

**STOW ON THE WOLD ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9TH MAY 2017
AT 7.00 PM AT STOW SOCIAL CLUB, WELL LANE, STOW ON THE WOLD,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

PRESENT: Town Cllrs: M Curtis, Chairman, S Clarke, B Eddolls, S Green, V Davies, P Day, J Davies, C Smalley, Ward County Cllr N Moor, PS R Knapp, Mrs R Scutt, Head Teacher, Stow Primary School, Mr S Jones, Vice Chairman of Stow RBL branch & circa 50 members of the public

APOLOGIES: Town Cllrs: A White, M Moseley, J Scarsbrook & Ward District Cllr D Neill

1. WELCOME

Cllr Curtis, Chairman of Stow Town Council welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained that this was not a council meeting although the town council do organise it. It is a meeting which allows not only the town council to give a report but also the Ward District & County councillors, police, school, along with any other organisations in the town who wish to participate. It gives an opportunity to share views and ideas for the town saying it is important that everyone works together to ensure that the interests of all are considered and acted upon where possible. He said Stow is an important historical town in the heart of the Cotswolds and tourism has an impact on everyone. It helps provide jobs and amenities but does impact on traffic and parking in the town.

2. TO SIGN AS CORRECT THE MINUTES OF ANNUAL TOWN MEETING THAT TOOK PLACE ON 10TH MAY 2016

It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting should be signed by the chairman as being a true and accurate record.

3. REPORT BY POLICE FROM SGT RICHARD KNAPP

Sgt Knapp began his report saying that for the period April 2016 to March 2017 there had been a total of 109 incidents reported which is a decrease of about 10% when compared with the same period the previous year. He explained that there had been changes in the way they record crimes and for instance burglary of dwellings now include sheds. Fraud was down from 27 to 4 but again he thought this may be attributed to the change in recording. Sgt Knapp then took questions. Town Cllr Eddolls thanked the police for their hard work. He said that residents should be encouraged to report any incidents to the police by calling 101 if a non emergency otherwise 999.

4. REPORT FROM STOW PRIMARY SCHOOL HEAD TEACHER – MRS REBECCA SCUTT

Mrs Scutt gave a very interesting report on the huge number of activities that the school has been involved in over the past year. There had been many trips out and the school continue to get involved in lots of sporting activities too. The police had visited the school and given a talk on internet safety. There are close relationships with St Edward's Church and also the Baptist Church. The children had even taken part in a mock christening, funeral and wedding. The school continue to play an active part in the Armistice Parade too. In conjunction with the town council they had also taken part in the nationwide event called "Have a field day" which took place on the QEII field. She said the school is well supported by the local businesses too. The school is currently supporting the charity Well Child and many fundraising events have been organised including four people taking part in the London Marathon. The school is lucky to have a very active PTFA who continue to raise thousands of pounds for the school. Stow Civic Society took 150 models of ceramic money box sheep into school. Then each child decorated their own individual model sheep

using all types of materials and gave the sheep a name. The sheep will then be put on display at St Edward's Hall for the duration of the Cotswold Festival on 15th July 2017.

5. REPORT BY WARD DISTRICT CLLR DILYS NEILL

Cllr Neill was unable to attend but sent in a report which the clerk read out. She apologised for not being able to attend in person but this was because she had been diagnosed in October with leukaemia and has been having treatment on and off for the past 6 months. She said she was recovering well and is now able to deal with District Council correspondence but due to the risk of infection she is unable to visit crowded places or attend large meetings. She hoped that she would be back to full CDC duties in the next couple of months. She thanked fellow District councillors who have picked up her workload in her absence. She spoke about the Benchmarking Survey which had been commissioned by the town council. She also applauded the establishment of a Community Land Trust for the town. She hoped that a meeting could be organised between CDC/GCC/town council in the next couple of months to discuss parking problems. The District Local Plan is due to be submitted for Government approval within the next few months. She ended her report talking about the two large developments in the town for land adjacent to Bretton House and land north of Tesco which both had been given outline planning permission but there are still the "Reserved Matters" to agree.

