

The Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting took place by Video Conference on Tuesday 6th April 2021 at 7pm.

Welcome and Chairman

The Mayor of Alcester, Cllr Gill Forman, took the Chair and welcomed everyone to the meeting. The meeting was convened using Zoom software as public meetings were not permitted due to the national Covid-19 pandemic restrictions.

In accordance with legislation, the Annual Parish Meeting in 2020 had been cancelled due to the pandemic.

Apologies

The Town Clerk had not received any apologies.

Minutes

Minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 2nd April 2019 were confirmed as a true record on a proposition by Cllr Mark Cargill and seconded by Cllr Andrew Foster. As this was a virtual meeting, the Mayor asked the Town Clerk to sign the minutes on her behalf.

Report from Alcester Town Council

The Mayor presented an update on the work of the Town Council during the preceding year. She explained that the Council had 4 committees and gave a summary of the work of each.

The Facilities Committee report confirmed that the Town's play areas were all regularly inspected in accordance with recommended practice. The allotment judging was completed and prizes awarded. Considerable work had been undertaken at the Eric Payne Community Centre during lockdown with the installation of a new kitchen in the Depot and the conversion of the office into a Wellbeing Room. A licence had been completed with Riverside Angling Club allowing them to manage the Town Council fishing rights at Jubilee Fields. A reptile survey had been undertaken at Abbey Fields to establish whether it would be a suitable location for slow worms to be relocated from the Bloor Homes Allimore Lane development.

The Community Care Committee reported on the support which had been provided for residents during the pandemic. A large group of Community Resilience volunteers had arranged for hot meals to be delivered to vulnerable residents. This scheme had been supported by Town Council staff and councillors who had sourced grants from external bodies and managed donations received from individuals and groups in the town. The Holiday Lunch club had been set up by the Town Council to provide a hot meal for children during school holidays. On the day of the meeting, the Mayor reported that 60 children had been served. In response to a national food poverty campaign, 250 local families had been supported with supermarket vouchers. The Town Council had funded a scheme called Totally Locally to support local businesses as they reopened after the pandemic. The Town Council had employed a new Youth Club leader who will run the Youth Club once it reopens.

The Planning Committee reported that it has been consulted on 69 planning applications during the year, the most significant of which were Aldi Food Store, the Swan Hotel and revisions to the Allimore Lane housing development. The Neighbourhood Plan referendum had been delayed by the pandemic but was now scheduled for 6th May 2021.

The Presidium report confirmed that a CIL Allocation Policy had been adopted. The Committee has an ongoing programme of review of existing policies which are updated as required. The Town Council had

received an unqualified report from its external Auditors with no matters reported which required attention.

The Mayor explained that during Covid, all staff had continued working, often from home and thanked them for their commitment. She reported that the Town Council had purchased a new bench to mark the contribution of NHS staff and key workers during the pandemic which had been installed on the corner of Birmingham Road and School Road.

The Mayor was delighted to announce that Alcester Town Council had been awarded Quality Council status. She explained that there were only 122 Quality Councils out of a total of 9000 parish and town councils.

Finally, the Mayor was very pleased to report that the Town Council had signed a 125-year lease of the Greig Hall. The lease would be completed and the building handed over once certain legal formalities were concluded.

The Mayor announced that the Annual Report of the Town Council would be published on the Town Council website following the meeting. She confirmed that any questions about the report could be emailed to the Town Clerk.

Accounts

The Town Clerk confirmed that accounts had been received from Church Street Property Trust, Newport's School Foundation and Alcester Bunting and Lighting Executive. The Mayor asked anyone wishing to view the accounts to contact the Town Clerk. Accounts will be made available on the Town Council website.

Alcester Organisations

The Mayor then opened the floor to representatives from various Alcester organisations who presented on their activities during the year:

1. Eileen Barnes – Alcester Dementia Café
2. Wendy Mills – Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group
3. Mike Clark – Alcester Bunting and Lighting Executive/Alcester Scout and Guide Hut Committee
4. Bill Goodall – Alcester First Responders
5. Andrew Deeks – Alcester United Charities
6. Alison Williams – Alcester and District Inner Wheel
7. Nina Knapman – Citizens Advice South Warwickshire
8. Tony Bradley – Alcester Male Voice Choir
9. Mike Bowe – Alcester and District Lions
10. Carole Zambonini – Alcester Dementia Day Care
11. John Curtis – Alcester Round Table
12. Andrew Foster – Moorfields Charity
13. Emma Randle – Alcester Community Resilience
14. Ian Chester – Alcester Town Football Club
15. Susan Juned – Alcester Youth Project/Litter Free Alcester/Alcester War Memorial Town Hall/Alcester Heritage Trust

The Mayor thanked everyone for their contributions noting that, even in the Covid-19 pandemic, groups and societies had remained busy with many volunteers stepping forward to assist others in difficult times.

The Mayor closed the meeting and asked everyone to stay safe and take care.