

**STOW ON THE WOLD ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> APRIL  
2022 AT 7.00 PM AT STOW SOCIAL CLUB, WELL LANE, STOW ON THE WOLD,  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

**PRESENT:** Town Councillors A White (Chairman), S Clarke, J Davies, V Davies, J Scarsbrook, J Piper, Mrs H Siphthorp, Clerk/RFO of council & Ms E Sajewicz, Deputy clerk of council, Ward County Cllr M MacKenzie-Charrington, PC A Palfrey, Mrs R Scutt (Head of Stow Primary School) and approximately 20 members of the public

**APOLOGIES:** Town Cllrs A Clayton & A Cox, Ward District Cllr D Neill & Mr & Mrs D Magson

**1. WELCOME**

Cllr Alun White, Chairman of Stow Town Council, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Stow Social Club for hosting the meeting.

**2. TO SIGN AS CORRECT THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING THAT TOOK PLACE ON 22<sup>ND</sup> MAY 2019**

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

**3. REPORT FROM POLICE BY PC ALISON PALFREY, BEAT MANAGER**

PC Alison Palfrey introduced herself and PCSO Katy Perrett and gave a report covering the following points

- Stow businesses had set up a WhatsApp group to share information and contact Police about anything suspicious, which was working well.
- Traffic operation had been carried out with DVSA/Police/local Speedwatch outside Tescos and had been very successful with lots of offences picked up. Speedwatch group had two further sites set up: A429/Fosseway by Tesco and Oddington Road/St Edward's Drive.
- Additional officers at Stow Police Station are PC Frank Ward, PCSO Kim Graham and PCSO Katy Perrett.
- Regular Police Information Point (PIP) sessions at the Library had been started by PCSO Katy Perrett for anything people wanted to tell Police or report in confidence. She urged people to come and use it as the Police rely on people coming forward and information would be treated with complete confidence. Dates are posted on the Town Council's website.
- Incidents of note over the past year included murder, fatal road traffic accidents (fast roads), travelling criminals targeting Tesco (shoplifting for drugs), and working closely with schools and vulnerable families.
- Stow Fair on 12<sup>th</sup> May. The last two events had been mad with everyone being released from Covid restrictions. Main problem had been youths gathering with catapults and throwing stones at houses. A pre-fair meeting is scheduled with the Police Inspector, agencies, councils, business and Travellers who run the fair.
- PCSOs are heavily involved with youth and other groups in the community, including litter and neighbour disputes.
- Police noted with sadness that Heather the Town Clerk was leaving.
- Police give a monthly report to the Town Council and the reports are available on the Town Council's website.

PC Palfrey finished by urging everyone to "use and abuse us – the more we hear the more we can keep Stow free of crime."

Questions invited. A member of the public asked about ANPR on both sides of Tesco. PC Palfrey said it was being discussed and hadn't been ruled out.

PC Palfrey was thanked for her report.

#### **4. REPORT ON STOW PRIMARY SCHOOL – MRS R SCUTT, HEAD TEACHER**

Mrs Scutt said she had been at the school for 20 years. It was a lively school with 140 children and 26 in the nursery, along with a Community Hub toddler group and family support. The school had a fabulous staff, governing body, children and parents. She was proud to say the school had not shut for a day during the pandemic to vulnerable/key workers and thanked the Police and other helpers for their support. She said there was now a “forest school” and expressed gratitude for the grounds. It had been a challenging time recently and difficult for the children but they had bounced right back. All were back now and the school was making good use of Government’s catch-up grants to provide support groups outside school hours. Activities additional to the national curriculum included an outdoor disco, and she thanked the community for their harvest last year and said how wonderful it was to see all the children and parents. Stow Primary School had been delighted to start off the fireworks last year and it was amazing of the Town Council to provide burgers for the children who couldn’t afford them. The School was proud to parade on Remembrance Day with its own banner and sing for the everyone in the Square. It was one of only two schools affiliated in this way. Other events the children had taken part in included the nativity at Edwardstow, turning on the Christmas lights in Stow, bingo for children and adults, making Easter Tea for grandparents with bingo and songs. Edwardstow had provided an Easter egg hunt for children and it was lovely for them to have a relationship with the older residents. The children had done litterpicking. The School had great support from Stow Tesco and Fairshare – they have one night a week and give to families in need in Stow. She also thanked the Co-op, Library and Police particularly regarding online safety, for their support, along with the Baptist Church where some of the children have mentors and role models, and St Edward’s Church. She thanked the Brethren community for their generous support with education packs, breakfasts and food parcels for children in need thanks to their Rapid Relief Team. She spoke about supporting charities – Well Child, Christmas Shoebox and a cake sale held for Ukraine. For the Platinum Jubilee, the children were involved in many activities including Well Dressing. She said everyone was always welcome to visit the School.