6. REPORT WARD COUNTY CLLR NIGEL MOOR

Cllr Moor said it was a privilege to have been re-elected last Thursday. He said he will continue to work closely with the town council along with the other 19 parishes within his Ward. He said he enjoyed the town council meetings saying they were "most informative and interesting". He talked about GCC's budget which covers many different priorities. Adult care and child protection takes a lot of the budget not forgetting infrastructure. He talked about the new Doctor's surgery which still has not been resolved. He had met with members from Stow Civic Society with regard to finding a suitable location for a museum; smart traffic lights for the Unicorn junction; Trying to achieve double lane between Stow and Moreton. New developers must be made to get the roads/footways up to standard to enable GCC to adopt. There will be £150M spent on road repairs achieved by borrowing money at a low interest rate over 5 years. He said that a major priority for him would be to try to get HGV's diverted from the Fosseyway and Stow. He then took questions. Cllr Curtis thanked Cllr Moor for his help and continued support of the town council and the community as a whole.

7. REPORT BY MR STEVE JONES, VICE CHAIRMAN OF STOW RBL BRANCH

Mr Jones gave a summary of what the branch do to help ex servicemen and their families. He said the branch was very active and many branches of neighbouring towns had been closed. The Welfare Team play a big part taking members to hospital appointments and giving benefit advice and helping with the paperwork. They continue to organise the Remembrance Parade and attend other events too. The branch works alongside the Poppy Appeal which is a separate entity and work with the Social Club to raise funds. They also attend funerals of ex servicemen taking the standard along. They also help with the repatriation of servicemen when required. Stow Primary School is also officially affiliated to the branch as are the army cadets who are based in Moreton. In a nutshell he said the branch is there to help anyone who has served in any of the armed forces in whatever way they can.

8. REPORT BY ANY OTHER LOCAL ORGANISATION REPRESENTED AT THE MEETING

STOW COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

Mr Peter Minty introduced himself at the chairman of this newly set up charity. He said it had been two years in the making and the aim is to provide affordable housing for the people of Stow in perpetuity. They are now legally constituted and a registered charity. The trust needs to raise funds and find land where houses can be built. The cost to join the trust is £1 for life. He said they are currently in talks with the CDC to see if they can get any funding from them. He then took questions.

NEW DOCTOR'S SURGERY

It had been hoped that a representative from the surgery would be present to give an update on the new surgery. Sadly this was not possible and the clerk read out an email received from Stow Surgery's Practice Manager, Ms Sophie Williams earlier in the day. To quote:-

"Unfortunately we've had no further update from the development team so at this point I'm not sure if there will be anything to say.

I have attached the last communication we had from the team – at the end of March and Mrs Jenny Scarsbrook also gave an update to the same effect at the Friends of Stow Surgery AGM the minutes from this are on the surgery website. At the meeting Mrs Scarsbrook said that she expected to finalise the outstanding financing issues relating to the building of the new surgery within two weeks which, she later in the meeting, extended to a month. That time has now passed."

9. REPORT BY CHAIRMAN OF TOWN COUNCIL & CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

a) Cllr Mike Curtis, Chairman of Council

Cllr Curtis said that there are 11 seats on the council and the majority were elected in May 2015. However, two councillors subsequently resigned and as a result the council co opted Peter Day & Jo Davies. The council employ two staff – Mrs Heather Siphthorp, Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer who is full time and Ms Linda Burke, Deputy Clerk who works part time. Heather joined the council just over a year ago and came with lots of experience having been clerk at Moreton Town Council for 10 years. The council meet once a month with the exception of August. He listed the various committees and gave a summary of their responsibilities saying that the Chairman of each of the committees would be giving a report. He ended by thanking all the members of council for their hard work and support over the past year. Councillors are not paid and they give up their time to support the town. Cllr Curtis said that if anyone was interested in becoming a councillor, should a vacancy arise in the future, to contact the clerk who would be pleased to outline what the role entails. He then asked the various chairmen of the council committees to give their reports.

