



Ashburton Town Council

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 27 APRIL 2011 AT 7.30PM IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE TOWN HALL**

Present: Cllr Gill: Chairman, Cllr Baker, Deputy Chairman
Cllrs: Hitchcock, Pugh. Also Cllrs Posner and Distin

In attendance: The Clerk, the Deputy Town Clerk.

001/11GP Apologies

Cllrs Slater due to work commitments and Brewer on annual leave. This was proposed by Cllr Pugh, seconded by Cllr Posner.

002/11GP To receive the minutes of the previous meeting

These were signed by the chairman as a true record. Carried unanimously.

003/11GP Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

There were no matters arising.

004/11GP Garden Competition

The clerk reported that the committee had previously decided that this year there would be two prizes for each class of £20 and £10 vouchers plus the perpetual town council shield. It was decided that the prizes should be purchased from Tuckers and Riseley Nursery. Four first prizes and three second from one and three first prizes and four second from the other.

The date of the competition was discussed and due to bad weather last year perhaps it should be earlier. This would be decided at the next meeting.

**RECOMMEND: CLERK TO INVESTIGATE PURCHASE OF VOUCHERS AND
PUT GARDEN COMPETITION ON NEXT AGENDA**

005/11GP Review of Code of Conduct

The clerk thanked Cllr Posner with his help on revisions.

There is a new section 6 which states:

- 6 (1) You must treat others with respect.
- (2) You must not—

- (a) do anything which may cause your authority to breach any of the equality enactments (as defined in section 33 of the Equality Act 2006(a));
- (b) bully any person;
- (c) intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is or is likely to be—
 - (i) a complainant,
 - (ii) a witness, or
 - (iii) involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings, in relation to an allegation that a member (including yourself) has failed to comply with his or her authority's code of conduct; or
- (d) do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, your authority.

The clerk stated that this was to prove that the town council has reviewed the Code of Conduct and all councillors must study the final draft of the Code of Conduct as this will be adopted at the next Full Council meeting. The clerk gave the councillors copies.

Cllr Posner asked the councillors to also note section 7, which refers to the Standards Board. The Board will be abolished in November and at present it is not known what will be replacing it.

006/11GP Review Standing Orders

The clerk said that the new section under Committees and Sub-Committees (1d) stated: Chairman of committees shall serve no longer than two consecutive years as chairman on the same committee. (Amended Feb 2011) and will be adopted at the next Full Council meeting.

Cllr Gill stated she believed it was time for others to step forward.

007/11GP Ambulance Station Ashburton

The clerk said that the ambulance was being replaced by a paramedic vehicle. Mel Stride MP was looking into the issue after receiving an email from Cllr Posner. The nearest ambulance stations were at Newton Abbot and Torquay.

Cllr Distin said he was surprised that they did not have to consult. Cllr Posner said that this was because it was a service adjustment and not a financial adjustment. Cllr Distin said he would be interested to know how many and what type of calls they had. He wished the committee to ask for a meeting with the ambulance service. The clerk said that the council should also officially write to Mel Stride MP.

Cllr Hitchcock wondered except in extreme emergencies how much difference would it make.

008/11GP Officer's report

- The clerk stated that the election is on 5 May, the count on 6 May and councillors would cease to be councillors at midnight on 9 May. The next full council meeting

was due to be on 10 May. The standing orders state that the meeting should be on the next Tuesday following the fourth day after the election. The clerk stated that this should be 17 May. It also stated in the Local Council Administration book that the meeting must be within 14 days of the election. Councillors need to sign their declarations of office before the meeting and should come into the office to do this before 17 May. The clerk had tried to confirm this with both the Devon Association of Local Councils and Teignbridge District Council, however, no one was available until next week. The clerk said that this would mean moving the Finance and Town Hall Buildings Committee meeting to 24 May. It was proposed by Cllr Baker and seconded by Cllr Pugh that the meetings be moved. All in favour.

- It had also been necessary to change the Statement of Internal Control under Section 4 a new bullet point had been added: the independent external examiner who reviews all the systems introduced by the Council and advises on any additions or amendments to the controls if necessary. The clerk gave the councillors copies. The clerk again thanked Cllr Posner for his assistance. This change actually meant that no less than once every year an external examiner would check that the controls set in place by the town council are being actioned. A senior auditor has offered his services to do this, free of charge, and this would come up at the next full town council meeting under the Finance and Town Hall Buildings report.

009/11GP Correspondence

1. Devon County Council. Devon Tithe map project and tithe apportionment transcription by volunteers. The Devon Record Office has digitised all the Devon tithe maps (c.1840) and is looking for volunteers across the country to transcribe the 1840 apportionments for each parish. Cllr Posner volunteered and the clerk would notify DCC.

RECOMMEND: CLERK TO NOTIFY DCC

2. Street collection. 2 July 2011. Amnesty International.
3. Road closure for utility works. 08.30 to 16.30, Tuesday, 3 May to Monday, 9 May 2011. Road from Waterleat Cross to Rewlea Cross, Ashburton, Junction of Bowdley to Halshanger Cross.
4. An email from Teignbridge District Council attaching a Register of Interests form and a Declaration of Acceptance of Office Form. All councillors would be required to complete both forms after the election and the Register of Interests form must be returned within 28 days of the election.

010/11GP Any other urgent business

- Cllr Pugh stated that he had received a complaint that Birdi's Lingerie shop had a mannequin outside and that two of the staff have been sitting outside the shop. People found this disconcerting when waiting for a bus. The clerk stated that he had also received complaints from shops that people waiting for buses were

standing in their doorway and even inside the shop if it was raining. Cllr Posner said that there was a bench outside the hairdressers which proved no problem and could not see what the problem was.

- Cllr Baker asked why the polling station had been moved from the St John Ambulance Hall to the Church Hall. The clerk stated that this was the decision of the Teignbridge electoral department.

There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at 8.15pm.

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CHAIRMAN
25 MAY 2011