



# ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21



# Welcome to Alcester Town Council's 2020-21 Annual Report

This is the report of the Town Council and covers the activities and services it has delivered from May 2020 to April 2021.

The Council consists of 16 councillors, all elected every four years. Two of the councillors are also Stratford on Avon District Councillors and one of those is also a Warwickshire County Councillor. The Mayor is a Councillor elected annually by the members of the Council and acts as Chair of the Town Council.

The parish is divided into three wards, Alcester West, Alcester Oversley and Oversley Green (see back page for representation).

## The Town Council is responsible for the following:

- Responding to planning applications
- Publication/review of the Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Maintenance of 4 play areas
- Maintenance of 3 recreational open spaces
- Cemetery on Birmingham Road
- Eric Payne Community Centre- management/hire
- Management of over 130 allotments at 4 sites
- Health & Wellbeing projects and activities
- Issuing grants to local organisations
- Mayor's office, engagements, annual Awards evening and civic events
- Publication of Annual report and quarterly newsletters
- Website maintenance and social media
- Council and committee meetings throughout the year
- All statutory duties of a Town Council

Copies of this report are available to download at [www.alcester-tc.gov.uk](http://www.alcester-tc.gov.uk)

## Alcester Town Council

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The office is open between 9am-1pm Monday- Friday



## PRESIDIUM

Presidium of Alcester Town Council (ATC) is the executive committee comprising the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Immediate Past Mayor and the three Chairs of the Planning, Community Facilities and Community Care Committees.

### Councillor membership:

- Gill Forman (Mayor)
- Kathryn Cargill (Deputy Mayor, Community Care)
- Clive Neal-Sturgess (Planning)
- Tim Forman (Community Facilities)
- Andrew Foster (Immediate Past Mayor)

**Committee Clerk:** Vanessa Lowe



**Meetings and purpose:** Presidium meets on the last Tuesday of each month, a week before Full Council to receive reports, discuss issues arising from them and to confirm the Agenda for Full Council.

Presidium acts as a Finance Committee with the Town Clerk reporting and discussing financial details. A report is subsequently made to Full Council. The Town Council received an unqualified report from its external Auditors with no matters reported which required attention for the year ended April 2020.

The Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and Immediate Past Mayor acted as a Staffing Committee reporting to Presidium and subsequently to Full Council.

Alcester Town Council has signed a 125-year lease with Stratford on Avon District Council for the Greig Hall. Alcester Town Council has been awarded Quality Council Status.

### The main propositions to Full Council during the year were:



- To adopt the terms of reference for the Presidium, Planning, Community Facilities and Community Care Committees
- Staff trained online regarding Covid-19 precautions
- Annual review of Standing Orders
- Recruited a new Groundsman and a Youth Club Leader
- Purchased and installed a special commemorative bench in recognition of the work of NHS staff and keyworkers during the pandemic
- Funded the purchase of twenty laptop chargers to enable donated laptops to be distributed to local children for home online learning during the pandemic
- Reviewed the existing Safeguarding Policy
- Reviewed the existing Complaints Procedure
- Reviewed the existing Equality and Diversity Policy
- Reviewed the Financial Regulations
- Reviewed the Scheme of Delegation
- To adopt the budget for 2021-22 with a precept of £286,227

- To adopt a CIL Allocation Policy
- To adopt the Privacy Policy
- To adopt Subject Access Request Policy
- To adopt Security Incident Policy

*Cllr Gill Forman, April 2021*

## PLANNING

### Councillor membership:

- Clive Neal-Sturgess (Chair)
- Kathryn Cargill
- Kirsten Forbes
- Mark Cargill
- Mat Hempell
- Mike Bowe (Vice-Chair)
- Tim Forman
- Vaughan Blake



**Committee Clerk:** Sarah Duran

**Meetings:** The Planning Committee met on 8 occasions throughout the year using Zoom software or by email meeting due to Covid-19 restrictions. Minutes are on the Town Council website. The Committee considered over 69 planning applications and public representation occurred at 3 meetings via Zoom. There were no formal site visits this year. Objections were made on 17 occasions. A statement in objection was supplied to Stratford on Avon Area Planning Committee B meeting relating to 20/01667/FUL Garage Block Hertford Road.

**Please note** that in the parish of Alcester, Stratford on Avon District Council (SDC) is the planning authority and as such process all planning applications and make decisions on each application. Alcester Town Council is a **statutory consultee** in the planning consultation process. It does not make decisions.

### Applications of significance:

An amended application was received for the proposed ALDI Food store at Broad Lane Caravans, Kings Coughton. Significant changes were put forward with respect to external materials such as a green wall together with wooden panelling, landscaping and drainage. However, at the time of writing various reports from WCC Highways remain outstanding and a Holding Objection was

submitted. The Swan Hotel redevelopment- Holding objection was withdrawn following clarification on use types. Land North of Allimore Lane- Northern parcel-Holding objection removed to enable a small number 2.5 storey plot substitutions; Southern parcel- Reserved Matters will be coming forward shortly. The new application for inclusive access to Lloyds Bank TSB Plc bank was supported.

**Alcester Neighbourhood Plan (NDP):** A Steering Committee was appointed in 2017, chaired by Wendy Mills, meeting on several occasions to draft the NDP. The plan focusses on five main areas: Housing and the Built Environment, Economy, Transport and Infrastructure, Community, Leisure and Well-being and the Natural Environment. Public consultations were held on draft plans, and following comments and amendments, a Submission plan was put forward for independent examination. The Examiner recommended that the plan be put forward for referendum which was cancelled due to the Covid-19 emergency in 2020 but rescheduled for 6 May 2021.