b) Cllr Alun White, Chairman of Planning, Traffic & Parking Committee

Cllr White was not present but had sent in a report which the clerk read out. In summary it said that the committee had met 18 times throughout the year and looked at a total of 74 planning applications and developed a number of proposals for traffic management, pedestrian safety and parking. The main achievements on planning were persuading CDC to reject the McCarthy & Stone proposed development on land north of Tesco. The company is now appealing. Council also persuaded the Planning Inspector at the McCarthy & Stone appeal, for the former Stow Agricultural site, to impose design amendments that led to McCarthy and Stone abandoning their plans for the site. The main causes for concern were that all the development in the town, that has been granted planning permission, in most cases were for homes for the elderly with no provision of affordable housing for local people. Also the two largest

developments were permitted on AONB land, on highly visible sensitive sites at the entrances to the town. On traffic and parking the main achievements were reshaping the parking in the square to provide better located disabled parking. Moving the coach drop off to near the Police Station to encourage coaches to enter and leave by the High Street and therefore reducing the number of coaches going down Digbeth Street. Agreeing a 20 mph zone for the town which will be implemented by GCC and agreeing changes to various no waiting restrictions to improve safety for drivers and pedestrians. The causes for concern are the ever increasing traffic flows on the Fosseway and the Oddington Road and the pressure on parking spaces both in the square and residential streets. He also said that the council had persuaded GCC to begin developing proposals to improve the Unicorn Junction and ended saying the council are seeking to develop additional off street car parking for businesses to reduce their use of the square and residential streets.

c) Cllr Colin Smalley, Chairman of Burial Board

Cllr Smalley began by saying how grateful the Burial Board is to the clerk because after years of trying the council have been able to get the Community Payback Team (CPT) to supply offenders to do tidying up in the cemeteries. He said they have been invaluable in getting large areas cleared of years of overgrowth. A new fence was installed on the southernmost border of the New Cemetery (Bretton House boundary). Hopefully this will help keep the deer out who are stripping the graves of fresh flowers. Sadly since the fence has gone up people are throwing their dead flowers and wrappings over the fence making an unsightly mess. Clerk has been rewriting the cemetery rules and regulations and updating the fee schedules which have now been agreed with council. A new booklet and updated application forms are being distributed to Funeral Directors etc. The clerk has a great knowledge of burials and the current laws which has helped the Burial Board push things forward far faster. The Burial Board is also looking at a new policy document for people planting trees and shrubs in the cemeteries. Repairs have been completed to the dry stone wall adjacent to the Fosseway. Objectives for the future include improving the pathways in the cemeteries which have fallen into a dilapidated state. The Bier House needs to be looked at from a structural point of view, along with the Lichgate where it has been established that the heavy metal gates have caused damage to the stonework.

d) Cllr Sue Green, Chairman of Parks & Square Committee

Cllr Green said the committee basically looks after the green spaces in the town like the playing fields, allotments, the Wells and also works in partnership with GCC/CDC running the Visitor Information Centre. The committee also organise events and she spoke about the dance for the Queen's birthday celebrations which took place in the square. The council had also organised for the fun fair to return to the square after 25 years and had arranged for Chaplin's Circus to come to the town too. However, the circus is no longer operating so the council will try to find an alternative operator as it was such a success. She spoke about the Bonfire event and also the Christmas tree lights switch on both of which were very successful and continue to grow. She thanked the Community Payback Team (CPT) for their great work at King George's field and also to Stow Brethren for burning the rubbish that had accumulated as a result. The CPT would be moving to QEII field next. A dog poo campaign had been organised and members and volunteers had been out and about in the town spraying stencils on the pavements in the hot spots in the hope of encouraging the minority to pick up. She said that the committee are looking at improving the Christmas lights this year. A new gate for the entrance, via Talbot Square, to QEII field which will allow wheel chair access. A new town leaflet which has been a joint venture between the council and Cotswold District Council. She ended saying that the

council will continue to improve the green spaces in the ownership of the council and make them more accessible.

e) Cllr Mike Moseley, Chairman of Finance & General Purpose Committee

Cllr Moseley was not present so no report was given.

10. TOWN CLLR BEN EDDOLLS, CHAIRMAN OF NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN GROUP

Cllr Eddolls said that this project was like “running through treacle”. He said that the draft plan was nearly ready and once finalised it would go to the town council for approval and adoption. It would then go out to independent assessors for comment. He said he hoped it would be in place within 12 months.

11. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

There being no further questions Cllr Curtis thanked everyone for attending and hoped that everyone would stay for the refreshments on offer.

12. MEETING CLOSED: At 8.50 pm.

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