Mr Bockhart spoke thanking Mrs Scutt and the children for taking part in the Remembrance Parade and said it had been the biggest turnout for years.

Mrs Scutt said it was sad when Chamberlayne and Fisher House came to an end. A resident had given funds to the school for community awards which they would be doing every year, for children who give to the community without taking back.

A resident suggested the Allotment Association could work with the School to make use of surplus fresh produce and was invited to email Mrs Scutt so something could be worked out. A resident said a small group was working at the Wells and offered to do more work there if wanted.

Mrs Scutt was thanked for her report.

#### **5. REPORT FROM GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR MARK MACKENZIE-CHARRINGTON, COTSWOLD DIVISION, STOW ON THE WOLD**

Cllr MacKenzie-Charrington introduced himself saying he had been the County Council member for Stow Division area for nearly a year. He registered his thanks to District Cllr Dilys Neill, with whom he had a very good working relationship, and also to all Stow Town Councillors and the clerk and deputy clerk.

He said by way of background the county is divided into 53 Divisions and the Stow Division is just one, which he represents on our behalf. It’s made up of 20 parishes ranged between Little Rissington in the south, Moreton-in-Marsh to the north, Bledington to the east and Farmcote in the west and Stow in the middle. The principal roles of the County Council are:

- Education
- Public Transport and Highways

- County Planning – not domestic
- Fire and Safety
- Adult and Children’s Social Care
- Libraries
- Waste Disposal – not collection
- Trading Standards

His written report would be on Stow Town Council’s website. He made the following points: He sits on the multi discipline North Cotswold Line Taskforce committee that is looking into expanding the train service between Worcester and London via Oxford. It is likely double the current number of services and will run later in the evening. Moreton will be an integral part of the proposed upgrade, including expanded car parking at the station. It will require some further double tracking where it’s currently missing, with a total cost of many tens of millions. He spoke about issues with the increasing amount of quarrying, and his work with the Bledington Flood Group, saying some people there are still not back in their homes following the 2020 floods.

He said there will soon be a dedicated new North Cotswold bus service, based out of Moreton, that will respond to requests from isolated people who don’t have other forms of transport, available for daily between 7am & 7pm, from specific locations taking them to their local community. Details will be provided as soon as a contractor is in place. It will be part of a 2 year trial including the Forest of Dean costing £1.532m, funded by Government.

Sheep Street centre line which is not in the centre – he is trying to persuade the local highways manager that this should be fixed quickly rather than waiting.

A resident asked what Stow Traffic Action Group could do to help decision makers with information. She said the resurfacing of Sheep Street had made a big difference to traffic noise and thanked GCC for the work.

Cllr MacKenzie-Charrington said he would be happy to arrange for the group to meet with various elements of the authority to put forward their thoughts.

A resident asked whether there were any improvements for cyclists planned for Stow and said there was nowhere at Tesco to lock a bike. Cllr MacKenzie-Charrington said Stow could be included if there was a plan, and Cllr White said the Town Council would talk to Tesco.

A resident said there were lots of blocked drains and asked how they should be reported.

Answer 08000 514514 or on GCC website, Your Highways Report It.

A resident asked for details of where the Fire & Safety funding was going and Cllr MacKenzie-Charrington said he would ask.

Cllr MacKenzie-Charrington was thanked for his report and his support for the town.

## **6. REPORT BY WARD DISTRICT CLLR DILYS NEILL**

Cllr Neill had given her apologies as she had to attend a family funeral. Her written report had been published on the Town Council website.

Leader of Cotswold District Council, Cllr Joe Harris, introduced himself and spoke about council finances, saying that only 7p out of every £1 of council tax went to Cotswold District Council.

