



CHILTON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Town Assembly

held on Tuesday 1st June 2021 in St. Aidans Church Hall, Chilton

Cllr. Elizabeth Bruce Mayor of Chilton Presiding.

Present: Councillors:- S.Sutherland, A.Bruce, J.Cairns, V.Collinson, P. Davies, P.Malpass, L.Rundle, K.Hornsby, M.Young

County Cllr. J.Cairns was also present in her role as County Councillor

In attendance: Mr.. J.Robinson, Acting Town Clerk, Mrs. V.Nelson, Office Manager.

Members of the public: *15 members of the public were present.*

The Mayor on behalf of the Town Council welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked those who would be presenting reports.

AA01/21 **APOLOGIES**

RESOLVED: To accept apologies and reasons for absence from Councillor A.Hughes and G. Wheadon.

AA02.21 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Nil.

AA03/21 **MEMBERS' DISPENSATION**

None.

AA04/21 **ANNUAL REPORT OF CHILTON TOWN COUNCIL**

The Chairman referred residents present to the printed Annual Report of Chilton Town Council 2020/21 (copy on file). He specifically addressed the various issues in the report covering the last Civic year. In welcoming the new members to the Council she also thanked the members who had stood down during the year and thanked them for their service, as well as welcoming those who had been recently elected to the Council. She also wished on behalf of the Town Council and the Community in general to thank former County Councillor C.Potts for the sterling work she had undertaken for many years. She welcomed the new

County Councillor, Cllr. J.Cairns.At this point the Mayor presented a bouquet of flowers to Cllr. Potts husband to pass on to her, on the Councils behalf.

The report also covered the main activities undertaken by Council and the various roles played by members.

She wished to place on record the Communities thanks to ALL NHS Staff, care Staff and all KEY WORKERS for the role they have played in both supporting and protecting the Community during the COVID Pandemic.

The Mayor closed by thanking all members of the Council for their contribution to the work of the Council during the past year and to the staff for all hard work and dedication given. He referred to the Town Clerk being on long term sickness and wished Paul well on behalf of the Council.

She advised the meeting the report will be also available on the Council website.

AA05/21 **MINUTES OF ANNUAL TOWN ASSEMBLY 2019**

The minutes of the Annual Town Assembly of 2019 were formally agreed moved Cllr. A.Bruce and seconded Cllr. S.Sutherland.

The Acting Town Clerk advised he had been unable to find the 2019/20 Accounts in the office as a result of staff absence. A special Town Assembly will be called to present them. This was agreed.

AA06/21 **REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

Mr. L.Potts read a prepared report from Mrs. C.Potts on her last year as County Councillor (copy on file). The report covered the issue of COVID and the County Council response to same. A list of all organisations who received funding via her members budgets, was warmly received. A vintage tea party had been planned for 2020, but deferred due to COVID, this will still go ahead. Various major improvements in the ward were also highlighted in the report. Mrs. C.Potts concluded it had been an honour and privilege to serve the Community and wished her successor well.

The Mayor thanked Mr. L.Potts on behalf of the Council for presenting the report on his wife's behalf.

County Councillor J.Cairns reported on her success at the election being linked to her being politically independent and her programme to represent the public. She is Passionate, Cares and willing to listen to the residents of Chilton. Her committees at Durham County Council will be Economy and Enterprise as well as Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committees, South Durham Planning and Durham and Darlington Fire Authority.

The new administration are reviewing the new County Headquarters at the Sands site and also re-opening the DLI Museum. They are undertaking a County wide Strategic Investment Programme, County wide not just a focus on the City of Durham.

She concluded by both thanking and wishing Cllr. C.Potts well in her retirement, thanking her for her support and friendship.

