY, LEGAL & FINANCE MATTERS

(**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.

i) **LANDLORD TENANT MATTERS**

Tavistock Tennis Club – it was reported;

- that a request had been received in connection with proposals to change the Club from an association to a company limited by guarantee, which would require consideration being given to consent to assignments of the current Leases to the new Company;
- that the provisions of the current Lease in connection with same were reported and it was acknowledged the Council would require assurances with regard to the level of surety being offered, likely including that it was properly and adequately insured to protect the Council's position;
- it might be necessary to act promptly depending on the timing of any formal request;

- the further views of the Council's Solicitors were being sought.

ii) **OTHER LEGAL MATTERS**

No matters brought forward.

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

The Meeting closed at 7.50pm.

Signed:

Dated:

CHAIRMAN