Most of its income came from fees and charges, and government grants which were steadily being reduced. CDC was facing a financial cliff edge and having to take tough decisions.

He spoke about the demographic timebomb in Stow with the majority of the population being over 60, and wanting to have younger people, a diverse workforce, and more affordable housing on a small scale.

He also spoke about the climate agenda and supporting small businesses.

He picked up on some issues from Cllr Neill’s report. On second homes and holiday lets, he said CDC had had a working group looking at this and believed that new legislation was needed. CDC had written to the local MP to try and get his support, and was looking at any powers it had to

put this into the Local Plan. CDC would like the power to levy more council tax on these properties to get better value for the community.

Cllr Harris invited questions.

Q: Could the development at the top of Stow Hill that was 85% empty be adopted by CDC?

A: If it is private land the District Council has little power. Cllr Neill is trying to create a dialogue with the owners to see if it would be possible to free up anything.

Q: Wind turbines on the Cricket Field would be lovely.

A: Debate to be had through Local Plan. Encouraged to talk to Town Council and residents about it.

Q: Council tax grant by 8 April?

A: Government has announced but District Councils have not yet got the funding or the staff/resources to deliver it. Will follow up. It is imminent.

Q: Peter Minty of Stow Community Land Trust – Is there any way you can help an organisation like ours to purchase somewhere? Can you support subsidies to make it advantageous for developers to work with us?

A: Keen to support organisation if community based and good team, can help support. About to become a cabinet member so let's talk in a couple of months.

Cllr White thanked Cllr Harris and was pleased to have his support for affordable housing and working.

## **7. OVERVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE TOWN COUNCIL AND THE YEAR AHEAD – CLLR ALUN WHITE, CHAIRMAN OF STOW TOWN COUNCIL**

Cllr White said it had been a difficult two years, and thanked the people and businesses of the town for their steadfast response to the pandemic. He gave the following report:

“Firstly I want to thank those who voluntarily lent a hand to those in difficulty.

I thank the emergency services, our health and social care professionals and our teachers for their dedication.

I thank my fellow Councillors, past and present for the part they have played. I welcome Ashleigh Cox, Janet Piper and Sophie Winter and the returning Ben Eddolls to the Council. Particular thanks are due to our retiring Clerk for her sterling service through this testing period. I thank the advisors who support the work of Council Committees.

I thank the many willing hands who make joyous events like Bonfire Night, our Christmas Lights and the renowned Christmas Tree Festival possible.

I thank those who monitor traffic speeds, those who pick litter and those who help our community in diverse ways.

I thank our County Councillor Mark and our District Councillor Dilys for their help and support. Much of the work of the Town Council is reported and on our website with highlights in Stow Matters so I'm not going to catalogue it now.

We give modest grants to community groups which benefit the town and attract visitors.

We have sown wildflowers on KGF and the Cricket Field and planted new hedges on KGF and the Allotments.

Two oaks have been planted on KGF to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and much work is being done to mark that singular celebration.

We are flying the Ukrainian flag in support of the people of that beleaguered nation.

Looking to the coming year your Council will work with the Gloucestershire County Council on a parking strategy for the Town.

We will finalise the Neighbourhood Plan in the light of the informal consultation with residents that I will speak about shortly.

We will address issues raised in the Stow Streets Accessibility Survey.

We will continue with the many tasks needed to maintain the fabric of the town and serve you all.

I will now hand over to others to say what they have contributed to the town.  
It is an honour to serve you and to lead such an active Council.”

**8. UPDATE ON EMERGING STOW ON THE WOLD AND THE SWELLS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN –  
CLLR ALUN WHITE, CHAIRMAN OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP (NPSG)**

Cllr White gave the following report:

“The NPSG have been working hard behind the scenes and have now set a framework to make Stow on the Wold and the Swells communities stronger and more vibrant for many years to come.

The last time we consulted our communities was back in 2020, just ahead of the first Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. This was when all properties in Stow and the Swells received a Household Survey by post. It asked lots of questions about what residents would like to see in the town and much more.

