



**MINUTES OF THE ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 12th APRIL 2022
AT GLOBE HOUSE, PRIORY ROAD, ALCESTER.**

Present

Councillors K Cargill (Mayor), M Cargill, M Bowe, C Neal-Sturgess, A Foster, G Forman, V Blake, W Mills, E Randle, K Greenaway, K Foster, S Blackman and A Leask.

In attendance Mrs V Lowe, Town Clerk, Cllr P Daniell (County Councillor) and Cllr S Juned (District Councillor).

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT DISCRETION OF MAYOR

There was no public participation.

District and County Councillors' Reports

Cllr S Juned (Ward Member for Alcester Town) gave an update on the lack of progress with the reinstatement of the Three Tuns following the fire in April 2021. She explained that a petition had been produced which would be presented to SDC on 25th April.

Cllr Juned has emailed WCC officers requesting an update on empty WCC buildings in Alcester.

Cllr Juned attended the SDC and police consultation on the new CCTV installation at the rear of Hopkins Precinct. She had co-signed a letter to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) requesting funding for CCTV at The Greig Hall. She reported that the PCC had recently appeared at the SDC Overview and Scrutiny Committee and had answered questions regarding police attendance at instances of anti-social behaviour.

Cllr Juned repeated her reminder that residents should register to pay Council Tax by direct debit as this would ensure prompt payment of the £150 government rebate on heating costs.

Finally, Cllr Juned reported that she had received a complaint about the litter and leaf debris collecting in the cycleway into the town centre and had requested that this was cleared.

The Town Clerk asked Cllr Juned to note that the Town Council office had received numerous complaints about the difficulty in renewing the green waste collection subscription at SDC.

Cllr M Cargill (Ward Member for Alcester and Rural) confirmed that Cllr Juned had reported all relevant issues from a District perspective.

Cllr P Daniells (County Councillor) explained that he was no longer reporting on Covid figures in his weekly report as these figures were no longer being reported to him. Cllr Daniells asked Councillors to be vigilant in spotting and reporting illegal encampments over the Bank Holiday weekend.

On traffic matters, Cllr Daniells is looking at the parking challenges around the Town Hall. He has arranged for the road markings to be upgraded on Kinwarton Road. He was still working on the 30 mph speed limit issue on Birmingham Road but regrettably this change was not being supported by either the police or the WCC Highways minor works team. Cllr Blackman noted that 100% of local residents supported the change. Cllr Neal-Sturgess explained that any change in the speed limit would need to be done in accordance with national guidelines.



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Cllr Daniells confirmed that the Homes for Ukraine scheme had resulted in 554 matches in Warwickshire. DBS checks were being undertaken and interim payments being finalised. Suitable schools had been identified. Cllr Randle asked Cllr Daniells to find out how many visas had been issued.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr E Wilson, Cllr L Pusey and Cllr D Henderson.

2. Minutes of Council Meetings

The Mayor asked Councillors to consider for approval the minutes of the Full Council meetings held on Tuesday 1st March and Tuesday 29th March 2022. They were proposed to be accepted by Cllr Mills, seconded by Cllr Neal-Sturgess and approved by Council; they were then signed by the Mayor.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest on the agenda items.

4. Mayor's Report

The Mayor reported that she had attended the Chairman's lunch at Alcester Rugby Club. She congratulated the Alcester Male Voice Choir on raising £600 for Ukraine refugees at their recent concert. She reported that she had been delighted to judge the Easter bonnet competition at Our Lady's School. The Mayor thanked Councillors for attending the Annual Parish Meeting on the previous Tuesday. The meeting had been well attended with 40 attendees and 17 organisations presenting. Finally, the Mayor was very pleased to report that, on her recommendation, the Friends of the Greig Hall had been awarded a High Sheriff's award at a reception on 7th April. Councillors were reminded to reply to the invitation to Mayor Making on 3rd May.

5. Presidium

The Mayor had been absent from Presidium which had been chaired by Cllr Forman. Cllr Forman confirmed that she was satisfied Committee members approved the minutes from the preceding month, which were then signed. Councillors noted the award of the grasscutting contract for 2022-23 to Limebridge Rural Services Limited at a cost of £11,200 plus VAT.

There were the following propositions from Presidium:

5.1 "To authorise the Town Clerk to accept a quotation from C R Macdonald Limited to resurface footpaths in Jubilee Fields up to a maximum of £25,500 plus VAT"

This was proposed by Cllr Mills, seconded by Cllr Randle and carried by Council.

5.2 "To delegate authority to the Town Clerk to authorise expenditure up to a total value of £145,000 plus VAT on the second phase works for the Greig Hall as agreed at Presidium on 29th March 2022".

This was proposed by Cllr Neal-Sturgess, seconded by Cllr Blake and carried by Council.

6. Restructuring of Council Committees

There had been a workshop earlier in the evening on this topic.



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The Mayor proposed that the new structure as set out in the Town Clerk's paper circulated in advance was adopted. This was seconded by Cllr Bowe. The motion was passed 7 votes to 6 votes.

Cllr Foster proposed a motion to defer a decision on the subject until a later meeting. This motion was defeated by 7 votes to 6.

In summary, the new structure from May 2022 was agreed to be as follows:

6.1 Lead Councillors to be appointed for areas of Town Council business as detailed in appendix 1 to the Town Clerk's paper.

6.2 Lead Councillors to report to Full Council on a rota basis to be confirmed.

6.3 Planning Committee to be retained with 7 members plus the Lead Councillor for planning as Chair.

6.4 Presidium to be renamed Finance and General Purposes with 4 members plus the Mayor. The Mayor to act as Chair.

6.5 Staffing Committee to be convened by Town Clerk when required and to comprise the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and 2 members. The Mayor to act as Chair.

