

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL** held on **MONDAY 26th APRIL, 2021 at 5.00pm** conducted remotely via Zoom and YouTube

PRESENT Councillor Mrs A Johnson (Mayor)
Councillor A Hutton (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors Ms L Crawford, J Ellis, Mrs M Ewings,
A Lewis, Mrs U Mann, G Parker, Mrs G Parker, B Smith,
H Smith, A Venning, P Ward and P Williamson

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

Prior to the commencement of the Meeting;

- a Minute's silence was observed in memory of Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, who had recently passed away; and
- a few moments of Quiet Reflection were held, led by The Town Mayor.

290. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence had been received.

291. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made at this point in the Meeting. However, see Minute No. 298 below.

292. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

- a) RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of Tavistock Town Council held on Tuesday 9th March, 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman (Appendix 1).
- b) Matters arising – following a query it was reported that Kingdon House was the name of the Charity which had previously been based in a building of the same name. However, the name of the building had recently been changed to The Printworks, although the name of the Charity remained as previously and the premises were still known locally by many as Kingdon House.

293. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

No Public representations or questions had been received.

ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION

294. GENERAL FINANCE

a) Schedule of Payments

The Council received and considered a copy of the monthly accounts as at 28th February, 2021 (Appendix 2) as listed on the Council Website.

b) Budget Monitoring Report

The Council received and considered a copy of the Budget Monitoring Report (Appendix 3) as at 28th February, 2021.

295. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT & LICENSING COMMITTEE

The Council considered the following: -

- a) Development Management & Licensing Committee - Minutes of the Meeting held on 30th March, 2021 (Minute No's 281 - 289 inclusive) (Appendix 4);

Noted That - it was reported that;

- An update regarding the progress of the planning inquiry relating to the Dartmoor National Park Authority would be provided to a forthcoming Committee Meeting by a Member;
- a Member reported correspondence with the Local Planning Authority, in a capacity as Devon Association of Local Council's member of the World Heritage Site Partnership, regarding use of heritage statements and various planning applications - most especially regarding listed buildings within the World Heritage Site and the Conservation Area.

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of 30th March 2021, and the recommendations included in the foregoing report of the Committee be approved and adopted.

296. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2021-2022 & RELATED MATTERS

The Council received the report of the Town Clerk (Appendix 5), in connection with the above.

In the ensuing discussion particular reference was made to;

- the anticipated timeline for the outcome of a recent Court case regarding 'virtual meetings';
- benefits/drawbacks of various start times for Council and Committee Meetings and the potential impacts of electoral cycles, virtual vs physical formats etc;
- the practical impact of holding the Annual Meeting virtually on normal ceremonial activities, also the requirements of Covid regulatory and related hygiene compliance should physical meetings return together with prospective new meeting formats;
- whether adjustment could be made to either bring forward the 22nd June Council Meeting and/or arrange another on 1st June in view of the unavailability of a Member to attend the former.

RESOLVED THAT

- a) if the Regulations permitting the temporary holding of Meetings on a virtual basis were not extended, that the Annual Meeting of Council 2021 be held on a virtual basis, and be re-scheduled to Tuesday 4th May, 2021;
- b) the start time for Committee and Council Meetings be amended to 5.30pm subject to review prior to the next elections to the Council in 2023;
- c) subject to the addition of a Council Meeting on Tuesday 1st June, 2021 and the deferral of the Development Management & Licensing Committee Meeting from Tuesday 1st June to Wednesday 2nd June, 2021 that Appendix 1(a) to the report indicating the draft Calendar of Meetings for the 2021-22 Civic Year be commended to the Annual Meeting of Council for adoption.

Noted That – in a response to a query Officers undertook to undertake further enquiries to ascertain if the Meeting of Council scheduled for 22nd June might be cancelled.

297. POLICY/PRIORITIES

The Council received the Report of the Town Clerk (Appendix 6) pursuant upon the Council's recent priority scoping session.

