

AXBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL
DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF AXBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON
MONDAY 17TH MAY 2010 IN THE TOWN HALL, THE SQUARE, AXBRIDGE

Meeting commenced: 7.30 p.m.

Meeting concluded: 10.02 p.m.

Present: Councillors J Gall (Mayor), D Bratt, Mrs K Browne, B Hamblin (Deputy Mayor), Mrs P Ham, Mrs V Isaac, I Laken, P Passey, M Taylor, Mrs J Trotman and C Walkling (from minute 07/10)

Apologies for absence: Councillor J Lukins (representing Council at another meeting) and Mrs E Scott

Also in attendance: Mrs V L Brice (Town Clerk) together with County Councillor Mrs Hill, PC P Wills and 1 member of the public (part of meeting)

5/10 Minutes of the Council Meetings – 19th April 2010 and 10th May 2010

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the council meetings held on 19th April and 10th May 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6/10 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Gall – declared a personal and prejudicial interest, as Mayor, in the item relating to the Mayor's Allowance and indicated that he would hand over to the Deputy Mayor, and leave the room, during consideration of this item (minute 10/10(b) refers).

Councillor Mrs Isaac – declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the cricket club, being involved with the club.

7/10 Reports

County Councillor Mrs Hill	Reported on the Somerset County Council Plan 2010-13 which focused on people, place and prosperity. She would meet officers on Wednesday regarding the street lighting project. Additional funding of £300,000 had been made available for highways and she would enquire whether this could facilitate the completion of the bus stop at Cheddar Road.
District Councillor Mrs Scott	No report
Police	PC Wills explained the benefits of, and procedure for, implementing "No cold calling zones" and sought support from the Town Council to issue letters to all householders to progress this and, subject to public support, to discuss the siting of signs (at no cost to the Council). He referred to parking regulations for The Square, which included Sunday, and meant that cars could not park in The Square for Church Services (being restricted to just one hour). He suggested that the Council may wish to consider this. Problems with double parking along Cheddar Road and Houlgate Way were also discussed and the Police would be happy to meet with the Town Council and Somerset Highways to consider this matter. The Clerk would provide a list of events to PCSO Susan Venn Adams. RESOLVED: That the Council supports the police in progressing "No cold calling Zones" and agrees to letters being sent out with the June OYEZ.

8/10 Outside Representative Reports

Group	Report
Axbridge Action Group	AGM held on 5 th May. Would continue to pursue the recommendations in the Streets and Parking Improvement Plan and had awarded funding to Axbridge Guides.
Axbridge & District Museum Trust	The outcome of the grant application to Sedgemoor District Council was still awaited. The leaflet was proving a success.
Chamber of Commerce	Had responded to Sedgemoor District Council's Core

	Strategy. Updated on fundraising and future meetings.
Cheddar Valley Cluster Group	Next meeting on 20 th May 2010.
Farmers Markets	No report
Pageant	Updated on fundraising events, donations, costumes and associated events during the weekend. Rehearsals would start in early June, with tickets available on line. Councillor Mrs Ham would check if there was a specific role for councillors. It was hoped to be able to accommodate Axbridge Cricket Club's request to hold a cricket match on the Furlong on the Saturday evening.
School Governor	A leaving do was being planned for the Headteacher. Governors had visited the school and the process to appoint a new Headteacher was on-going.
Somerset Assoc. of Local Councils	Nothing to report.
Somerset Market Towns Forum	Next meeting on 16th June in Wellington. Councillor Trotman (Chairman of SMTF) would attend – cost £10.00
Sports and Social	Fun Day on 17 th July was being organised. Anyone wishing to have a stall should contact Mrs Ham.
Town Trust	Planting to be carried out in Blue, Red and Gold to recognise the Centenary of the Guide Movement.
Other Representative Reports	<u>Callow Rock and Shipham Quarries Liaison Group</u> – update on last meeting. <u>Carnival</u> – will be on 25 th September - theme “Mardi Gras”. New committee members had been appointed. <u>Sedgemoor Parish and Town Council Workshop</u> – the meeting had tried to establish which services local councils may consider supporting financially. Will be further meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 8.03pm for Public Participation

[One member of the public addressed the Council regarding Axbridge Playmates]

The meeting resumed at 8.06pm

9/10 Planning and Licences Committee

a) Meetings held on 5th May 2010 and 17th May 2010

Members received the minutes of the meeting held on 5th May for information. A meeting had been held just prior to Council to consider one application, on which members had no observations and had not felt it to warrant a planning application.

