

**STOW ON THE WOLD ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> MAY  
2019 AT 7.00 PM AT STOW SOCIAL CLUB, WELL LANE, STOW ON THE WOLD,  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

**PRESENT:** Town Councillors B Eddolls (Chairman), S Clarke, J Davies, H Cheston, M Curtis, V Davies, Mrs H Siphthorp, Clerk/RFO of council & Ms E Sajewicz, Deputy clerk of council, Ward County Cllr N Moor, Ward District Cllr D Neill, PC J Page, Rev M Short, Mrs R Scutt (Head of Stow Primary School) and approximately 45 members of the public

**APOLOGIES:** Town Cllr A White & Ms B Banning

**1. WELCOME**

Cllr Ben Eddolls, Chairman of Stow Town Council, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Stow Social Club for setting everything up. He introduced Stow Social Club's president, Mr Cahill Murphy. Mr Murphy spoke about developments at the club and what the club wanted to achieve for its members and for the wider community. He said the club had been losing relevance recently. The first priority had been financial stability and thanks to recent events and fundraising, membership had increased to almost 300. Financial stability had been achieved but it was an ongoing effort. The second priority was the social element. He thanked the lady members for their continued efforts. Currently only bingo and darts but the club was keen to be a central local focal point for the community. The room upstairs was available for groups and family gatherings at a nominal fee and he asked everyone to spread the word. He thanked the club's committee and particularly Mr Kenny Powell for their hard work.

**2. TO SIGN AS CORRECT THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING THAT TOOK PLACE ON  
19<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2018**

The minutes were agreed and signed by chairman as a true and accurate record.

**3. REPORT FROM LOCAL POLICE**

PC Page explained the staffing and set up at Stow Police Station. He spoke about the latest crime figures. Domestic burglaries were down from 25 to 2. Thefts from motor vehicles continued to be reported and he reminded everyone not to leave valuables in vehicles. PC Page then took questions from members of the public responding as follows. Robberies in the area tended to be carried out by travelling organised crime groups.

Stow Police Station was staffed 24/7 with those officers responding to 999 calls, road accidents, etc. Reception desk was open Monday to Wednesday but at other times officers could be out and about.

Gypsy fair had decreased in size so there were fewer officers assigned. This month's fair had seen minor incidents. He added that the Police never tell the businesses to close or not serve travellers during the fair which had been banded around the town. The decision was made by the business owner.

Police were willing to meet with supporters of an ANPR camera for Stow.

Cllr Eddolls thanked PC Page for his report.

**4. GCC'S HEAD OF WASTE & RECYCLING TO TALK ABOUT RECYCLING AND PLASTIC FREE  
COLEFORD**

Speaker had been unable to attend.

**5. REPORT ON STOW PRIMARY SHOOOL – MRS R SCUTT, HEAD TEACHER**

Mrs Scutt said she had been at the school for 17 years and has had four Ofsted inspections with everything going well. There were 140 places and 26 in the nursery. She spoke of the massive support received from the community, the PTFA, wider community, volunteer help, running

club, transport, pet therapy, fundraising, concreting, trees, pond clearing, community lunches, Police who were amazing and always helped in so many ways and prioritised safeguarding, as well as the other organisations in the town. She thanked the town council for its support and for listening to the children and responding with the special "STOW" firework. She thanked the library staff, Tesco and the Co op for always providing what the school needed. She said the playground had been refurbished and £24,000 had been raised by the PTFA. A team of local people had canoed to raise funds and she thanked them and many others who had provided support for the school.

Mrs Scutt said the children had been out and about, swimming in Bourton, training with Cotswold School, litter picking, church, library and outdoor activities. It was important that children learned to serve the community and help others so they had established links with Edwardstow Court and other retirement homes. Research had shown it was great for children to spend time with older people. As a bonus Edwardstow Court was providing employment for many parents. Teachers were to have training on how to teach about dementia which would have great benefits.

Cllr Eddolls thanked Mrs Scutt for her report.

