



**MINUTES OF THE ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 7th JUNE 2022
AT GLOBE HOUSE, PRIORY ROAD, ALCESTER.**

Present

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

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT DISCRETION OF MAYOR

There was a presentation from Sgt Stephen Chadwick of the Alcester Army Cadet Force. Sgt Chadwick explained that the group was for 12-17 year olds and aimed to provide "fun, friendship, action and adventure".

Siobhan Knight made a presentation to Councillors regarding her concerns about the mowing of roundabouts around Alcester whilst the wild flowers were in full bloom. She explained that 97% of wild flower meadows had been destroyed since the 1940's and were therefore precious. Cllr M Cargill offered to contact her outside the meeting to discuss further.

There was a presentation from Alcester Dementia Day Care, led by Mrs Carole Zambonini, on the group's vision to create a bespoke day care centre on part of the Greig site. A business plan for this project had been distributed to Councillors in advance of the meeting. A number of questions were raised by Councillors in particular concerning parking requirements and the numbers that would be accommodated by the new Centre. The group were thanked for all their work in preparing for their presentation. The Mayor confirmed that the matter would be included on the Full Council agenda for discussion at a later date.

District and County Councillors' Reports

Cllr M Cargill (Ward Member for Alcester and Rural) reported on the initial headline figures from the SDC Residents' Survey reporting an 86% satisfaction rating overall. There would be more analysis to follow when the results are published.

Cllr S Juned (Ward Member for Alcester Town) gave an update on the Three Tuns reporting that stripping out work had been delayed following the discovery of asbestos.

She reported that the new fence at the Hopkins playground had been completed but the gate required some replacement parts. A new wheelchair friendly table has been ordered.

Cllr Juned is in touch with SDC regarding residents' parking requirements when the High Street is closed. Cllr Juned reported that the £150 energy rebate has now been paid to eligible direct debit customers but not to those who do not pay by direct debit – these residents should be referred to their District Councillor.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs D Henderson and E Randle and from Cllr P Daniell (County Councillor).



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2. Minutes of Council Meetings

The Mayor asked Councillors to consider for approval the minutes of the Full Council meetings held on Tuesday 3rd May 2022 and Tuesday 10th May 2022. Cllr Blackman asked if the item in the minutes reporting the award of community grants should also include reference as to what the grant was for. The Mayor replied that this had not been done previously but was happy to introduce this in subsequent years.

Both sets of minutes were proposed to be accepted by Cllr M Cargill, seconded by Cllr Forman 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 been pleased to attend the Stratford Town Council Mayor Making and Civic Service. Within Alcester, she had presented at the WI meeting, had attended coffee mornings for Alcester in Bloom and Alcester Royal British Legion, had been a judge at the Food Festival and started and presented medals at the Raceways 10k race.

The most significant events had been for Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee and she had been delighted to attend the beacon event at Centenary Field on 2nd June and the Street Party on 5th June. She expressed her thanks to everyone involved and in particular to the Town Clerk and her team, Sarah Duran and Tim Forman, for their efforts in making the weekend such a huge success.

The Deputy Mayor reported that he had attended the Coventry City Council Mayor Making and had been honoured to light the Alcester Jubilee beacon with the Earl of Yarmouth.

5. Town Clerk's Report

The Town Clerk presented her monthly report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. She reminded Councillors to complete and return their new Declaration of Interests Form to her as soon as possible.

6. Annual Return

The completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2022 had been circulated in advance. The report from the Internal Auditor, Mrs S Griffiths had also been circulated in advance.

The Clerk confirmed that all financial documentation had been made available to the Internal Auditor who had attended Globe House on 6th May to complete the internal audit. Council considered the Internal Audit procedures for the year 2021-22 and agreed that they were adequate and effective.

There were no questions regarding the documentation supplied.

