Ashburton Town Council

MINUTES OF THE FULL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON
TUESDAY 13th FEBRUARY 2024 At 7.30pm
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE TOWN HALL

Present: Cllr. Giles (Chair)
Cllrs. Bovey, Hext, Hogbin, Nutley, Pickvance, Searight, Turner, and Wood.

In attendance: Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Office Administrator, Portreeve and two members of the public.

015/24 Apologies.
The Clerk noted apologies had been received from Cllrs. Distin, Parker and Tinne, all due to prior engagements. Cllr. Giles proposed that the apologies be accepted; seconded by Cllr. Hogbin. All in favour.

01624 Declarations of interest.
There were no declarations made.

017/24 Public comments/statements.
There were none.

018/24 To receive and approve the minutes of the previous meeting on 9th January 2024.
Cllr. Giles confirmed the minutes had been circulated. They were duly signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Cllr. Turner asked Councillors if they would agree to her investigating obtaining funding from Heritage Funding to cover the repair to the clock and tower.

ACTION

019/24 To receive the Mayor's Report.
Cllr. Giles read her report; (Appendix 1).

020/24 To receive the Police Report.
The Clerk reported that the report had been circulated by email (Appendix 2), and advised that the new PC (Claire Hurrell is due to come into the Office next week.

021/24 Teignbridge District Council Report.
Cllr. Nutley reported that the Council Tax rise for Teignbridge has been held at 2.99% and proceeded to read his report. (Appendix 3).
The Clerk presented an email received from Cllr. Rogers about a forthcoming visit by the Managing Director of Teignbridge District Council.
Cllr. Searight noted that the Post Office is currently open from 6am until 9pm to allow residents to withdraw cash due to the vandalism of the ATM machine. A new ATM is due to be fitted before the end of March.

022/24 Devon County Council report.
The Clerk read the report from Cllr. Parker-Khan and reported that she will try to have a meeting with the new chair of DNP planning. (Appendix 4)

ACTION

Cllr. Hogbin raised the parking situation in Woodlands Road noting that the school have been very proactive with their caretaker putting out cones at drop-off and pick-up times.
Cllr. Wood noted that the Housing Needs Assessment is so important for the future of Kenwyn.
Cllr. Pickvance noted that development on the Kenwyn site will require roads and drainage and the Council must ensure these issues are raised at the planning stage.

023/24 To receive the report from the Chair of Finance Committee.
Cllr. Turner confirmed the minutes had been circulated and proposed the minutes be accepted as a true record. Seconded by Cllr. Bovey. All in favour.

024/24 To receive the report from the Chair of Planning Committee.
There was no planning report to present. Cllr. Searight explained the meaning of a Certificate of Lawfulness as these are being requested more frequently.

025/24 To receive the report from the Chair of General Purpose Committee.
Cllr. Wood reported that the minutes had been circulated and proposed the minutes be accepted as a true record. Seconded by Cllr. Searight. All in favour.

026/24 To receive the report from the Ashburton Chamber of Trade.
The Chair stepped down in October 2023 and there have not been any nominations for a new Chair since. The interim Chair presented her report. (Appendix 5).
Cllr. Nutley asked how the current roadworks have affected trade in the Town Centre. Some businesses are as much as 70% down on the same period last year and the compensation claims are not straight forward to complete, generally needing 3 years accounts to be attached.
Cllrs. Giles, Hogbin and Wood all expressed thanks for the hard work and commitment being displayed and councillors expressed their wish for this to be taken forward for further discussion at GP.

027/24 Correspondence

i. To agree the use of the Town Council Logo in The Growing Space.
Cllr. Giles proposed that this be accepted; seconded by Cllr. Wood. The Clerk will notify Growing Space.

ACTION

ii. To agree purchase of bench with donation from Rotary Club.
Rotary have asked if they can buy a bench for St Lawrence Lane through the Council. The Clerk asked Councillors if they are prepared to add a bench to the asset register. Cllr. Turner reported that the bench in question had been greatly missed. Cllr. Nutley proposed that a bench be purchased; seconded by Cllr. Hext. All in favour with one abstention (Cllr. Pickvance).

