

## **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

Minutes of the **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING** held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2013 at 7.00pm in the Pump Rooms, Tenbury Wells.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Cllr S. Corfield, Deputy Mayor Cllr G. Price Cllrs, M. Drummond, E. Hudson, D. Ingram, J. Morgan; M. Willis

**IN ATTENDANCE:** WCC Cllr K. Pollock, MHDC Cllrs P. Grove and A. Penn, West Mercia Police Sgt Kent, Town Clerk, Admin Assistant to the Town Clerk, 1 Member of the Press, 7 members of the public

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr A Rigby.

**ABSENT:** S. Bowkett, M. Brennan, E. Weston, Cllr J. Watson, J. Da Costa

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Cllr A Rigby.

### **2. To receive the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2012**

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 21st April 2012, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record of proceedings.

### **3. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

None

### **4. Mayors Opening Remarks**

The Mayor Cllr S Corfield welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for their work in the year. She was had been pleased to see the return of the Fountain and the Bathroom fittings to the building Tenbury & District Museum to the Pump Rooms and thanked the group for their involvement and for opening the building to the public on some weekends. She noted that Tenbury & District Museum Society would welcome any new volunteers.

### **5. Mayors' Annual Report**

Attached (Appendix A)

### **6. District Councillors Report**

Attached (Appendix B) – Cllr Phil Grove, Malvern Hills District Council.

### **Questions from the Public**

#### **Recycling Bins**

Q: Some people had not had them delivered? and what happens if you don't want one.

A: Cllr Grove said it depend on where residents lived and ease of access to properties but all bins should be delivered to nominated properties by the first collection date.

Members of the public said that some people who wanted bins had not had them and vice versa. Cllr Grove agreed to look into this issue and report back.

### **7. County Councillors Report**

- Election - Cllr Pollock was grateful to those who had voted for him and to have been elected for a further 4 years. Conservatives now held a total of 30 seats on WCC, down from before. They now had a majority of 3. Labour had increased their seats from 4 to 12. Liberal Democrats had gone down from 9 to 4 seats Greens and Independents now had 2 seats each. Cllr Pollock gave his congratulations to Cllr Phil Grove for his election to represent the Hallow ward on the District Council. Full results could be seen on the WCC website. 2 cabinet members had been lost in the elections – a new 9 member cabinet was being elected.
- One of the cabinet members who had failed to secure re-election had held the education portfolio and been instrumental in ensuring that GCSE results in Worcestershire, which were below average 4 years ago, were now well above national average and above cohort of similar counties. It was sad to see someone who had contributed so much have to leave but such was the fickle nature of politics.
- Public Realm Works – dependent upon Tesco's moving ahead but as Tenbury store is relatively small still hopeful it will not be delayed.
- Cllr Pollock repeated his view that the concept of shared space in Tenbury needs further discussion. Shared space has proven unpopular in the recent consultation but he feared

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many had written off the idea without necessarily understanding the reasoning behind it. He noted that supermarket car parks were a perfect example shared space working very well and felt it should still be considered.

- Cllr Pollock said he understood that parking was a serious issue for tradespeople in the town and would continue to champion the move of the recycling site to free up more spaces on Palmers Meadow car park.
- WCC were facing cuts of £20M per year for each of next four years. This would be very, very challenging.
- Cllr Pollock had been Disappointed at tone of Cllr Brennan comments re spirit leaving town in recent newspaper coverage. In his opinion the spirit has not gone and was very supportive of response letter from Cliff Slade subsequently printed in the newspaper. He urged people not to be defeatist.
- Extra cash for roads and footpaths.
- Buses – 761 756 763 were now no longer run by WCC but County were working hard to maintain service with Teme Transport. From 4<sup>th</sup> June a new Co-ordinator would be based in the Tourist Information office so people can book the new services. Journeys will cost £1 each way for those with bus passes, or £3 for those without.

### Questions from the Public

Q: " In light of your comments on shared space will people be listened to if they are not happy with the proposed road improvements? Will the opinions of the public be taken into consideration?"

A: Yes people's views are taken into account which is why there have already been consultations. Understand that there are concerns for elderly and other residents with regard to shared space but convinced that shared space is designed to be safer and that the scheme has been drawn up by experts in this field and has worked in other places however counter-intuitive it might seem. Still very much in support of the concept but on consultation then would listen to the majority and take the most balanced view. Nonetheless sometimes new ideas just need people to have faith.