10/10 Administration and Finance

a) Report of Administration and Finance Advisory Group – May 2010

Members received this report - the key issues being set out below.

b) Mayor's Allowance

Councillor Gall, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, in this item left the meeting. Councillor Hamblin took the Chair.

The previous budget had been increased by £100 to accommodate tickets for the Mayor's Banquet.

RESOLVED: that the Mayors Allowance of £1,350, as budgeted, be paid to Councillor Gall.

Councillor Gall returned to the meeting and resumed the Chair.

c) Town Crier's Honoraria

Members wished to thank Mrs Chamberlain for her hard work in representing the Town, as Town Crier, and wished to receive a regular report on the events she attends for inclusion in OYEZ.

RESOLVED: that the Town Crier's honorarium of £125, as budgeted, be paid to Mrs Chamberlain - with a letter from the Council thanking her for her support.

d) Internal Audit

The internal auditor had found the books to be well kept and completely in order. Members congratulated the Clerk on her hard work. The group had noted that the level of reserves should be increased and would endeavour to address this during the budgeting process.

RESOLVED: that a letter be sent to the Internal Auditor, thanking her for her work in auditing the Council and advising that the Town Council will address the issue of reserves when budgeting over the next few years.

e) External Audit

Members received and considered Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Return "Accounting Statements" and "Annual Governance Statement" together with an explanation of the variances for the figures which had increased/reduced by 15%. The Council thanked Councillor Taylor, in particular, for his work on the explanation of variances.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that Section 1 of the Annual Return be approved and signed by the Mayor and the Clerk;
- 2) that Section 2 of the Annual Return be completed by confirming the Council's agreement to each statement (box 9 – not applicable) and be signed by the Mayor and the Clerk; and
- 3) that the variances statement, as revised, be approved by the Council for inclusion within the Annual Return.

f) Axbridge Playmates

Members discussed the application from Axbridge Playmates which was seeking grant funding of £1,000 to ensure that the group could continue to meet its expenditure, if not fully booked. £300 had been granted by Axbridge Parochial Charities. Members felt that grants should be used to support viable charities/groups which provided benefit to the community. Members discussed the work of the group and its merits and concerns, in particular, relating to the grants award process.

RESOLVED: that £200 be awarded to Axbridge Playmates to meet the majority of the cost of the premises and that, in April each year, the Council make it known through OYEZ that a small budget is available for grant applications from local groups.

g) Financial Monthly Report and Payment of Invoices

The financial report for May 2010 including all payments agreed during the meeting is set out below. The Vodafone bill had not yet been received but a new contract had been negotiated.

Mrs V Brice	Clerks salary (May)	886.65	S.112(2) LGA 1972
Mr D Hogarth	Furlong Manager (May)	178.96	S.112(2) LGA 1972
Post Office	NI and Tax (May)	157.92	
Somerset County Council	Pension contribution (May)	246.90	LG Pension Scheme Regs 1997
Mr R Hembrow*	Grass Cutting (March)	349.21	S.10 Open Spaces Act 1906
Mr A Laken	Town Maint. Cont.	240.00	
Fairlands Middle School	Photocopying and paper	64.46	
Lloyds TSB Commercial Finance*	Printing of OYEZ (April)	45.50	
Mrs P Pollard	Internal Audit (09/10)	99.60	
G & J Property and Land Maintenance	Move top soil at Furlong (BMX)	400.00	
Mr J Gall	Mayor's Allowance	1,350.00	
Mrs G Y Chamberlain	Town Crier's Honorarium	125.00	
Axbridge Playmates Playgroup	Donation	200.00	
EDF Energy (Changing Rooms Ac)	Electricity	36.00	

	Total:	4380.20	* on receipt of invoice

RESOLVED: that the expenditure detailed above be approved.

