

## **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

Minutes of the **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING** held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 6.00pm held remotely via Microsoft Teams.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Cllr E. Hudson, Deputy Mayor Cllr. M. Drummond, Cllrs S. Bowkett, A. Corfield, L. Davies, M. Davies, D. Dowell, J. Fielder, J. Morgan, D. Patrick and R. Pleded.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Cllr. K. Pollock WCC, Cllr. Bridget Thomas, 1 member of press, 5 members of public, the Town Clerk and the Assistant to the Town Clerk.

### **1. APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **2. MINUTES**

Proposed by Cllr. M. Davies, seconded by Cllr. Morgan and unanimously

#### **RESOLVED:**

**The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019 were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a true and correct record of proceedings.**

### **3. MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT**

The Mayor presented his report. Attached [**Appendix A**].

### **4. DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Thomas, representing Malvern Hills District Council presented her report. Attached [**Appendix B**], which had been circulated.

There were no questions.

### **5. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Cllr Pollock, representing Worcestershire County Council presented his report. Attached [**Appendix C**], which had been circulated.

There were no questions.

### **6. LOCAL POLICE REPORT**

Unfortunately, due to work commitments a representative of the Safer Neighbourhood Team could not attend the meeting. The report [**Appendix D**], which had been circulated, was read by the Mayor.

### **7. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

One member of the public wished to address the Council with regards the town centre.

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Tenbury faces a substantial challenge in recovering economically from the twin blows of the 2020 floods and the COVID pandemic, a particular asset in this recovery will be its retail high street incorporating a historic streetscape as an attraction to tourists and residents.

Unfortunately, certain aspects of this streetscape have an appearance of neglect, which will inhibit the prospects of recovery, by far the worst of these is the corner building at 1 Market Street, opposite the Crow. This corner retail site (currently occupied by Little Meadows Animal Charity) is in a prominent visual position and with a decorative original facade should be a focal point of the historical streetscape, unfortunately however, through neglect, it is in an extremely poor and deteriorating state and is a visual blight!

There are however very effective powers to deal with these situations which lie with the Local Planning Authority at Malvern Hills. This is s.215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Guidance on this power states "s.215 has been effectively used in.....town centre street frontages....LPA's should certainly not be afraid of using s.215 powers. LPA's reported it is a relatively straightforward power to use and it can deliver extremely good results".

I would ask that the Town Council uses its influence to press the LPA to exercise this power both to resolve the current visual blight at 1 Market Street and to act as an incentive to other town landlords to maintain their properties and prevent any developing appearance of a neglected town retail area.

I raised this issue personally with Councillor Penn back in January of this year but I have heard nothing further since.

The Mayor stated that it was unfortunate that Cllr. Penn could not attend this evening and asked Cllr. Thomas if she had any insight to the current situation.

Cllr. Thomas stated that the charity was based in a neighbouring town and an enforcement procedure was underway. Cllr. Thomas said that she has been dealing with the tenants in a difficult situation in Stoke Bliss and they had been prosecuted 3 times previously.

Cllr. Thomas stated that Cllr. Penn has contacted the owners, however had no response. The efforts to rectify the situation are ongoing.

The member of the public stated that it is his opinion that it is the owner, not the tenant who needs to be pursued and urge the Town Council and District Council to use their powers to resolve the situation. He stated that prolonged negotiation will draw out the situation, whereas threat and actual enforcement expedites a solution.

The Mayor stated that Malvern Hills District Council are investing in the recovery of the town centre and the Town Council can make the Director of Economy and Environment aware of the issue and ask to apply pressure to the Planning Authority.

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### **8. MAYOR'S PRESENTATIONS**

The Mayor presented Cllr. Jonathan Morgan with a Certificate for Long Service and thanked him for his 30 years' service to the residents of Tenbury and his continued work as a Member of the Tenbury Town Council.

The Mayor also presented Certificates of Commendation to the three long standing members of Tenbury Bloom, Janet Fielder, Sheila Harris and Charlie Wilcox for their hard work and dedication.

Meeting closed at 6.42 pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

## Appendix A

Mayor's Annual Report. 2020 - 2021

I have been Mayor of Tenbury for two years now and I would like to say what an unremarkable and uneventful period that has been.

Would it were so!