As a result of collating the information gathered from this survey those wishes and aspirations were put to landowners and potential developers. They have now come back with their proposals. So we now need to seek residents’ views, once again, on whether or not any of the potential developments could be adopted to give a satisfactory outcome to their wishes and contribute to sustaining and improving our communities whilst retaining the beautiful characteristics that make our communities so special.

Any development in the town must have community support so watch out for the dates and do come along and ask questions and give your opinions. This will be done by informal public consultations. The information gathered from these consultations will then give the NPSG the steer it needs to finalise the emerging Neighbourhood Plan for community approval.

A letter from the NPSG will be delivered to all households in both Stow on the Wold and the Swells giving details of where and when the consultations will take place.

For anyone who is unable to attend then the information will be posted on the Council’s website and will be publicised via social media channels so you can take a look at a convenient time to suit you.”

A resident asked about a new housing survey. It was confirmed this was a Housing Needs Assessment and would be available on Council’s website and a copy provided.

A resident had concerns about consultation information being online and some residents not having access. It was confirmed there would be a leaflet delivered to all households to ensure everyone was aware of the events.

**9. CELEBRATIONS IN THE TOWN FOR QUEEN’S PLATINUM JUBILEE, 2-4 JUNE 2022 – MRS  
HEATHER SIPTHORP, CLERK & RFO OF THE COUNCIL**

Mrs Siphthorp spoke about the plans and events being organised in the town. A resident spoke to express appreciation for Council’s efforts.

Cllr White spoke to thank Mrs Siphthorp for all her work as she is leaving the Council, and there was a round of applause for her.

**10. STOW MOTOR SHOW, SATURDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022 – MR BEN EDDOLLS, CHAIRMAN OF STOW  
MOTOR CLUB**

Mr Eddolls said Motor Shows had been held in 2007 and 2008 at Stow Rugby Club, and had been resurrected in 2018 and been a fantastic event. Motor Shows are community events and the Club wants everyone to be involved. The 2022 Motor Show would be held on the Cricket Field on 9<sup>th</sup> July.

He said the Club had received £9000 from GCC’s Bring Back Better Fund with the help of Cllr MacKenzie-Charrington. It had been hoped to use it to improve access to the Cricket Field but it had been found that the services were too close to the surface to allow the work. It was now

planned to use the funds to purchase a marquee and generator that could be used for events in the town to benefit the community. He said the Motor Show would be a brilliant day out and encouraged everyone to come and to support it.

#### **11. CENTRE 67 – STOW ON THE WOLD YOUTH CLUB TRUSTEES**

Trustees Ms Frances Hamilton and Ms Gemma Joynes spoke about the Youth Club being relaunched a year ago following lockdown and said they were proud to be providing activities for young people from Stow and surrounds. The Youth Club was operating every Friday from 6pm to 7.30pm for Juniors and from 7.30pm to 9pm for Seniors. There were no strict age cut-offs. There was a professional local leader, born in Stow. They were tapping into GCC funding for special needs and more vulnerable families. In the holidays the Youth Club had hosted four day-long sessions with hot food delivered every day. Madam Zucchini had visited and had said their sessions were the best she had seen.

They said children love using the Club as it a safe space where they can be with friends and be off their phones. Activities include baking and trips like paddle boarding. The charge is £1 per child per session. They have had lots of positive feedback.

As former chairman and a strong supporter of the Youth Club, Cllr White expressed thanks for the way the Youth Club had been revived, and this was met with applause.

A resident suggested the school, Youth Club and allotments work together to have activities for children.

#### **12. ANY OTHER LOCAL ORGANISATIONS WHO WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK**

**Mr Peter Minty – Community Land Trust (CLT)** – said the CLT was legally constituted to provide affordable housing for the people of Stow. It was now fully set up as a charity, and exempt from right-to-buy so its assets could be owned by Stow in perpetuity. It could buy agricultural land and get planning permission to build on it which a developer couldn't. It could pay slightly above agricultural value but less than commercial. Some discussions with landowners were under way and he hoped something would come of it. There was a small dedicated committee. Anyone can join for £1.

Cllr White thanked Mr Minty. He ended the meeting by thanking everyone for their contributions and the Stow Social Club for their hospitality this evening.

#### **13. MEETING CLOSED**

Meeting closed at 9.00pm.

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