

ATM 2018

26th April 2018

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting for the Parish of Royal Wootton Bassett held on Thursday 26th April 2018 at 7.00pm in the Sacred Heart Church Hall, High Street, Royal Wootton Bassett.

PRESENT: Councillors: Rob Anstee, Steve Bucknell, Mary Champion, Janet Georgiou, Mike Farrow, Paul Heaphy, Sue Hughes, Nic Hughes, Jenny Stratton and Steve Watts.

Wiltshire Councillors: Mary Champion (as above) and Mollie Groom (late).

Electors of the Parish: Gabriel Sexton.

Officers in attendance: Johnathan Bourne, Town Clerk, Michelle Temple, Administrative Services Manager, Kelly Warren, Administrative Officer and Committee Clerk.

In the Chair: Councillor Steve Bucknell

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Bowler, Mike Leighfield, Caroline Redmond, Marion Sweet and Steve Walls.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED to confirm and sign Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Thursday 27th April 2017.

3. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor, Councillor Steve Bucknell, presented his report which included an overview of the work of the Town Council over the past 12 months.

The following items were included within the report: -

- The Royal British Legion County Parade – privilege to have our town host the event.
- The Boroughfields public toilets were opened early in the Mayoral year and now operated by Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council. Running costs are a third less than Wiltshire Council.
- The Bus Services – Mayoral correspondence to the bus companies following the dangerous activities with buses chasing each other around the town.
- The CCTV Suite – this has been newly refurbished and has helped CCTV supervisor Dave Williams secure a full compliment of 24 dedicated volunteers.
- The stone poppy – this sadly collapsed and is still being investigated by insurance engineers.
- The precept – has been kept stable for ten years and now only £4.31 per annum higher than 2007.
- Christmas Lights Event – another successful night for the town on 1st December 2017.
- Jubilee Lake – extensive works to reinforce the banks at the lake are now coming to a close. The costs of these works are under budget.
- The Town Hall – the stairway has been renovated and a quinquennial maintenance report has been agreed.

- The Neighbourhood Plan – the referendum result was a YES after 5 years of work.
- The Civic Awards presentation evening – celebrating those special people who really make our community what it is.
- Merchant House – Works are about to start to renovate this property which is owned by RWBTC. The aim is to secure this as a valuable asset for the future.
- Staffing – The admin team has seen some changes through retirements, maternity leave and ill health. Three new starters have been welcomed.
- Sparrow Lane – Finalising acquisition of this site from Wiltshire Council to develop as a quiet haven in the centre of our town.
- Swindon Road – Site has been acquired from Wiltshire Council and now talking to the Men’s Shed about their aspirations to develop the area.
- New Website and Repatriation Archive – these are projects that have been worked on this year but the results will be seen in the forthcoming months.
- The Town Council is nationally benchmarking its activities by applying for recognition under the Local Council Award Scheme, which is given to only to a very few parish and Town Councils.
- The Town Council is also considering creating a new strategic plan and a staffing report to consolidate this.

The Mayor passed on his thanks to the Town Clerk, Johnathan Bourne and the accountant, Kalpesh Patel for managing the Town Councils finances over the last year.

RESOLVED that the report be adopted.

4. QUESTION TIME

Members of the public were invited to ask questions of Councillors and Representatives, including charities, in respect of the reports submitted.

Copies of the reports were circulated at the meeting, outlining the activities of the various organisations over the past 12 months.

Mr Gabriel Sexton of 9 Huntsland asked whether there was an update with regards to opening a railway station in Royal Wootton Bassett. The Mayor advised talks are still ongoing. There is enthusiasm for one and the long term hope is for a railway line to take us to London Paddington.

The meeting closed at 7.18pm