6.1 Approval of Annual Governance Statement

The statements on the Annual Governance Statement for the year ending 31st March 2022 were considered and approved. The Mayor asked Councillors to confirm that they were happy for her to sign the Statement. This was proposed by Cllr Neal-Sturgess, seconded by Cllr Wilson and carried unanimously. The Statement was signed by the Mayor as Chair of the Meeting and the Town Clerk. (*Minute reference – Annual Return*)



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6.2 Approval of Accounting Statements

The Accounting Statements for the year ending 31st March 2022 which had been prepared and signed by the Town Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer were considered and approved. The Mayor asked Councillors to confirm that they were happy for her to sign the Statements. This was proposed by Cllr Forman, seconded by Cllr Blake and carried unanimously. The Statements were signed by the Mayor as Chair of the Meeting. (*Minute reference – Annual Return*) The Mayor thanked the Town Clerk for her efforts in dealing with the audit this year.

7. Finance & General Purposes Committee

The Mayor confirmed that she was satisfied that Committee members approved the minutes from the preceding month, which were then signed. There were no questions about the minutes.

There were the following propositions from the Committee:

7.1 "To approve the Terms of Reference for the Finance and General Purposes Committee"

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

7.2 "To approve expenditure of up to £1000 by the Town Clerk to purchase supermarket vouchers to cover hardship cases."

The Town Clerk explained that during the Covid lockdown, a scheme had been initiated for referrals to the Town Clerk, for those who required urgent assistance to buy food. The F & GP Committee were proposing that the scheme be reinstated.

Cllr Blackman asked if the figure stated was sufficient and the Town Clerk explained that £1000 was an initial figure which could be increased if required. The proposition was proposed by Cllr Leask, seconded by Cllr Pusey and carried by Council.

8. Planning Committee

Cllr Bowe confirmed that he was satisfied Committee members approved the minutes from the preceding month, which were then signed. Cllr Bowe had issued a summary written report on the applications considered which had been circulated in advance. There were no questions about the minutes.

There was a proposition from the Committee:

8.1 "To approve the Terms of Reference for the Planning Committee."

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

9. Lead Councillors

9.1 Health and Wellbeing

The update report was presented by the Mayor. Cllr Mills commented on the excellent work being undertaken at the moment particularly the new community fridge project.

9.2 Youth Engagement

A report was presented by Cllrs K Foster and Leask. Councillors were reminded about the stall at the Court Leet street market on 12th June. Alcester Academy was thanked for raising £1000 for the community fridge.



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9.3 The Greig Hall

A report was presented by Cllr M Cargill on progress on the renovation works. Cllr A Foster asked if the business plan could be presented to Full Council which was agreed. Councillors were reminded about the craft stall being run at the Eric Payne Community Centre on 11th June in aid of the Greig Hall.

9.4 Road Safety and Speedwatch

A report was received from Cllr Foster on the speedwatch scheme. He is recruiting new volunteers and liaising with Great Alne Parish Council regarding training. Cllr Foster asked the Town Clerk to arrange a meeting with Cllr Daniell to discuss how local speedwatch schemes could be co-ordinated.

10. Motions from Councillors

10.1 Motion from Cllr Blackman to install a new litter bin

The motion sought to install a new litter bin next to the bench on the bridleway adjacent to the A46/A435 traffic island. It was agreed that the landowner would need to be identified before any action could be taken. The Town Clerk will establish ownership and report back to Cllr Blackman. The motion was deferred until a later meeting.

10.2 Motion from Cllr Blackman to declare a climate emergency

The motion requested that Alcester Town Council declare a climate emergency in line with hundreds of town and parish councils across the UK.

Cllr Blackman explained that he had been working on this item with Cllr K Foster. Cllr Bowe asked if a Lead Councillor should be appointed to manage this project. After a discussion, it was agreed that a Working Group would be formed which will be jointly convened by Cllr Blackman and Cllr K Foster.

The motion was then proposed by Cllr Blackman, seconded by Cllr K Foster and carried by Council.

11. Town Council Representatives

Alcester War Memorial Town Hall - Cllr Forman reported that a complaint had been received regarding disabled access to the first floor. Repairs were being undertaken to the stairs.

12. Payment of Accounts

The Town Clerk presented the Payment of Accounts for the preceding month. The accounts were proposed to be approved by Cllr Mills, seconded by Cllr Pusey and carried by Council.

13. Dates of future meetings

Planning Committee - Monday 20th June at 7 pm by Zoom

Finance & General Purposes Committee - Tuesday 28th June 2022 at 7 pm.

Full Council - Tuesday 5th July 2022 at 7 pm.

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings at Globe House.

The Mayor closed the meeting.