ACTION

iii. To agree the date and topic for the DNPA Link Member visit.

Cllr. Giles proposed agreement for this visit; seconded by Cllr. Hogbin. All in favour.

028/24 To agree the draft letter re Ashburton Town Lottery closure.

Cllr. Searight requested the background information regarding the Lottery closure. The Clerk explained the multiple reasons for its decline. Cllr. Turner proposed the draft letter be accepted; seconded by Cllr. Nutley. All in favour.

ACTION

029/24 To receive an update from the website working group and approve the brief for the website upgrade.

Cllr. Hogbin reported that there have been 2 website meetings so far and reiterated that the website is owned by the Town Council. There are two proposals from the website designer, the first that an events calendar is automatically updated from the Information Centre, Town Hall and Arts Centre. The second being to redesign the home page. The Town Council has been granted £3,000 from the feasibility monies from the UKSPF Town Centre and Market Fund, to be spent by the end of the month. Cllr. Hogbin proposed the brief be accepted; seconded by Cllr. Turner. All in favour.

030/24 Councillors' reports of attendance at sub committees and meetings of other organisations.

Cllr. Turner reported on her attendance at the Moorlands Trustee meeting on 30th January. (Appendix 6)

Cllr. Wood reported that the Land Management working group have met. A survey of the trees in Bullivers Way has been completed. The Ranger is dealing with ongoing problem with Himalayan Balsam. Cllr. Tinne is to speak to the planning officer at DNP regarding possible parking solutions in Chuley Road.

ACTION

Cllr. Wood reported on behalf of the swimming pool that the pool is now drained, and a couple of leaks have been located. Various repair options were discussed.

Cllr. Searight attended the inaugural meeting of the Food Festival which is planned for August/September in St Lawrence Lane.

031/24 To suggest content for the Ashburton Town Council media post.

Cllr. Turner has completed an article for Around Ashburton. Other Councillors can let her know if they wish something added.

032/24 Matters raised by Councillors for information only or on a future agenda.

Cllr. Turner reported that the first Councillors' Surgery is this Saturday with others planned for 2nd April and 5th June. Organisation Day is 9th March 10am – 2pm.

Growing Space will be doing the refreshments. Cllr. Turner also asked that Precept and Christmas Lights be added to the Finance agenda.

ACTION

Cllr. Wood asked that Tree Survey, Himalayan Balsam, Parking and Benches are all added to the GP agenda.

ACTION

Cllr. Searight asked that Loss of Business because of the roadworks is added to the GP agenda.

ACTION

Cllr. Giles thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 21:02

Signed _____ Date _____

Chair

Ashburton Town Council

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Actions arising

018/24	**To receive and approve the minutes of the previous meeting on 9th January 2024.** Cllr. Turner to investigate obtaining funding from Heritage to cover the repair to the clock and tower.	
022/24	**Devon County Council report.** Clerk to arrange a meeting with the new Chair of DNP Planning.	
027/24 **i** **ii**	**Correspondence.** **To agree the use of the Town Council Logo in The Growing Space** The Clerk to notify Growing Space that the use of the logo is acceptable. **To agree purchase of bench with donation from Rotary Club.** Clerk's Office to organise purchase of bench.	
028/24	**To agree the draft letter re Ashburton Town Lottery closure.** Clerk's Office to send letters as appropriate.	
030/24	**Councillors' reports of attendance at sub committees and meetings of other organisations.** Cllr. Tinne to speak to the planning officer at DNP regarding possible parking solutions in Chuley Road.	
032/24	**Matters raised by Councillors for information only or on a future agenda.** Cllr. Turner asked that Precept and Christmas Lights be added to the Finance agenda. Cllr. Wood asked that Tree Survey, Himalayan Balsam, Parking and Benches are all added to the GP agenda. Cllr. Searight asked that Loss of Business because of the roadworks is added to the GP agenda.	