RESOLVED THAT Tavistock Town Council;

A Supporting the town through and beyond Coronavirus;

- i) continue to embed Coronavirus support measures within its day to day operations as/where appropriate and achievable;
- ii) request the Budget & Policy Committee consider and recommend whether, and if so how, the Council grant scheme for 2021-22 might best be deployed and if/how it should continue to be targeted at those suffering distress arising from Coronavirus;
- iii) indicate its support for the re-election of the Tavistock Business Improvement District Ltd recognising the contribution it has made to supporting the business community generally and, most recently, during Coronavirus;
- iv) Communicate to principal authority partners its willingness in principle to engage in partnerships/initiatives (such as the 'levelling up' or 'community renewal' programmes) targeted at supporting the community through/past Coronavirus and developing local resilience.

B Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP);

Request the Development Management & Licensing Committee, in its capacity as organisational lead body for planning, development and the built environment, to:

- i) Consider the position with regard to whether to proceed with a NDP at the present time and make a recommendation to Council in principle accordingly;
- ii) In the event the answer is in the affirmative, the Committee to meet with WDBC Strategic Planning Officers to review the extant planning policy framework in the round (national and local and the implications of the mooted Government changes to planning), then to make further recommendation(s) to Council as to:
 - a. how best and when to proceed in view of the current position in respect of changes to the planning framework nationally;
 - b. identify those critical planning areas that the Committee considers essential a meaningful NDP should address

(i.e. those areas where the existing superior plans are inadequate or insufficient and/or where a NDP could appropriately add value through measures 'in conformity' with superior plans).

C Public Conveniences

Liaise with the Borough Council regarding how best the two organisations can work together to support good quality and financially sustainable Public Conveniences at the Bus Station and Guildhall Car Park for the Town.

Noted That attention was drawn, in particular, to an anticipated Borough Council initiative regarding the Community Renewal Fund, together with matters in connection with the Bus Station conveniences/the role of the Public Conveniences Sub-Committee.

ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

The following items had been circulated for information only: -

298. SERVICE REPORTS

The Council received and noted the reports of the General Manager, Town Hall/Butchers' Hall & Works Dep't, and the Pannier Market (Appendices 7 – 9 refer).

i. General Manager's Report;

Noted That- The General Manager confirmed (Guildhall Car Park):

- there was anticipated additional spend iro £12,000 on the surfacing if that were to include the area currently occupied by WDBC, and £6,000 for rectification to the ground lighting. These costs would be met from the Property Maintenance Budget.
- the resin surfacing to the traffic bearing areas would be completed on Tuesday 27th April, 2021

ii. Town Hall/Butchers' Hall and Works Department Report;

The General Manager reported that liaison had taken place with the Police regarding alcohol related anti-social behaviour in The

Meadows prior to, and exacerbated following, expiry of the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in January 2021. Following a meeting between the Police, WDBC and Town Council Officers there was consensus that the evidence warranted progression of an Order to which end it was agreed that

Tavistock Town Council endorse and commend to West Devon Borough Council and the Police the progression of a Public Spaces Protection Order, as supported by the Police locally on the accumulated evidence, affording the Police the power to control alcohol consumption in The Meadows, with a view to implementation at the earliest opportunity so as to address the significant and growing alcohol related problems/antisocial behaviour in that location.

It was further noted

- Councillors G Parker and H Smith declared a non-prejudicial interest in the item above, by virtue of association with the Sensory Garden;
- The background to the plans for reopening of the Town Hall and acceptable/safe activities in conjunction with resourcing and Government guidance as it emerged were discussed.

iii Pannier Market Report

Staff and traders were commended on the recent successful re-opening of the Pannier Market.

299. FINANCE AND OTHER MATTERS

The Council received, for information, the following: -

- a) Report of the Assistant to the Town Clerk (Appendix 10);

RESOLVED THAT Tavistock Town Council support the removal of the BT Payphone Kiosk, at Hazel Road, Tavistock due to the very limited usage over the preceding 12 months.

Noted That – the Assistant to the Town Clerk;

- undertook to ascertain if the number of calls provided included emergency calls;

- advised where on Tavistock Town Council’s website the page could be found with regard to the Sir Francis Drake Statue;
 - Office staff were commended on their prompt response during the recent Operation Forth Bridge process.
- b) Town Hall & Markets Consultative Group Meeting - Notes of the Meeting of the Town Hall & Markets Consultative Group held on 23rd March, 2021 (Appendix 11);
- c) Whitchurch Down Consultative Group – Notes of the Meeting of the Whitchurch Down Consultative Group held on 13th April, 2021 (Appendix 12)

Noted That reference was made to correspondence by a Member in a personal capacity with the Local Planning Authority in connection with whether planning consent was required regarding uses undertaken under demise on parts of Whitchurch Down.