A member of the public noted that accidents do happen in supermarket car parks so they are perhaps not the best advert for shared space.

Q: The owner of Casa Portuguesa of 61 Teme Street travels a distance every day and said that she was not happy about the parking in the town and was considering moving her business to Bewdley. When she has a delivery the vans have to double park to unload her pottery. Sometimes her only option is to park in the bus stop (only when the buses have all gone).

A: From October 2013 parking enforcement on Teme Street would be taken on by MHDC which should greatly improve this situation.

Q: Bewdley Town has an half an hour parking limit would that be done in Tenbury?

A: Limit in Tenbury will be 1 hour but the real answer is to have the limits enforced because then people will adhere to them. Different times might be worth later consideration as part of the public realm works.

Q: Can the new enforcement fine large lorries still coming through the town ignoring the "not suitable for HGV" signs at the bridge?

A: No. These are no more than warning signs and the road is an A road. It should be noted that the majority of traffic is local, supplying businesses and farming - only 1% of the HGV traffic is genuine through traffic. It would be detrimental to the local economy to stop HGV's all together.

### **8. Local Police Report**

Sergeant Kent gave an overview of the last 12 months. In Tenbury crime is down by 7% and has been decreasing each year. Anti-social behaviour is also addressed and this has decreased by 6%. Tenbury has a very good team of Response Officers and CSO's. The Safer Neighbourhood Team work very well in the community and do a lot of hidden prevention with early stage intervention stopping people becoming offenders at a very early stage. Tracey Wood, Neighbourhood Officer leads the local team. The successful Family Fun Day held

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summer is a great event and all are welcome this year on Sunday 23rd June 2013. Pub watch has been a very successful collaboration between local landlords and the SNT. Neighbourhood watch is also to be encouraged. Nonetheless crime in Tenbury Wells is low and it is a safe place to live.

In the future the policing style will change. The Station will close as an office. The Police will share accommodation with another agency (not yet sure which one). Response officers will come from Leominster but the Safer Neighbourhood Team will still be based in Tenbury.

Sgt Kent did not know where she herself would be based but had enjoyed her time in Tenbury and hoped still be have some contact with the Town.

### **9. Questions from the Public**

#### **Mr K Griffiths regarding The Regal**

Q: Mr Griffiths made various points expressing his concern over the terms under which the Town Council had leased the Regal to the Regal Tenbury Trust viz. the legality of the document; the amount of rent being charged for the first 10 years and subsequent years of the lease; grant donations being given; and repairing responsibilities within the lease. Mr Griffiths also felt that the Freedom of Information request he had made should have been debated by the Council. He said that he was disgusted with the Town Council and he was going to the Press.

A: The Mayor responded that the information requested under the Freedom of Information Act had been correctly supplied by the Clerk according to practice and that Mr Griffiths had been given access to all of the information requested. The lease had been properly drawn up by the Town Council solicitors and the decisions regarding the detail of the lease had been publically debated at many Town Council meetings. The Deputy Mayor added that the building remained the property of the Council and as such the Council as landlord retained responsibility for structural upkeep. Even without the lease to the Trust the Council would still have these responsibilities. In entering into the agreement the Town Council felt it was no worse off and that as the Regal being run by the Regal Tenbury Trust was attracting people into the town this was a good outcome. It was often the case that buildings or land were leased for peppercorn rents when they served the wider community, the Swimming Pool being a good case in point. It was regretted that Mr Griffiths had not chosen to submit his further specific questions ahead of the meeting so that in depth answers could have been given immediately. Mr Griffiths was assured that if he would put his questions in writing he would receive written answers. The Town Council had nothing to hide on this matter and felt the success of the Regal since it began to be managed by the Regal Tenbury Trust was vindication of the decisions it had made.

#### **Mr Roger Thirlby regarding Palmers Meadow**

Q: Would it be possible to hire the far end of the Palmers Meadow to hold a Mower Race. Roger was the Secretary of the West Midlands Mower Association, a charitable organisation. A donation to the Mayors chosen charity would be given.

A: The Council Amenities Committee would consider such a request. Members present felt it was an idea which had some merit. Mr Thirlby was asked to email his request in more detail to the Town Clerk for inclusion at the next Amenities Committee meeting.

Meeting closed at 8:20pm

Signed.....

Date.....

# Annual Town Meeting

Tuesday 7th May 2013

## Report from the Mayor Councillor Susan Corfield

It has been an honour to be Mayor of Tenbury Wells and I have been very lucky to be Mayor in a year filled with great events both National and more local to Tenbury.