## **6. OVERVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE TOWN COUNCIL AND THE YEAR AHEAD – CLLR BEN EDDOLLS, CHAIRMAN OF STOW TOWN COUNCIL**

Cllr Eddolls spoke about the new council membership following elections in May 2019. He thanked outgoing members Colin Smalley, Sue Green and Mike Moseley and welcomed new members Hugo Cheston, Lynne Rixon and Maggie Deacon.

He began his report by speaking about council grants – new policy on grants whereby applications would all be considered at the June council meeting. Grants in last financial year had been given to Stow Motor Show, Stow Cotswold Festival, Stow Community Land Trust, Stow Cricket Club, Villager Community Bus, Cotswold Friends, St Edward's Church Christmas Tree Festival, Centre 67 (Stow Youth Club), Stow Civic Society, Stow RBL and Rotary Club of the North Cotswolds.

New defibrillator had been purchased for cabinet on exterior of Stow Pharmacy. A training event on how to use the defibrillator would be taking place on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2019 from 9.30 am at Stow Youth Club (organised by council) – Free to attend and all welcome.

Buckingham Palace Garden Party – former Cllr Vera Norwood had been nominated by the council for the GAPTC draw and her name was pulled out of the hat. She would be going to a Garden Party next week. She is naturally very excited at having this opportunity.

New deputy clerk Liz Sajewicz joined on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2018.

Clerk gained her CiLCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration) qualification and this means that the council can now use the General Power of Competence from Localism Act 2011.

Cllr Eddolls thanked the advisors on council committees namely Messrs Jack Baggott, Kit Ayers, Geoff Parke, Nigel Surman, Rev Martin Short, Graham Golby and the numerous volunteers who helped with the bonfire and Christmas tree lights switch on events – without their help with such limited resources it would not be possible to run such events.

He also thanked Ward County Cllr Nigel Moor and District Cllr Dilys Neill for their help and support of the town and congratulated Cllr Dilys Neill on being elected Vice chairman of the CDC.

He acknowledged the passing of former Cllr Keith Cox.

#### **Council plans for the coming year:**

- Hoping to purchase the Youth Club building.
- New council website and revamp of Facebook page.
- Tree survey has been completed for all trees in the council's ownership. Will be a very useful tool for council to budget and be proactive in caring and maintaining for these trees over the next 5 years.
- Hope to start a quarterly newsletter which will be delivered to every property in the town and be available in public places like the library etc.
- Stow Loop is a group email list which is sent to residents (and some businesses) and a great way to communicate and he encouraged everyone to sign up if not already on.

#### **Burial Board**

- Overflow cemetery car park resurfaced.
- Lych gate and bier house roofs repaired.
- Refurbishment of cemetery gates, fencing and benches almost complete and ongoing throughout the cemeteries.
- New lavender hedging planted at cemetery entrance flower borders and growing well and hopefully will make quite a display in late June.
- St Edward's churchyard the metal railings at main entrance & pedestrian gates and lantern lamp have been repainted.
- Tesco grant funding achieved towards cemetery path resurfacing for £1,000. All the paths in the cemeteries will be resurfaced during this financial year.
- A dry stone wall is currently being erected on the boundary of New Cemetery and adjacent to Brio Development.
- Plans for the coming year include marking out of plots in Cemetery Meadow as running out of space in New Cemetery and also rearranging plots in Garden of Remembrance.

#### **Parks and Square Committee**

- New VIC noticeboard near Maugersbury Road car park.
- A dog fouling campaign took place in July 2018 and a litter pick in April 2019.
- Christmas lights switch on event was well attended.
- Annual bonfire event held on 2nd of November and was a huge success.
- Completed repairs to play equipment.

#### **Planning, Traffic & Parking Committee**

- New air pollution monitoring device installed at Unicorn junction and results will be made available after it has been in situ for 12 months.
- 20 mph zone put in place.
- 7.5 weight restriction for Digbeth Street.
- Second Benchmarking Report for the town was carried out and as a result a further in depth parking survey is to take place in June 2019.
- Community Speedwatch & STAC.
  - Plans for the coming year. Work towards a 7.5 tonne weight limit for Adlestrop Bridge instead of Sheep Street which the police objected to. Continue to work towards finding suitable land in the town for a new car park. Strive towards getting some affordable housing in the town.