Item 019/24

Appendix 1 - Mayors Report February 2024

This past month I have attended 3 events, the RBL Burns night, The Pensioner's Association AGM and The Twinning AGM. All 3 events are now very much in the annual calendar of the town and as mayor I was very pleased to be invited. These associations are but a few that form the vibrant community that is Ashburton.

Appendix 2 - Neighbourhood Police Report

Item 020/24

Ashburton Town Council

January 2024

This report covers the area of the Ashburton.

The area includes the town of Ashburton, its road network including a section of the A38.

The area is served by the Neighbourhood Policing team, working out of Ashburton Police Office, Conway House.

The team is led by Sector Inspector Sean Roper and Police Sergeant Seth Saunders.

We are pleased to announce PC 2367 Claire **HURRELL** has been selected as the new Neighbourhood Beat Manager for Ashburton and Buckfastleigh.

Claire begins the role on **12th February 2024** and we hope to introduce ourselves personally at one of the Town Council Meetings in the near future.

PC 2367 Claire Hurrell

PCSO 30577 Tamzin Campbell-Moseley

January

In the period **1st of January 2024 to 31st January 2024** there were 16 criminal offences recorded for this area.

- 1- Sexual Assault
- 5- Assaults
- 1- vehicle Interference
- 1- Theft from vehicle
- 1- Drink Drive
- 2-Malicious Communications
- 1- Sexual Offences
- 1- Stalking
- 1 Theft of Vehicle
- 2- Criminal Damage

Police also responded to over 61 non crime incidents across this area in January.

These included, road traffic related matters, domestics, concerns for welfare, missing persons and firearms management.

Tamzin Campbell-Moseley

Police Community Support Officer 30577

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Item 21/24

Teignbridge District Council Report.

District Councillors Report 13th February 2024

This month the council considers to resolve and approve the proposed council tax base for 2023/24

We have been supporting residents through the cost-of-living crisis, boosting job opportunities, combatting climate change and protecting the local environment are the priorities of the draft budget currently being considered.

Residents were encouraged to comment on the council's priorities via its annual budget survey. The majority of Teignbridge residents look set to have an expected council tax rise cancelled out thanks to a planned cost-of-living payment to households. The district council, which receives nine per cent of a household's total council tax payment, is proposing to increase its portion by 2.99 per cent in the next financial year – an annual rise of £5.54 for a band D property.

However, to help with the cost of living, Teignbridge plans to give all households liable for council tax on their main home a one-off payment of £5.54. The payment, which will need to be agreed by the council, would be universal for properties in bands A-H, including those that are on 100 per cent council tax support. It is estimated this could cost the council in the region of £330,000 plus administration costs.

As well as using Teignbridge's share of the proposed council tax increase to provide a one-off £5.54 cost-of-living payment to all households liable to pay it on their main home on 1 April 2023, the draft budget proposes a range of other financial measures designed to support local people and build economic prosperity.

When you consider only 9 pence in every pound raised by council tax comes to the District Council and from this Teignbridge provided the essential services that local people need such as recycling and collecting household waste, cleaning the streets, tackling graffiti and fly-tipping, provide car parks, ensuring food is safe, supporting people in need with housing and council tax reduction schemes as well as voluntary organisations.

If the draft budget is approved this month, councillors will continue to provide 100% council tax support to those who need it most through its council tax reduction scheme and will for a second year provide £20,000 for town and parish councils to support local cleanliness initiatives through the 'Tidy Teignbridge' scheme.

Councillors also want to continue to invest in the Teignbridge 100 affordable and social housing initiative which has seen the first council houses built in the district for decades.

To support local initiatives, each councillor who was receiving £1200 will now have £1000 through the councillors' community fund to back local good causes in their local wards.

Item 022/24

Appendix 4 – Devon County Council Report

A minor update on a couple of pertinent issues, pending additional information.