11/10 Leisure and Recreation Advisory Group

a) Report of the Leisure and Recreation Advisory Group

Members received this report - the key issues being set out below.

The Chairman would contact the contractor to chase up a site meeting regarding the installation of the sports wall and would pass the Play Area and Furlong Safety Check Log to the Clerk. The Clerk was asked to contact Sedgemoor District Council to request that they cut the hedge along the footpath from Penn Way.

b) Levelled BMX area

The BMX area had been levelled and the soil moved to the side of the Furlong. It was hoped that the soil would self seed but members expressed concern at the current situation and the matter would be considered by the Group.

12/10 Highways Advisory Group

a) Report of the Highways Advisory Group –May 2010

Members received this report updating the Council on a number of highways issues.

b) Feasibility Study – Footway from Meadow Street Car Park to The Square

It was noted that the only part of the Streets and Parking Improvement Plan which had received full support of the Council was the improvement of the footpath link from Meadow Street Car Park to The Square. Neither principal authority seemed to be able to resolve this matter and it was suggested that a grant be sought to enable the Council to employ a highways engineer to carry out a feasibility study on improving both pedestrian access and the appearance of this area.

RESOLVED: that the Council seek to obtain a grant for this work and, if successful, draw up a brief and employ an independent specialist to carry out the feasibility study.

c) Severe (Cold) Weather Action Plan

Members considered the above plan and thanked Councillor Lukins for his co-operation in this matter.

RESOLVED: that the Severe (Cold) Weather Plan be approved.

d) Disabled Parking in The Square

Members discussed, in detail, the request for a disabled bay on the west hand side of Axbridge Square (by the Chemist/Co-op). Whilst members appreciated the difficulties being experienced by the disabled driver, the Council had given careful consideration to the siting of the current disabled bay by the Town Hall. Members considered this to be the best location, giving central access to, and serving the maximum number of places within the Square, and being positioned in such a way to assist drivers in parking and getting out of their vehicles. This bay would shortly be enforceable by a Traffic Regulation Order. Members did not support the creation of an additional disabled bay within the Square, given the relatively low number of parking spaces available and the high demand for parking in this area.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk responds to Somerset Highways accordingly (a copy of the response to be sent to the lady initiating this request).

e) Lighting – Church Steps and Back Lane

County Councillor Mrs Hill would be meeting with the officer on Wednesday.

f) General Highways Issues

Double Parking along Cheddar Road – the situation was being monitored to establish any peak problem times.

Bench in Chestnut Avenue – a local family wished to install a memorial bench on the grassy bank at Chestnut Avenue. Further information was being sought regarding installation costs/procedures, on-going maintenance etc and members were invited to put forward any other suggestions.

A38 Exhibition –members received a brief update on the Drop In Session at Cross, which had been well organised and attended.

Bus Stop – Cheddar Road – members noted that the funding was no longer available to finish this project. This would be pursued with Somerset County Council.

13/10 Cemeteries, Allotments and Open Spaces Advisory Group

a) Town Maintenance Contractor report

The Town Maintenance Contractor had worked on the Furlong, Back Lane, The Square and in Starr's Close. Members welcomed the proposal of a seat on this area of land and suggested contacting the family wishing to provide a memorial bench to see if this location would be of interest to them.

b) Allotment Rents

The Clerk advised that the rents for one section of the allotments had previously been increased due to the cost of providing fencing around the area and that it may now be appropriate to reduce these rents. The income/expenditure needed to be analysed. The remainder of the invoices could be issued in June, as usual.

RESOLVED: that this item be included on the agenda for the next Council meeting and be raised at the Administration and Finance Advisory Group, if appropriate, in the meantime.