He reported that the Community Payback Team had been doing a great job working in the cemeteries, allotments, playing fields, Well Lane, St Edward's Churchyard etc. They come to the town on average once a week.

### **Neighbourhood Development Plan**

Cllr Eddolls introduced Cllr Maggie Deacon and invited her to speak as the new chairman of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group. Cllr Deacon said a Neighbourhood Plan would prevent inappropriate development but should enable us to have development we want like truly affordable housing, car parking, work/live units and sports facilities. The group was keen to get a couple more members, particularly people with long links to Stow, young people and people with young families and business owners. She was also keen to involve residents to test potential ideas and invited anyone interested in either role to contact her.

## **7. REPORT FROM GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR NIGEL MOOR, COTSWOLD DIVISION, STOW ON THE WOLD**

Cllr Moor said he was cabinet member for environment and planning and he had been working with Stow since 2013 to improve safety, congestion, etc. He spoke about:-

- Realigning parking in the square and more disabled and relocation of coach parking
- New 20 mph (Stow) and 30 mph (Maugersbury Road) restrictions which other towns were emulating
- New footpath to link with Monarch's Way
- Weight restrictions – Adlestrop Bridge is considered most enforceable way to reduce HGVs. GCC are working with Oxfordshire County Council on signage which he believed would get HGVs to use M40 instead of coming through Stow
- Improved phasing of traffic lights at Unicorn Junction
- Deterring traffic from Back Walls
- Working on removing Fosseway from the boundary with Warwickshire to Unicorn Junction from the designated freight route (to the A46 and M40 instead), which should be made easier by construction of the "A417 missing link" – consultation will take place this Autumn
- Examining impacts to Unicorn Junction and business case for digitising four sets of traffic lights up to Tesco
- Library – Stow is one of the most successful and there is no question about its future
- GCC has pledged the county will be carbon neutral by 80% by 2030 and 100% by 2050. A draft strategy is being prepared and will be out for consultation in Autumn
- Suggestion that Neighbourhood Development Plan consider requirement for new housing to be low carbon.

Cllr Moor invited questions from members of the public:-

- Speed of traffic on Fosseway; pollution; no safe pedestrian crossing to the QEII playing field
- Speed vehicles drive on country roads. Cllr Moor said risk based assessments determined where to put attention.
- 20 mph welcomed but suggestion that additional sign needed because the sign by the Fountain junction could be missed because of other distractions
- GCC response to funding crisis in schools? Cllr Moor said GCC focusses on facilities and buildings and is investing in schools including Stow. He lobbies and supports our MP to get fairer funding.

Cllr Eddolls thanked Cllr Moor for his report and his support for the town.

## **8. REPORT FROM COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL WARD COUNCILLOR DILYS NEILL**

Cllr Neill said she was delighted to be elected and that it was a joy and pleasure to work with Stow and the surrounding parishes. Her priority was to represent everyone and work harmoniously with colleagues from all parties. She invited everyone to look at the manifesto on

the Liberal Democrat website, saying she was keen to see affordable housing for Stow – quality housing, carbon neutral, something that would be a beacon for other locations. Other priorities were parking, provision for young people and social isolation. She reassured anyone who might be worried about a Liberal Democrat council that everyone was pulling in the same direction. She described the new team on the council, saying it was a younger team and included working mothers and a housing association tenant. Cllr Neill said she would be on the Planning committee which looked at applications where the planning officer's decision was contested by the ward member and would be a member of the Overview and scrutiny committee to oversee the workings of council. She said she loved hearing from people and invited anyone to get in touch with her.