Parking near Ashburton Primary

I have been liaising with Cllr Tinne regarding the parking on Woodland Rd and the lack of signage. I'm chasing the NHO to see when the signage associated with the TRO will be implemented. The biggest issue is driver behaviour and the lack of regard for safety for pedestrians. This has been an ongoing issue and is one consistent around lots of primary schools. Unfortunately, those acting in such a selfish manner are unlikely to engage in any proposed solutions. I know that the school have tried several approaches to address the parking issues, including car park passes and coning outside, with limited success. Attendance of Enforcement Officers does seem to ease the issue, but swiftly returns as soon as they're gone. I'd be happy to take back any further suggestions to the NHO to assess whether any additional measures can be implemented.

Kenwyn

You will no doubt be aware that Kenwyn is now back on the market. I have no specific details around why the prior sale fell through (commercial sensitivities mean I am not privy to such information) but can surmise there is a link to the falling property market and the planning requirements laid out by DNPA, particularly around affordable housing contributions. There may now be an opportunity for a community bid, if this is something the Community Land Trust wish to consider. I'd be happy to liaise with any group wishing to put forward a viable proposal.

Devolution

The Devolution consultation went live on Monday 12/2/24. The consultation details can be found on the following website: Devon and Torbay's deal - Devon and Torbay Devolution Deal (devontorbaydeal.org.uk)

I have also attached an FAQs document that may help answer any parishioner questions.

As always, please let me know if you have any queries.

Kind regards

Sarah

Cllr Sarah Khan

Ashburton & Buckfastleigh Division

07920 003112

Ashburton Town Council

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Item 026/24

Appendix 5 – Report from Ashburton Chamber of Trade

Ashburton Chamber of Trade Update February 2024.
I'm here to give you an update on the chamber of trade and its current standings. Nigel Ward, the previous chair, had to step down back in October. It was a sudden decision due to a couple of close bereavements and not one he took lightly and we'd like to thank him for everything he did in his time as chair. I unofficially stepped in to look after the organisation and set up and run the next few meetings until we could hold a SGM in January. The purpose of this meeting was to elect a new chairperson but unfortunately we had no volunteers or nominations. The remaining members of the executive group, myself, Lisa and Richard, agreed to hold another meeting in February giving the members and ourselves another month to form a new leadership team. Unfortunately, for one reason or another, the meeting was poorly attended and we were unable to form one. I am not prepared to continue to be a stand in chair and I have informed members I will not be organising or chairing another meeting going forward. However it is not all doom and gloom - this kick seems to have spurred a small group of traders into realising what they are about to lose and I have been promised that a group will be holding a meeting in march and are keen to see the continuation of the chamber of trade. I am not sure exactly who these people are yet but I hope we will be able to find a way forward together that enables us to hand over to a new leadership team and allow the organisation to continue. In the meantime myself, Lisa and Richard remain caretakers to ensure the organisation fulfils all its legal obligations.
To avoid any confusion, Ashburton and South Dartmoor Business Network was created to promote the Chamber of Trade to a wider audience due to lack of engagement from the town centre traders in the hope of getting more people involved. In basic terms, this has been successful and has attracted new members from the wider business community, growing the membership from around 50 to around 70 members. However there are now conflicting interests between the traders and the businesses with traders feeling that they aren't being supported and businesses not being particularly interested in whether the Christmas lights are twinkling or not. It is more than likely now that the organisation will drift back to being more town centre focused and the new leadership team will have my full support in doing so. I hope the chamber of trade and the town council will be able to continue to build a strong relationship.
I will still be involved in supporting the Chamber of Trade but with less time spent running it I can focus more on the projects which I am passionate about such as : - addressing the parking issues and trying to establish a park and ride- rebooting the Antiques Trail - Promoting and marketing Ashburton as a tourist destination
As part of this I have been working first with Mike of Jam Gallery and now Mark & Norma of Sherewood Gallery to establish a DMO. This is taking the form of "Enjoy Ashburton" and we are confident that it will be a platform that everyone - the Town Council, Information Centre and Chamber of Trade - can use to promote the town to visitors. A lot of the inspiration for the layout and content is being taken from similar DMOs such as Visit Totnes, Hello Kingsbridge and Visit Tavistock. The purpose is not so much to be used in the town centre, once people have found us the rest is fairly self-explanatory and for anything that isn't there's the information centre. This brand will be used online, on social media and in leaflet form with wide-reaching distribution on tourist information stands across Devon and beyond.
We are constantly being encouraged to go paperless and save trees, but what are the facts? Paper is made from wood which is renewable and good for the environment. In Europe, forest certification ensures that forests are well managed to increase in size and sustainability.
Digital communications have an enormous environmental impact. The digital industry creates an ongoing global demand for electricity causing huge emissions. In 2014 Greenpeace declared that