14/10 Personnel

a) Report of the Personnel and Protocol Advisory Group – May 2010

Members noted the report.

b) Clerks Payment – Specific Hours/Projects

This had been subject to a previous report.

RESOLVED: that the Council agree, in principle, that the Clerk be paid for extra hours for specific work, as long as the costs remain within budget.

c) Co-option

Members considered a proposal to alter the form to establish the applicant's key areas of interest/expertise.

RESOLVED: that the co-option application form be revised accordingly.,

d) Civic Lunch

Members discussed inviting local dignitaries to parade as part of the pageant and whether this should be combined with a Civic Lunch. The Pageant Committee had indicated that it would be happy to include a parade but did not wish to offer seats free of charge.

The Council felt that the pageant offered a great opportunity for Mayoral involvement and increased publicity, but did not consider it appropriate to invite local dignitaries if they would be required to pay. If the Pageant Committee did, however, allow free tickets, the Council would invite donations from those attending. This would be raised with the carnival committee. If it was not possible to accommodate this request, it was proposed that a pageant flyer be sent to local dignitaries, should they wish to attend on an informal basis.

The Civic Lunch was a thank you to local dignitaries and, as such, should be free of charge. Members noted that the Carnival Committee would welcome the opportunity to incorporate the Civic Lunch as part of the Carnival, which had been successful last year.

15/10 Meadow Street Car Park Management Group

Members received the above report.

16/10 Axbridge Promotions and Advisory Group

The group was working on the welcome pack. Two members of the public had expressed an interest in managing the website and this was being pursued. A rota to set up the community table at Farmer's Markets was circulated. All members were encouraged to assist.

A letter from the Modern Town Archivist regarding a budget for copying photographs would be passed to the group for consideration.

17/10 Election of Councillors to Standing Committees and Advisory Groups of the Council, as representatives for particular matters, as representatives on outside bodies, on a joint committee and the appointment of honorary officers

These appointments were considered in detail.

RESOLVED: that the appointments be made in accordance with Membership Schedule 2010/11, which includes the appointment of the honorary offices (Appendix A)

18/10 Contingencies and Emergency Plan

Councillor Hamblin would obtain a copy of Cheddar Parish Council's Contingency and Emergency Plan for consideration by the Council.

19/10 Green Issues/Recycling

Members welcomed the information on the disposal of recycling materials. The Clerk would find out about any open days, rather than arranging a specific visit for councillors. Information on recycling at St Johns Court would be drawn to the attention of the management committee.

20/10 General Correspondence and Diary Dates

The Council had received a list of correspondence and diary dates. It was possible that funding for projects may be available from the Police. It was noted that the Armed Forces Day would be held in the morning of 26th June 2010, to which members were encouraged to attend. This would be publicised in OYEZ, on the notice board and, possibly, at the Farmers Market.