16 February 2020 Tenbury flooded with over 180 properties affected, including 96 businesses.

The town received excellent support from the emergency services and the High School provided an Emergency Rest centre. Thank you to Tenbury residents, Community Groups and Local businesses, as well as outside Agencies for their support and contribution.

We should not forget how badly people were affected by the flooding of their properties, some of whom have still not returned and the emotional scarring which cannot be repaired by Insurance monies.

A special mention to a flood fund formed by Reverend Sian and Reverend Mark, which was able to give instant support to those less fortunate.

The Town Council's properties have been significantly affected including The Regal, The Pump Rooms, The Pavilion, Cemetery, skatepark, play areas and Riverwalk.

The Pump Rooms was declared structurally unsafe, and the Clerk and Assistant to the Clerk had to move to a temporary office in the library. Thank you to WCC for their support. Council meetings were held at High School - thank you again to school for the community support.

The country went into its first COVID-19 Lockdown on 23 March - this saw the introduction of a new way of working for the Town Council by holding its meetings virtually. This enabled the Council to continue to operate and show resilience despite both the flooding and a pandemic.

COVID-19 Risk Assessments were required for all play areas, skatepark, tennis and bowling. Play areas repairs and new beam installed. Hand sanitiser stations were installed in the play areas and regular disinfecting carried. Areas have been open since last summer, which has been welcomed by families.

My thanks go to residents who just got on and supported one another. The Council recognised the efforts of Becky Evans and Sharon Shepherd for their prescription group collection and delivery service.

The Council was fortunate that work commenced quickly on the Pump Rooms and The Regal following the floods.

The Council also agreed to complete the renovation of the pavilion, which included the removal of the original asbestos tiles with replacement

characteristic orange / red tiles & generally restoring this 1900 building. The first bowls match was played at the site on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> August 1895 (Tenbury Vs Craven Arms) and it was probably still going on in 1896.

Extensive works have been carried out on The Regal, which has seen the old community centre revamped into a bright studio with a bar area and dressing room. New flooring has been installed in the auditorium and foyer areas, together with new seating in the lower area of the auditorium. Regal made more flood resilient with a large pump installed in the cellar and walls tanked.

The Regal was able to reopen briefly in December and we look forward to the venue reopening on 17<sup>th</sup> May. Excellent news the Regal was allocated grants of £116k and further £58k Arts Recovery Fund.

It took longer to agree the works to the Grade 2\* Listed Pump Rooms. Extensive works have been carried out to make Pump Rooms structurally safe and more flood resilient. God willing, we can now Look forward to holding weddings in the summer and Council face-to-face meetings. Thank you to Ionic Surveying Consultants and Plas Lime & Co for their efforts. Of course, they have received payment for their work but their efforts on behalf of the Council have been exceptional.

The Half-pipe in the Skatepark has been renovated, with this facility used by many youngsters.

The whole Town felt anxiety when there were further flooding concerns in October, December and a very near miss in January this year. However, the Town Council works closely with other local authorities and agencies, being kept fully informed on the situation with much relief when flooding was avoided.

Excellent news was received on 14 July 2020 that £4.9m Government funding had been allocated for flood defences in Tenbury.

The Town Council has been and continues to work closely with the Environment Agency and grateful to the EA Chartered Civil Engineer, Sophie Lee, for the regular updates on how the scheme is progressing, which is going well and hopefully will see work commence early next year.

The Council will be working with the EA on improving the Riverwalk.

Works are now progressing with surveying the infrastructure in town to assess why Market Street floods and to get to the bottom of the smells in Teme Street. [No pun intended]

Members of the Council are also on the Flood Action Group that regularly meet with the multi agencies.

The monies donated to my Charity have allowed donations to be made to Tenbury Food Bank and towards IT equipment for needy pupils at Tenbury High Ormiston Academy.

In addition, the Town Council has granted £1,000 to Tenbury Chamber of Trade towards the Christmas Lights and to Tenbury CAB.

In August, the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary VJ Day was marked in the remembrance garden.

Town Council continues to be consulted on numerous planning applications and street naming applications, by Malvern Hills District Council. The Town Council receives requests for land to be identified and provided for Allotments. It has been difficult to find suitable land, however a potential site may be available, and the Council have been liaising with the landowner's agent.