QUESTIONS FROM PARISHONERS

The Chairman opened the meeting to questions from the floor:-

- a. An application for 2 disabled parking spaces has been submitted outside of the post office, to the County Council. A letter was submitted to the Town Council on the 27th November 2020, seeking their support, but no reply has been received. The Acting Town Clerk advised he would ensure it was discussed at the June Town Council meeting.
- b. A resident wrote some 15 months ago asking for help in regards to disability and allotments. It was agreed to re-visit the letter and reply to the letter author
- c. Limited funds to the Town, why spend £30,000 on Miners Welfare. Agreed to ask Trustees to respond on the Town Council behalf
- d. Discussion on Miners Welfare Charity in regards to finance/facilities/CIO Status/administration
- e. Request for a response to where the sale of Charity Land to the value of £106,000, where the funding is, Mayor replied to the question identifying the accounts in which funding is held
- f. Several questions raised in regards to roles and responsibilities of Charity Trustees
- g. One resident asked why Miners Welfare was not being run as a profitable concern instead of Town Council giving grants. Role of Charity/CTC was explained, it was not envisaged to be a profit making venue but a public amenity supported by CTC
- h. Questions in regards to the number of alleged keys to the Miners Welfare ground, the resident stated a figure of 150 being held by Tennis Club was not true. The Mayor responded to this area, with reference to the Council Insurance Policy
- i. A resident asked why Land sale was for £108,000 but only £100,000 put into Charity account. Mayor advised she believed the £8,000 was used for the legal payments for the sale. Acting Clerk to confirm to resident in writing
- j. Several members of the public, asking why Council Minutes are not on the website. Acting Clerk agreed to deal with this topic and upload all available minutes to the site
- k. Several residents spoke in negative terms re website/content/accessibility. Mayor and Acting Clerk advised website is currently being reviewed and DCC current providers, have been asked to attend a contract review meeting
- l. Several members of the public asked why Council Policies are not on the Website, Acting Clerk to review all Policies and upload those agreed by CTC
- m. A question was asked why the drainage project for the football field due to commence in March 2020 had not proceeded. Acting Clerk advised meetings are being arranged with Lord Eldon Estates to re-commence discussions to take the project forward
- n. Question on the roles and responsibilities of audit officers, answer given by Acting Town Clerk
- o. Question re increasing public consultation on services being provided
- p. Improving communication, to include social media/more noticeboards/notices in the Chapter
- q. Question re cost of allotments post size review in 2022, Mayor advised she would take this to the next Allotment Committee meeting
- r. Member of the public advised she was referred to as a Councillor in the Annual Report working for the foodbank during the Pandemic, she wished it to be highlighted it was in a voluntary capacity, she had not undertaken this role as a Councillor but as a member of the public.
- s. A former Town Councillor raised concerns that any offer of assistance/suggestions for help during the COVID pandemic had received a no from the Town Clerk, yet other communities locally had implemented the exact ideas. Mayor advised she could not comment on advice given by the Town Clerk as she was currently on sick leave
- t. Reference to Political group meetings and influence on decision making
- u. One resident asked about budget setting process, current budget, 3 main areas of spend and 3 priorities. Acting Town Clerk advised the Council will shortly be setting its 4

year MTFP which will cover these areas. It was agreed to add this area to the agenda of the Specail Town Assembly to be called shortly

- v. Several members of the public refered to lack of youth centre/clubs
- w. One member of the public asked why over the last 3 years 7 Councillors had resigned. The Mayor responded that she hoped over the next 4 years the current Council will be able to work more closely together
- x. It was requested all meetings be recorded and the recording be avaiallbe for public inspection
- y. One residen asked that all notices be put up in the Post Ofcie, Acting Clerk to request Postmistress if this is possible and if she agrees to be implemented
- z. Several residents asked that all minutes, agendas and financial details as well as audit be uploaded onto clearly accessiblte areas of the webiste,
- aa. Request that the 2019/20 accounts be uploaded more clearly onto the website
- bb. Several members of the public wished to thank the Acting Town Clerk for returning to cover staff sickness.

The Maoyr thanked the public for their questions and assured feedback and responses would be provided to the specific issues raised.

15/18 DATE OF 2020 TOWN ASSEMBLY

To be held 8th March 2022

Meeting closed 8.35pm

Signed:-

Mayor of Chilton