Chairman

Dated

Axbridge Town Council - Membership Schedule 2010/2011

Committee	Membership	2010/11
Part 1 - Standing Committees		
Appeals Panel	3 councillors (not on Personnel)	Will only appoint if required – to ensure no conflict of interest.
Personnel and Protocol Committee	New Committee – possible Mayor, Deputy Mayor (ex officio) and 3 other members Includes grievance and disciplinary role	Jeremy Gall (Mayor) Baz Hamblin (Deputy Mayor) Kate Browne Pauline Ham Paul Passey
Planning and Licences Committee	Standing Committee Mayor (ex officio) Deputy Mayor (ex officio) 3 (minimum) other councillors	Jeremy Gall (Mayor) Baz Hamblin (Deputy Mayor) Pauline Ham Ian Laken Mike Taylor Craig Walkling
Part 2 – Advisory Groups		
Administration and Finance Advisory Group	Mayor (ex officio) Deputy Mayor (ex officio) 1 (minimum) other councillor Clerk No co-options of non-councillors	Jeremy Gall (Mayor) Baz Hamblin (Deputy Mayor) Kate Browne Jennifer Trotman Mike Taylor Vicky Brice (Clerk & RFO)
Axbridge Promotional Advisory Group	Mayor (ex-officio) Deputy Mayor (ex-officio) 3 other councillors to comprise those members responsible for the website, newsletter “OYEZ” and twinning representative	Jeremy Gall (Mayor) Baz Hamblin (Deputy Mayor) Kate Browne Paul Passey Jennifer Trotman <u>Specialist Representative</u> Website representative (when known)
Axbridge Youth Partnership	Chairman: to be Deputy Mayor Mayor (ex officio) 3 (minimum) other councillors May co-opt specialist representatives	Will only appoint if required.
Car Park Management Temporary Advisory Group	Mayor (ex officio) Deputy Mayor (ex officio) 3 (minimum) other councillors Clerk	Jeremy Gall (Mayor) Baz Hamblin (Deputy Mayor) Paul Passey Liz Scott Jennifer Trotman Mike Taylor Vicky Brice (Clerk)
Cemeteries, Allotments and Open Spaces Advisory Group	Mayor (ex officio) Deputy Mayor (ex officio) 2 (minimum) other councillors May co-opt people with experience or expertise in cemetery matters	Jeremy Gall (Mayor) Baz Hamblin (Deputy Mayor) Kate Browne Val Isaac Jim Lukins <u>Specialist Representatives</u> Edith Channon Priscilla Chard
Highways Advisory Group	Mayor (ex officio) Deputy Mayor (ex officio) 3 (minimum) other councillors	Jeremy Gall (Mayor) Baz Hamblin (Deputy Mayor) Val Isaac Ian Laken Paul Passey Liz Scott Mike Taylor
Leisure and Recreation Advisory Group (inc Changing Rooms)	Mayor (ex officio) Deputy Mayor (ex officio) 1 (minimum) other councillor	Jeremy Gall (Mayor) Baz Hamblin (Deputy Mayor) Dennis Bratt Pauline Ham Ian Laken Jennifer Trotman Craig Walkling Mike Taylor

<u>Part 3 – Representatives</u>	
Council Representatives	
Axbridge Streets and Parking Improvement Plan Steering Group	Paul Passey and Mike Taylor
Emergency Planning	Dennis Bratt
Footpath Matters inc Parish Path Liaison Officer	Jim Lukins
Council Representation and Liaison on outside bodies	
A38 Joint Parish Meeting	Any three members of the highways group, sub to availability
Axbridge Action Group	Baz Hamblin
Axbridge and District Museum Trust (one appointment)	Baz Hamblin
Chamber of Commerce	Baz Hamblin
Cheddar Valley Cluster Group	Councillor Taylor (Chair), Hamblin and Vicky Brice (Clerk)
Environmental Group	Mike Taylor/Pauline Ham
Farmers' Market	Liz Scott
Local Action for Rural Communities – Local Action Group	Baz Hamblin
Mendip Hills AONB Partnership Committee	Liz Scott
Pageant	Pauline Ham/Baz Hamblin
Quarry Liaison Committee	Liz Scott/Val Isaac
School Governor/Town Council representative	Kate Browne
Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC)	Mike Taylor, Paul Passey and Vicky Brice, Town Clerk
Somerset County Youth Service -Sedgemoor Area Youth Office	Dennis Bratt
Somerset Market Towns Forum – representative and website editor	Jennifer Trotman (Chair), Baz Hamblin, Vicky Brice (Town Clerk) and website editor (when known)
Sports and Social Committee (up to 3 appointments)	Dennis Bratt , Pauline Ham and Craig Walkling
<u>Part 4 – Joint Committee</u>	
Town Trust/Town Council Liaison Committee	Jeremy Gall (Mayor), Pauline Ham, Paul Passey and Mike Taylor (Liz Scott – substitute)
<u>Part 5 – Honorary Offices</u>	
Sergeant at Mace	Mike Day
Town Bailiff	Richard Cottis
Town Crier	Vonnie Chamberlain
Keeper of the Bells	Dave Callow
Modern Town Archivist	Maggie Tur