#### 9. **STOW COTSWOLD FESTIVAL**

Mr Ron McAlpine spoke saying that the festival was held every 2 years on the third Saturday in July. This year it would be on 20<sup>th</sup> July. The Square would be closed from 11am to 11pm. The festival's aim was to promote Stow to visitors and give the people of Stow a good day out. It was non profit and will be supporting Stow Disability, Stow Almshouses & Stow Community & Family Hub this year. He described some of the stalls and entertainment planned. He thanked the town council for its support and said the festival was still seeking volunteers and sponsors.

#### 10. **STOW ARTS WEEK**

Ms Lindy Allfrey said there were 10 art galleries in Stow and they were organising an Art Week for 28<sup>th</sup> September to 6<sup>th</sup> October 2019. There would be events, demonstrations and talks, with a late evening on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October. They hoped to encourage visitors and see Stow as the place to come for paintings outside London. The week would bring more business to B&Bs and hotels. Cllr Moor expressed support and invited the organisers to contact him in relation to a grant.

#### 11. **OTHER LOCAL ORGANISATIONS WHO WANT TO SPEAK**

**The Rev Martin Short** said he had been here for 7 years and was impressed with so many people doing wonderful work for Stow.

He said that of the churches in Stow, the Methodist Church had closed, the Baptist Church was at a point where it was no longer sustainable and the Catholic Church no longer had a resident priest. The Church of England had lost 13 members of its regular congregation, a fifth of the total number. He said that after 1000 years of a Christian presence in Stow it was now a challenge to sustain it. People who attended church on Sundays couldn't pay all the bills. Rev Short said there was a very large painting hanging (at back of church on the left as you go in) were a possible a second door might be needed in that location for warmth, so he asked whether the people of Stow would support offering the painting to the Notre Dame to contribute to replacing art treasures lost in the fire. Rev Short then took questions from members of the public.

A member of public asked what had happened to the Baptists and Methodists. Response was that there were larger congregations in Chipping Campden and Chipping Norton. She then went on to suggest that if Catholics and Baptists could worship in St Edward's Church that could release two buildings for truly affordable housing.

**Mr Hugo Cheston spoke on behalf of Cricket Club president Bill Cheston.** He said the pavilion had been renovated with the help of funding from Tesco. The club wanted to open the pavilion for everyone to use and he invited anyone who might want to use it to an open evening on Wednesday.

**Mr Mike Curtis spoke on behalf of the Almshouse charity.** He said the almshouses were single occupancy and residents were tested every 3 years to ensure they were still eligible. They were for people of all ages not just older people. The charity would welcome more support.

**Mr Mike Curtis spoke on behalf of the Stow Community and Family Hub.** He said in 2017 GCC had offered the centre to the school but the school didn't want it so trustees took it on. Activities included yoga, gong baths and clubs for children. During daytime, the Hub was used for supporting children who had been excluded or had behavioural difficulties.

A representative spoke on behalf of **Stow Cotswold Festival** saying tombola prizes were needed. She appealed for any items worth at least £5 and said vouchers for businesses would also be gratefully received.

**Mr David Germaney spoke about the Read Easy charity** which provided one to one reading and writing tuition for people over the age of 18. He said 10% of adults couldn't read or write and many were unwilling or embarrassed to admit it. The charity had great results. He appealed for people willing to teach and to learn to make contact.

**Mr David Germaney spoke about the Baptist Church** saying it was struggling by not quite closed. There were plans to turn the burial yard into a memorial garden with an area of public open space/seating.

**A resident of Talbot Square** asked about disabled access to the Cricket Field. He also observed that there was a large area of grassland that would lend itself to wildflower planting which would benefit the community and wildlife and save money on grasscutting.

**Cllr Jo Davies** spoke to thank Cllr Ben Eddolls for being Chairman of council for the past year and this was supported by lots of applause.

Cllr Eddolls ended the meeting by thanking the Clerk, Mrs Heather Siphthorp and Deputy clerk, Ms Liz Sajewicz and the Stow Social Club for their hospitality this evening.

## **12. MEETING CLOSED**

Meeting closed at 8.49pm.

Minutes taken by Ms E Sajewicz, Deputy clerk of Stow on the Wold Town Council