



**MINUTES OF THE ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 9th JANUARY 2023
AT GLOBE HOUSE, PRIORY ROAD, ALCESTER.**

Present

Councillors V Blake (Mayor), M Bowe (Deputy Mayor), K Cargill, M Cargill, W Mills, G Forman, C Neal-Sturgess, E Wilson, C Elliott, A Foster, A Leask, D Henderson, G Smithers and K Foster.

In attendance Mrs V Lowe, Town Clerk.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT DISCRETION OF MAYOR

There was no public participation.

District and County Councillors' Reports

Cllr Juned had submitted a written report which had been circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr P Daniell (County Councillor) and Cllr S Juned (District Councillor). Cllr K Greenaway and Cllr J Harmer (District Councillor) were absent.

2. Minutes of Council Meetings

The Mayor asked Councillors to consider for approval the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 5th December 2023. The minutes were proposed to be accepted by Cllr Mills, 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's diary of meetings is an appendix to these minutes. The Mayor reported that, together with the Deputy Mayor and the Town Clerk, he had met the Fire Station manager for Alcester, Lee Tresigne and a number of the Alcester crew to discuss the WFRS consultation. Councillors had been invited to visit the fire station – an invitation will follow.

5. Town Clerk's Report

The Town Clerk presented her monthly report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. There were no questions about the report. The Town Clerk was asked to thank Tim Forman for his excellent work in managing the replacement of the water main at the Eric Payne Community Centre.

6. Resignation

The resignation of Cllr Emma Randle on 12th December 2023 was noted by Councillors. The Mayor extended his thanks to Cllr Randle for her service as a councillor and wished her well with her new venture. The Town Clerk was authorised to notify Stratford DC of the vacancy and to post the appropriate notice of casual vacancy on the website and notice boards.



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7. Finance & General Purposes Committee

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

The budget for 2024-25 together with a briefing paper had been circulated by the Town Clerk in advance of the meeting. The Town Clerk presented these figures to Councillors which were discussed and approved.

At the request of Cllr A Foster, it was agreed that the Road Safety Working Group could put a proposition to Full Council during the financial year 2024-25 for projects up to a value of £1000, any such payments to come from General Reserves.

There were the following propositions from the Committee:

7.1 To agree a budget of £410,840 for the financial year 2024-25. Taking into account anticipated income of £41,500, to request a precept from Stratford-on-Avon District Council of £369,340 for the year 2024-25.

This was proposed by Cllr Bowe, seconded by Cllr Neal-Sturgess and carried unanimously by Council. The Town Clerk will submit the request to SDC.

7.2 To approve the updated Volunteer Policy dated December 2023. Cllr Wilson proposed an amendment to clause 7.1 which was approved. Cllr Mills proposed that the policy was adopted with this amendment, this was seconded by Cllr M Cargill and carried by Council.

8. Planning Committee

The Deputy Mayor as Chair of the Committee confirmed that he was satisfied that Committee members approved the minutes from the preceding month, which were then signed. There was a question about the objection to the planning application for Hopkins Precinct which was answered by the Deputy Mayor. The Deputy Mayor gave a summary of items discussed at the Committee meeting including notification that planning permission had now been granted for the rebuilding of The Three Tuns. There had also been considerable correspondence regarding the numerous telegraph poles being proposed by Full Fibre broadband across the town. SDC had confirmed that such infrastructure was permitted nationally and they had no grounds for objection.

9. Lead Councillors

9.1 Business and Tourism

A report from the Mayor and Cllr Elliott had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Mayor notified councillors about the 'in person' training which the Town Clerk had arranged on Action Counters Terrorism awareness. Cllr Elliott confirmed that the Alcester Business Club continued to meet once a month at Minerva Mill.

Following a question from Cllr Foster, the Mayor explained that he had been advised that Warwickshire Towns Network had offered support in improving disability access in market towns and further advice was anticipated.



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9.2 Youth Engagement

A report from Cllr Leask and Cllr K Foster had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Cllr Leask reported that it had been agreed to run a new Youth Club session on a Thursday for young people aged 14+. This would hopefully attract some additional attendees and would enable more adult topics to be tackled.

10. Flood Working Group

The Town Clerk had circulated her notes from the recent Flood Working Group in advance of the meeting. Cllr Neal-Sturgess updated Councillors on various items in the report. He reminded Councillors that it was primarily the responsibility of householders to protect their own properties. Cllr K Cargill asked if the Working Group could also look at issues of pluvial as well as fluvial flooding. In some cases, landowners might need to be approached to deal with drainage issues which were affecting residential properties. This was agreed. Councillors were reminded that the next Working Group meeting was at 5.30 pm on Tuesday 6th February immediately before Full Council. The Rest Centre subgroup will also meet at the same time.

11. Squash Courts Working Group

Cllr Mills updated Councillors on progress with the renovation of the squash courts. Temporary flooring had been installed and the gas supply had been disconnected, with thanks to Orbit. Initial stripping out work had been undertaken by demolition contractors. Bloor Homes had kindly agreed to fund the planning and building control applications, both of which were in hand. The insulation had been installed and the walls plastered. A group of Community Shed volunteers were currently painting the walls.

There remained a shortfall of circa £20k on total funding but further grant applications were pending. The project remained on track to be handed over to the Shed volunteers in June for fitting out with a full launch in August.

There was a further public meeting for volunteers booked for 1st February.

12. Town Council Representatives

There were no reports this month.

13. Payment of Accounts

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

14. Dates of future meetings

Planning Committee - Monday 15th January at 6.15 pm (including update from Bloor Homes at the start)

Finance & General Purposes Committee - Tuesday 30th January at 7 pm.

Full Council - Tuesday 6th February at 7 pm.

All meetings at Globe House unless otherwise stated.

The Mayor closed the meeting.



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Appendix

MAYOR'S REPORT 9 JANUARY 2024

Mayor's Diary since the last Council Meeting:

- 6 December – Crafty Lunch Club Christmas Dinner
- 7 December - Communications meeting
- 7 December - Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Town Clerk meeting
- 8 December – Dementia Café visit
- 8 December – Events Forum meeting
- 11 December – recording of the Mayor's Christmas message
- 12 December – Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting
- 14 December- meeting with Alcester Fire Chiefs query visit
- 17 December – Nine lessons and carols at St Nicholas
- 18 December – Planning Committee meeting
- 4 January 2024 - Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Town Clerk meeting
- 8 January 2024 – Face For All presentation, re new day care facility
- 9 January 2024 – Zoom meeting re Mayor's Awards evening