- d) Tavistock BID Company – Minutes of the Meetings held on 17th February, 2021 (Appendix 13)

The BID Company was commended for the amount of work undertaken regarding the re-opening of the town, and how attractive the window vinyls were which had been erected in vacant properties.

A query was raised in connection with Item 7 in the Minutes, and it was confirmed to it that Tavistock Town Council had provided/continued to provide significant support to its tenants, but the Minutes had been written prior to the BID Company being informed of same. It was anticipated that the BID Company would update its members to that effect at its next meeting.

- e) West Devon Borough Councillor Report – Councillor S Hipsey (Appendix 14);

Noted That- an event entitled ‘Have I Got Planning News for You?’ had been delivered to Members of West Devon

Borough Council. It was suggested that perhaps the Joint Local Plan Team could be approached to ask if they would be willing to deliver the same event to Tavistock Town Councillors.

Accordingly, an approach would be made to request Plymouth City Council deliver same to the Town Council via a DM&L Meeting to which all Members of Council be invited (see also 297(B) above).

f) Project Update:

- i. Tavistock Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme (THI) – no update required to be given;
- ii. Guildhall Gateway Centre Project – the General Manager confirmed that the gas connection had now been completed, with a gas meter installation now being required. This however would not delay the re-opening of the Guildhall Car Park.

Delays had been incurred in recent months, but it was hoped the project was now nearing completion.

g) Updates

i. From Representatives on outside bodies

- Kingdon House - some activities had restarted, which had been well received. The new toilets had also been welcomed.
- Tavistock Community Football Association – anti-social behaviour and vandalism had also been suffered in this area, appreciation was expressed to a Councillor for work in that connection.
- Tavistock Community Gardening – some Members had been working with this group, together with the General Manager. The Blue Heart Scheme was also being progressed, which would help highlight the work Tavistock Town Council had undertaken with regard re-wilding certain areas, including Celle Garden

ii. From Members who had attended training session;

- Three Members had attended the recent DALC Social Media training session;
- It was reported that a North Devon group had been installing solar panels/batteries, particularly in social

housing properties, which had helped reduce utilities costs for those residents. It was presumed that any such project locally would appropriately be delivered by West Devon Borough Council and Livewest.

300. COMMUNICATIONS OR REPORTS AS MAY BE SUBMITTED BY THE MAYOR

- a) The Mayor and Deputy Mayor had recently undertaken the Town Clerk's Annual Appraisal;
- b) The Mayor conveyed her thanks to fellow Councillors and Officers for their immense support to her over her two-year Mayoral term which was nearing completion.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

301. 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.

The Meeting then temporarily adjourned at 7.00pm.

The Meeting reconvened at 7.23pm attendance by Councillors and authorised Officers at the Confidential reconvened part of the Meeting was accessed via Zoom.

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs A Johnson (Mayor)

Councillor A Hutton (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors Ms L Crawford, J Ellis, Mrs M Ewings, Mrs U Mann, Mrs G Parker, G Parker, B Smith, H Smith, A Venning, P Ward and P Williamson.

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk, General Manager, Assistant to the Town Clerk

DECLARATION On entering the Confidential section - each Councillor present was asked to declare to the Mayor that there were no other persons present, nor would be present, who were not entitled to be (hearing or seeing), and/or recording the Meeting. All Members made a positive Declaration.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION

302. PROPERTY, LEGAL, STAFFING AND 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 a list (Appendix 15) of all those with debts to the Council dating from earlier than the last quarter day and received updates accordingly including regarding a Small Claims matter.

Noted That the report also included an update outlining the position of those commercial tenants who had taken advantage of the Council's COVID Deferred Rent Scheme, with a further verbal update being provided.

ii. PROPERTY UPDATE

The Council received an oral update on works which had been undertaken on a Council property, without the prior knowledge of or notification to the Council. Investigations were in hand.

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

The Meeting closed at 7.33pm

Signed:

Dated:
CHAIRMAN