I started my year of office with celebrations for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. We had lots of fun despite the weather. The British spirit at its best.

The end of July brought two momentous occasions – the opening of the London Olympics and the re-opening of our much loved Regal cinema.

I thoroughly enjoyed the local Olympic events organised by our schools and it was my pleasure to give out medals to all the happy winners.

As for the REGAL - well where to start? Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> July was our very own Oscars with a special ceremony to thank all who had worked so hard to renovate our wonderful old cinema. We had a night of film, music and dancing which will long be remembered. On Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> – the actual 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Regal's opening in 1937 - we held a special family birthday party. I hope this will become a tradition in the town to celebrate this unique gem for many years to come. I would like to take this opportunity to thank once again not just those who worked so hard in the last year but also all those involved in securing the HLF grant which made it all possible in the first place.

In September the Council handed over the running of the Regal to the Regal Tenbury Trust and I have to say I think this was one of the best decisions made during my term of office. The shows and films now offered in our town are the envy of all other Mayors in the local Chain Gang and I am so pleased that the dedicated group of volunteers running the Trust are having such success. Well done to all who are involved. Now that I have more time I may just join in myself, it looks great fun. Long may it continue.

The business of the Council has run smoothly this year and it has been a surprise to see how many different responsibilities we have in the town. As individual councillors we do not always realise all that goes on day to day but being Mayor has really opened my eyes.

Sadly there are occasions where media reporting of our work has been less than celebratory making it hard not to feel our hard work has been in vain. As councillors we can all play our part in fighting negativity by choosing our words carefully when speaking on any matter – and we must always remember that whatever we say it will be assumed that individual opinions are those of the Council – which is not always the case.

During this year of office I have very much enjoyed the role of ambassador for our lovely town. I have attended functions hosted by many of the Mayors in our three neighbouring counties and it has been my honour to tell everyone what a wonderful place we live in. My Civic functions have brought many of these same Mayors to Tenbury and they have all agreed that I was not exaggerating in my praise.

The Town have been generous in their support for me during the year and I have been able to raise a total of just over £2500 pounds for my chosen charities.

Finally I would like to thank my Deputy, Cllr Price and all of the other Councillors who have supported me in my duties this year. The greatest thanks go to the Town Clerk for all her hard work and guidance. I look forward to moving to the back bench and seeing it all from more of a distance next year.

## Tenbury Town Council Report.

Life as a Malvern Hills District Councillor continues to be both interesting and challenging, with the past 12 months proving to have been a particularly eventful period. Four major issues have dominated the local political agenda:

- Implementing changes to car parking and laying the groundwork for the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement throughout the District from October 2013
- Getting approval from Council of the joint South Worcestershire Development Plan, paving the way for submission to the Secretary of State in April and an Examination in Public in July 2013
- Introducing ‘wheelie bins’ and fortnightly re-cycling collections following the winning of a £1.63m government grant to enable us to maintain the highly-valued weekly black bag ‘residual’ waste collection service.

Cllr Penn and I have been closely involved in many of the most controversial matters.

Malvern Hills is one of the smallest District Councils in the country, rated by the Government as one of the most efficient and a council that levies one of the lowest Council Taxes in the UK. Of our 154 staff, roughly one third are employed in connection with refuse collection and street scene activities like street cleaning, litter-picking, maintenance and car park management. A second third are involved with planning, housing and conservation – as befits an authority with a large Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. But that means only some 50 staff are available to do everything else – from finance to strategic direction, sports & leisure to Tourist Information and legal to economic development. So resources are constantly stretched and one way of getting more from less is for elected Members to do some of the work – so all our Councillors are expected to take part in workshops, training sessions, Task & Finish Groups, working parties and Council Policy Groups as well as Committees.

But, despite our heavy commitments at Council level, both of us have tried hard to respond promptly to enquiries from residents. We’ve also given support to

our three Parish Councils through regular attendance at their meetings. In return we have very much appreciated the public support that Tenbury Town Council has given us over past 12 months.

You know that both of us sit on the Northern Area Development Control Committee and this aspect of our planning role is always engaging, sometimes complex – and often fascinating.

So it's been a busy year blessed with some successes, and with yet more changes in the pipeline, we don't expect next year to be any less hectic.

Finally, we would like to thank all Town Councillors for the work they also do for our communities, they will appreciate that being an elected councillor is a real responsibility - but also a great privilege. We are certainly still enjoying it, Thank you.