Once the Plan is adopted by SDC, anyone submitting planning applications must comply with the policies in order that future development respects the needs and character of the town. Alcester will also benefit from additional monies that developers will have to provide for local infrastructure and facilities.

*Professor Cllr Clive Neal-Sturgess, April 2021*

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### **Councillor membership:**

- Andrew Foster
- Erick Wilson
- Gill Forman
- Keith Greenaway
- Laura Pusey
- Mike Bowe
- Tim Forman (Chair)

**Committee Clerk:** Jan Rowlatt

**Meetings:** Monthly meetings were suspended during the initial lockdown from March 2020. Subsequently the committee moved to meeting remotely every two months using Zoom software.

**Responsibility:** The Facilities Committee is responsible for the Eric Payne Community Centre, four allotment sites, the cemetery, the play areas, litter bins, seat and benches and miscellaneous other facilities in the town.

### **Main activities of the year:**

- Covid-19 government guidelines regarding closure of playgrounds were put in place in March 2020 and were re-opened on 4 July 2020
- Survey of the town's play areas was arranged and ROSPA reports obtained for all equipment at the sites
- Installed a new fence around the junior play area in Moorfields Park
- Continued with the tree maintenance programme
- Allotment judging completed
- Allotments were inspected to ensure a good standard is maintained

- Extensive work completed at the Eric Payne Community Centre including the installation of a new kitchen in the Depot and a Wellbeing Room in the Foyer



**Office- before**



**Wellbeing Room- after**

- Continued Maintenance checks for defibrillator at Eric Payne Community Centre
- A ground penetrating radar survey was carried out in the old cemetery. This was to help in identifying areas for new burial plots
- Reviewed the Cemetery Rules and Regulations
- Granted permission for numerous requests for new headstones in the cemetery
- Replaced broken or damaged litter bins as required around the town
- Reptile survey authorised at Abbey Fields to investigate its suitability for a relocation of slow worms from the Allimore Lane development
- Licence signed with Riverside Angling Club to maintain the fishing pegs along the river Arrow at Jubilee Fields and Westbury Park
- Supported the Cross-Parish Cycle Way scheme with regular attendance and input to their meetings

**Cllr Tim Forman, April 2021**

## COMMUNITY CARE

### Councillor membership:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Andrew Foster</li> <li>• Clive Neal-Sturgess</li> <li>• David Henderson</li> <li>• Emma Randle</li> <li>• Gill Forman</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kathryn Cargill (Chair)</li> <li>• Kathryn Soares</li> <li>• Keith Greenaway</li> <li>• Kirsten Forbes</li> <li>• Vaughan Blake</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

**Committee Clerk:** Jenny Theobald

**Meetings:** Monthly meetings were suspended during the initial lockdown from March 2020. Subsequently the committee moved to meeting remotely every two months using Zoom software.

**Responsibility:** The Community Care committee is responsible for Older Peoples' Services, Young Peoples' Services, Community Resilience and Business and Tourism. It also oversees projects initiated under the ATC's Health and Wellbeing agenda.

### **Main activities of the year:**

- The Alcester Community Resilience Team was supported by ATC staff and councillors with grants applied for, donations received and funds administered. This included funding the twice-weekly hot meals service for vulnerable residents during the lockdown periods
- The Repair Café continued to run whenever Covid-19 restrictions allowed. A drop-off and delivery service was offered during the lockdown period
- Advisory signage was introduced in the Town Centre to improve confidence for residents returning to the High Street following the first lockdown
- The Holiday Lunch club was launched for the school summer holidays, offering hot lunches to local children at the Depot. It has run during every school holiday period since
- A Cook and Eat Your Tea project was launched and ran very successfully for a group of teenagers. Unfortunately, the second lockdown intervened, but the project will be continued when restrictions allow
- The Child Food Poverty campaign was supported by staff and councillors, with supermarket vouchers provided to over 250 families in need during the Christmas period
- Late Night shopping in the run-up to Christmas was promoted, with many retailers reporting improved sales at a very difficult trading time
- Christmas Day lunch was held for a fourth year for isolated residents. On this occasion it was run in a takeaway format with volunteers delivering meals to isolated and vulnerable residents
- The Window Wanderland event was held for a second year, with a very positive response from residents during lockdown



***Barchester Cherry Trees Care Home***









***Moorfields Road***

- ATC is funding the launch of the Totally Locally scheme in Alcester, to help promote local businesses in the wake of the pandemic
- The Town's Youth Club is being relaunched, with a new youth club leader recruited and funded by the Town Council
- Award of Community Grants to 10 local organisations and societies who were able to operate despite Covid-19 restrictions

***Cllr Kathryn Cargill, April 2021***

## Alester Town Council Councillors

<b>Alcester West Ward</b>	<b>Alcester Oversley Ward (contd.)</b>
 <p>Mark Cargill</p>	 <p>Gill Forman</p>
 <p>Laura Pusey</p>	 <p>Tim Forman</p>
 <p>Emma Randle</p>	 <p>Andrew Foster</p>
 <p>Clive Neal-Sturgess</p>	 <p>Keith Greenaway</p>
 <p>Erick Wilson</p>	 <p>Mat Hempell</p>
<b>Alcester Oversley Ward</b>	
 <p>Vaughan Blake</p>	 <p>David Henderson</p>
 <p>Mike Bowe</p>	 <p>Kathryn Soares</p>
 <p>Kirsten Forbes</p>	
	<b>Oversley Green Ward</b>
	 <p>Kathryn Cargill</p>