On 21 October, I had the pleasure of showing the High Sheriff of Worcestershire, Mark Jackson OBE around Tenbury. This including a visit to Tenbury pool, the Regal and the Foodbank run by St. Mary's Church, that provides so much support to the Town and to meet volunteers who had supported others during lockdown. Mr Jackson paid tribute to the resilience of the town.

In December, with the support of MHDC, it was good to see the town reopen and working with a Christmas Market.

The Town Council supported the High School by purchasing Christmas cards which were designed by a pupil.

The Council continue to work with Freedom Leisure and Tenbury Community Pool to increase sport and leisure provision for Tenbury.

We are fortunate to enjoy an excellent working relationship with District Council & WCC. My thanks go to Ken, Tony and Bridget. A special thank you to Councillor Pollock on his retirement from the County Council. In my view, he never failed to do his absolute best for this town.

I would like to record my personal thanks to my fellow Councillors and to Susan and Dave, our employees.

Finally, a special thank you to our exceptional Town Clerk, Lesley Bruton. Unless you hold my position, you cannot be aware of how much organisation and effort she puts into her duties.

## **ANNUAL REPORT MALVERN HILLS DISTRICT COUNCIL FROM CLLRS PENN AND THOMAS**

We would all agree that it has been a very strange and sometimes difficult year and we would all welcome the disappearance of the words Covid, Coronavirus and Pandemic. We have been very lucky in our area with fewer cases of COVID-19 than other regions in England.

Malvern Hills District Council has managed to maintain the planning and other matters via zoom meetings, which seem to have been popular as attendances have been extremely good. Of course, there is a positive outcome for a year of not having to travel to Malvern, helping to reduce our carbon footprint. There has been talk of continuing some Zoom meetings after lockdown. This may not continue with regard to the planning committee meetings and site visits would resume as soon as we receive notification that it is safe to do so.

Malvern Hills District Council has been instrumental in supporting local businesses etc with grants, not only after the floods, but are continuing to support Tenbury in the recovery period. The town should spring back to life once lockdown is over and the tourists return to visit our attractive streets, shops and eateries and they will be welcomed. We hope that the new Town Centre Manager will aid in this recovery.

We are pleased to announce the start of Ward Budgets for the year 2021 and Kamel Ambroziak (community services apprentice) will be the lead officer for this project. The running period now ends on the 19th of December 2021.

There has been recognition for Tenbury High School and an award was received from the High Sheriff of Worcestershire for the support they gave the community during the flooding of February 2020. The school took control of running the rest centre and provided excellent support to the emergency services.

Our economic development team made big efforts to organise markets in Tenbury but the pandemic made that challenging. Market Square was chosen, sight of the round market, to hold the one market in December. It is hoped that as the restrictions of the pandemic ease, this theme can be developed.

There has been publicity regarding litter picking and by contacting MHDC and signing up, a pack will be delivered to your door. This includes a long handle picker, gloves, sacks and a high viz jacket. Councillor Thomas has signed up and will clear St Mary's Close, Cralves Mead and the footpath from the church to Orchard Court.

We are looking forward to the reopening of the Pump Rooms when perhaps the first time they will be used, will be for the elections in May.

Both Councillor Penn and myself would like to wish Councillor Pollock a very happy retirement from office.

Cllr Bridget Thomas.

## TENBURY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

12.04.21

### COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

#### 1. Death of the Duke of Edinburgh

I hope it is not seen as presumptuous to mention this sad loss at this time. I would like to place on record my own respect and indeed affection for Prince Philip. As many others have said, he served the Queen and our Country – not to mention the Commonwealth – for many decades.

My own involvement came in two ways. Firstly, some 20 years ago, my younger daughter was presented with a Gold Award, as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, following her efforts through King's School, Worcester. She thoroughly enjoyed the event, did great work with some older people in care (an activity she continues to this day) and received the award from the Duke in person. She and her mother, who attended the ceremony, were told that he had made every such award since its inception in person, regarding the award with great significance.

Secondly, I helped judge the Prince Philip Award at the Dairy Event in Stoneleigh on three occasions. The awards, for the quality of the presentations, were made in the Chinese drawing room in Buckingham Palace by the Duke in person. It was great to be present and chat with him in an informal fashion.