6.6 All Councillors to be eligible for election to committees.

6.7 Membership of committees to be decided by vote annually at the May Full Council meeting.

6.8 Only one family member to sit on a committee.

6.9 Councillors not sitting on a committee, encouraged to attend and observe.

6.10 Up to 6 experienced councillors to act as mentors to other councillors.

6.11 Community Care and Community Facilities Committees to cease meeting.

6.12 Community grants to be decided at Full Council meetings.

6.13 Above arrangements for a period of 12 months starting in May 2022 with a review in October 2022 and then again in March 2023.

7. Code of Conduct

The Local Government Association Model Code of Conduct had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Mayor explained that it had already been adopted by Stratford on Avon DC and Warwick DC and it was strongly recommended by WALC that all parishes adopt it.

Cllr Cargill proposed that Alcester Town Council adopt the Code with effect from 1st May 2022. This was seconded by Cllr Forman and carried by Council.

8. Response to Ukraine Crisis

The Mayor explained that a request had been received from Warwickshire County Council and WALC for the Town Council to register regarding support which might be made available to Ukrainian refugees and host families. The Town Clerk was authorised to register with WALC. Cllrs Bowe, Forman, M Cargill and K Foster agreed to co-ordinate any future support.

9. Response to Levelling Up White Paper

The Levelling Up White Paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting together with a proposed response drafted by the Town Clerk. This was approved as drawn. Councillors were asked to submit any additional comments to the Town Clerk by the end of the week.

10. Community Care Committee

There was no meeting in March.



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11. Community Facilities Committee

Cllr Forman confirmed that she was satisfied Committee members approved the minutes from the preceding month, which were then signed. Cllr Forman gave a summary of the matters discussed by the Committee.

Cllr Randle asked a question about the community allotment. The Town Clerk explained that the previous project had ended and the allotment site had been shared between previous community allotment holders. It was agreed that in view of the current cost of living problems, consideration might be given to repeating the project.

There were no propositions from the Committee.

12. Planning Committee

Cllr Bowe confirmed that he was satisfied Committee members approved the minutes from the preceding month, which were then signed. Cllr Bowe gave a summary of the applications considered by the Committee. He also gave an update on the quarterly update meeting with Bloor Homes.

Cllr Bowe reported that seven names for the new roads on the southern part of the Bloor Homes development had been chosen by the Committee and submitted to SDC for approval. Once approval has been granted, the families will be informed.

There was a proposition to adopt the updated Markets Licensing Policy dated March 2022. This was proposed by Cllr Bowe, seconded by Cllr Cargill and carried by Council.

13. Greig Working Group

Cllr M Cargill, as Chair of the Working Group, gave an update on the renovation works. The PWLB application for the new heating system has been approved and the contract for this should be signed shortly. The CCTV, alarms and wi-fi installation were all proceeding well. The plan remained to open the building for its first event in September 2022.

Cllr Cargill thanked Cllrs A and K Foster for organising a quiz which raised over £600 for the Greig Hall. He also thanked Church Street Property Trust for the recent grant of £5000 for security at the Hall.

Cllr Blake asked a question about the timing of the grant of a lease to the CIO. The Town Clerk confirmed that this was the intention once the CIO was operational. Cllr A Foster congratulated the Working Group on progress and asked whether the business plan should now be reviewed. This was discussed and it was agreed that this would be appropriate as part of the transition to the CIO together with a community engagement exercise.

14. Climate Change

Cllr K Foster made a presentation following her attendance at the WALC Climate Change Action Day. She explained that, at a local level, climate change could be considered as a series of small problems to be tackled. She suggested that the Town Council could play a role in encouraging behavioural change amongst residents highlighting the importance of communication and signposting. Cllr Foster proposed that a task and finish group was set up to discuss further. The Mayor asked Cllr Foster to lead this group and asked Councillors to email Cllr



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Foster if they wished to be involved. It was agreed that Cllr Mills could be involved in her communications role.

At Cllr Neal-Sturgess' suggestion, it was agreed that climate change should be removed from the Community Resilience Working Group.

15. Town Council Representatives

Moorfields - The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Blake had indicated that he would be interested in the vacant position on Moorfields Charity. The Mayor proposed that Cllr Blake be appointed, this was seconded by Cllr M Cargill and carried by Council. The Town Clerk will inform the charity.

Town Hall - Cllr Forman gave an update on the recent committee meeting. She reported that the Hall would need to increase prices to reflect increasing energy costs. Significant woodworm had been discovered in the rear stairs. The Trustees had received a complaint regarding disabled access to the upstairs of the Hall and they were revisiting previous advice.

Church Street Property Trust - Cllr M Cargill reported that a meeting of the Trustees had taken place and grants had been awarded to the Depot Youth Club, the Netball Club, Alcester Baptist Church (for the community fridge) and Alcester Youth Project (for the Abbey Fields project).

16. Payment of Accounts

The Town Clerk presented the Payment of Accounts for the preceding month. The accounts were proposed to be approved by Cllr Neal-Sturgess, seconded by Cllr M Cargill and carried by Council.

17. Correspondence

Email correspondence received by the Clerk was taken as read.

18. Dates of future meetings

Mayor Making - Tuesday 3rd May 2022 at 7 pm at Alcester War Memorial Town Hall.

Full Council Tuesday 10th May 2022 at 7 pm at Globe House

All other committee dates to be confirmed after the meeting.

The Mayor closed the meeting.