"compared with the electricity demand of countries in the same year, the [digital] cloud would rank 6th in the world, with demand only expected to increase". That's not even taking into account the millions of tonnes of waste produced by discarded phones, tablets and laptops. If we are talking about carbon footprint, we need to be honest that digital has one too.
We have absolutely no hesitation in using paper and valuing its importance for our marketing strategy.
The project is in its early stages and we have no completion date yet, although we hope to have it finished later this year. Mark and Norma are giving up their time and skills completely for free but under the caveat that no time pressure is put on them and their paid work must come first. We will keep the town council and the information centre updated on our progress and hope very much to be able to work collaboratively with them as the project progresses, creating an asset that we can all be proud of.
On a personal note, while you have been kind enough to let me speak, I have always been and will remain passionate and driven to boost trade in Ashburton town centre so please don't hesitate to reach out to me in the future if there is anything I can help with in an individual capacity or as part of the chamber of trade.

Item 030/24 – Appendix 6

Moorland Community Caring

I attended the Trustees meeting of Moorland Community Caring on Tuesday, 30th January.

We were saddened by the death of Huw Cox who had only recently become a trustee. I am sure he would have been a great asset to the work of Moorland.

Although there are several trustees, we are always looking for others who have skills they could offer us. Volunteers for social events and befriending are also welcomed.

The work of Moorland is ever growing with the number of referrals for our well-being staff particularly in the area of dementia and those returning from hospital. Money is always tight and we hope that our recently appointed Secretary will focus on local fund-raising and grant applications.

Work in Ashburton. You will all have heard about the social events. The twice monthly get togethers in the town hall for sandwiches, cake and some sort of entertainment either a quiz, gentle exercise, bingo, a sing-a-long and occasionally a trip out to a pub for lunch. There is also the monthly Memory Café held in Ashburton. Heather facilitates our Memory Café. She is our Wellbeing Co-ordinator who specialises in dementia and end of life; she is also a qualified occupational Therapist. Her knowledge and experience is vast, but the Memory Café is not a clinical place, it is a place to have fun and to provide a space for families, friends and members alike. The Ashburton social events are not funded and the annual cost for

the above is over £4,000. As well as the obvious benefits to the attendees of social interaction, which may be the only time they go out, is that the organisers and volunteers of these events who become aware of any problems people may be experiencing and can pass this onto the well being coordinators. You will of course know that in Ashburton that is Suzy Williamson.

However, the work you won't hear about unless you are personally involved is that Moorland Community Caring is part of the South Devon Well-being Partnership, delivering Well-being Programmes, individually tailored to a patient's needs. Working in collaboration with GPs, District Nurses, Mental Health practitioners, Health & Social Care colleagues and Social Prescribers, we engage with patients for 12 – 20 weeks, helping to improve well-being. This may be addressing loneliness, bereavement, anxiety, diet, physical illness, budgeting and so much more. The aim wherever possible is to help people live independent, fulfilling lives.

All this work comes at a cost and the overall spend last year for Moorland was £106,000 of which only approximately £60,000 is funded. The remainder comes from grants obtained by the manager, Jayne Edwards, or from donations.

Moorland Community Caring also provides these services and social events in Buckfastleigh and Bovey Tracey.