#### 2. The Economy

We have to hope that this third lockdown is coming to an end, as planned by the government. So far, some 15% of the workforce has been furloughed, while other businesses have been forced to be closed. We have to hope that many will survive and flourish once restrictions are removed.

It would be wise for all of us to consider supporting local businesses and retailers, and this probably applies to vacations as well. We might hope that Tenbury and this area in general could benefit from the reluctance of many people to go abroad at this time.

While the economy has suffered under Covid, the County has succeeded in returning a balanced budget. This is partly because of huge grants from central government, for which we are grateful.

By the same token, we are confident that the apparent deficit in the coming years will be reduced by government help, so that we should not worry too much about future financial success.

#### 3. Public Infrastructure

It has been a great privilege to serve as a Cabinet Member for the last five years with responsibility for infrastructure, as well as the economy. A great many projects have proceeded in that time, but it would be foolish to believe that much of that success was due to the Cabinet Member.

Our roads and pavements are in good condition. Tenbury has benefited from the Public Realm investment that has made the town a prosperous centre for the retail trade and entertainment, not least through the Town Council's ownership of assets like the Regal.

This is complemented by our support for active travel – walking and cycling. This applies across the county, with investment in bridges, and walking and cycling tracks in many places.

It is to be hoped that the huge investment planned by the Environment Agency will be successful in stopping flooding in Tenbury and other villages on the River Teme. The plans are ambitious, but it will take some time to realise. They will certainly seek not to devalue or even destroy the qualities that make Tenbury so attractive.

#### **4. Local Matters**

Tenbury has benefited from the hard work of all those involved in the provision of Tenbury in Bloom, led in my time by Glenys Gluyas and Janet Fielder. The town has good reason to be grateful to all the companies and individuals who financed this provision, and I hope it will continue in the future during the transition to new leaders.

In May, I will also be handing over to a new County Councillor, following my deselection by the local Conservative Association. This brings to an end a most stimulating and enjoyable 12 years for me, seeking to represent the residents of the Tenbury Division.

Lest it be misunderstood, this division stretches from Little Witley to Little Hereford and embraces 18 town and parish councils or meetings. While living in Great Witley for 33 years, I had recently moved to Cheltenham for good personal reasons that no longer apply.

Now, while I retain a great affection for the Tenbury area, I will no longer have a formal role in seeking to represent it. That said, I wish you all a very prosperous future, where I hope the County Council will be seen to be a positive force in the community, assisting in making the area a better and more prosperous place to live.

**Cllr Ken Pollock**  
**Cheltenham,**  
**Gloucestershire,**  
**GL50 2BZ**  
**12.04.21**

Martley & Tenbury SNT

Firstly, I don't think I need to say that this year has been far from normal. Over the last year COVID-19 has affected the way each and every one of us lives our lives, this has clearly impacted on crime statistics and trends. As pubs and bars have been closed we haven't seen the same figures in relation to alcohol related disorder in the town that we saw in previous years.

During first lockdown things went very quiet as any cars on the move were be stopped and the occupants spoken to, this had an impact on travelling criminals as it made them more obvious than usual. Figures in relation to road traffic accidents and road related deaths have also reduced due to there being less traffic on the road.

We've also had to contend with policing the Coronavirus restrictions which was an added strain on resources. I'd like to say that from my personal observations Tenbury and the surrounding area have, on the whole, been fantastic in their observance of the restriction. Most of the reported breaches turned out to be malicious or the restrictions have not been fully understood by the persons making the call to Police.

We have seen some reports of anti-social behaviour, mainly on the skate park and on the Burgage, again with lockdown conditions imposed this is down on previous years, as the lockdown is eased I can see this starting to return to normal levels. With this in mind our intention will be to focus our attention in these areas in conjunction with partner agencies.

We currently aren't running any local surgeries and at this stage we don't know when we will be allowed to resume. You may have heard whispers that the local policing team would be moving into the fire station but this is no longer the case. I have been told that we will now be staying at Berrington Road. The team will be changing soon as I'm off to pastures new, until a replacement is found I will still be looking after the area. PCSO Stacey Birks has joined PCSO Ness Snape who you all know well I'm sure.

As said in previous years, we are easily contacted on [mt.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:mt.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk).