



## ATTLEBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall, Queens Square, Attleborough, Norfolk NR17 2AF  
Tel: 01953 456194 - email: [enquiries@attleboroughtc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@attleboroughtc.org.uk)

### Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Annual Town Assembly Held on Wednesday, 26 May 2021 at 7.00 pm

#### Present:

Cllr P Leslie Town Mayor - presiding  
Cllr S Marsh                      Cllr V Dale                      Cllr J Francis                      Cllr A Smith  
Cllr T Taylor                      Cllr E Tyrer                      Cllr A Westby  
In attendance – Anne Willett – Clerks Assistant (minute taker)

#### **001/2021) Welcome by the Chairman**

Cllr Leslie welcomed the quest speakers and thanked all those who had participated in the Zoom meetings up to now.

#### **002/2021) Minutes of the Annual Town Assembly held on 15th April 2019**

On the motion of Cllr Dale, seconded by Cllr Taylor, it was

**RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Annual Town Assembly held on 15th April 2019.

#### **003/2021) To receive the Mayor's Report –**

Cllr Leslie reflected on a difficult year for Attleborough, with an unprecedented pandemic and challenging road works, all being compounded by Town Council drama and expressed his profound gratitude to everyone who had contributed to the herculean efforts required to move the Town Council into a “new era” and assist the community. He was especially grateful to the many local heroes, who had selflessly supported others in this endeavour. Businesses had appreciated the support given by Breckland Council, whilst residents have had access to the wonderfully successful local Coronavirus helpline. The Town Council had recognised the financial issues facing so many residents and froze the precept, but would continue to modernise and improve Town Council services despite this. Meetings would shortly return to Town Hall but continue to be live streamed. With high street shops opening and a community starting to work together to deliver our aspirations – Cllr Leslie was excited about the town's future. Challenges would still be faced but could be overcome by working together viewing them as opportunities. An example of this the additionally 4,000 homes, rather than turning Attleborough into another commuter town, we could help turn this into a showcase of sustainable developments based around a vibrant community, allowing funding for much needed infrastructure, green spaces – such as the Linear Park, sports provision, healthcare and education facilities. This is why the Town Council had worked so hard to open productive communication channels with key stakeholders and why we need a community led neighbourhood plan committee to energetically engage in this process. Please become part of this work and help deliver projects such as current ones involving Decoy Common and other open spaces. In conclusion, yes – this had been a difficult year, but this year we need to look outwards and to the future – we need to unify ourselves around a common vision and collectively work to achieve it.

## **004/2021) To approve the Attleborough Town Lands Charity Account**

### **(Rev Matthew Jackson**

Revd Matthew Jackson, Chairman of the Attleborough Town Lands Charity Account presented the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2019 and 2020 which were presented.

- In the year 2019 income from rent, deposits and the investment portfolio managed by Barratt & Cooke was £23,792 compared to £21,515 in 2018
- The Trustees granted £28,508 to individuals and groups serving the community, compared with £7,148 in 2018 and £5,680 in 2017
- In the year 2020 income down to £17,550 compared to 2019
- The Trustees granted £11,467.
- The main criteria for individual applications are genuine need, the receipt of state benefits and residency in the town. We would encourage organisations serving the people of Attleborough to apply on behalf of clients who meet these criteria to the Secretary, Mrs Pat Buttolph, at St Mary's Church office.
- I would like to thank the Trustees and Treasurer, who give freely of their time and experience.

By a show of hands proposed by Cllr Leslie the accounts were accepted

## **005/2021) Guest Speakers**

- **Rev Matthew Jackson, St Marys Church** - spoke about his thoughts during the past year, first hearing of the pandemic on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020 after attending Norwich Cathedral and on 17<sup>th</sup> March the Archbishop of Canterbury announcing all activities within the Church of England buildings should cease. As we entered the first lockdown we thought we would be back to normal by Easter. The Church very quickly adapted sending weekly emails, things changed and evolved, a team began phoning everyone once a week and services were set up online via Zoom. The Bishop of Norwich was able to join in during Pentecost. The online Church magazine included a wonderful picture of all that was happening in our virtual world and we continue our services with some people in church and some at home. With the help of two major grants we were enabled to install a new sound and camera system. Like many charities we have struggled with our finances but we are hopeful for the future.
- **Tracy Turner (Tracy Turner Ltd – Mental Health)** – Recently opening a clinic offering occupational Health Services and is very passionate about promoting mental health awareness. The lockdown has caused considerable effects, one in five people reported depression from June 2020. Although men's mental health has remained constant, historically men are reluctant to seek support, there has been a clear deterioration in women and young adults, isolation cited a main cause. 42% of relationships have suffered, with a 65% increase in calls to the Refuge charity due to domestic violence, alcohol related deaths increased by 49%. To reduce the cases of poor mental health we need to think proactively as we have done with Road Traffic Accidents. Poor mental health effects the workplace and costs to businesses can be significant, income may be affected, homes repossessed, NHS waiting lists increase further. We need to build a community spirit, encourage people to talk openly, reduce loneliness and isolation. I have

recently started a new group called Kaleidoscope to help improve mental health and where you can meet new friends.

- **Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen (Leader of Breckland Council)** – The last year has been a challenge and Breckland had to tackle a humanitarian crisis, to work remotely and still deliver its' services. Breckland has provided dedicated offices of support as a single point of contact for the Attleborough community both for community groups and businesses and that strengthen our communication and relationships particularly our relationships with the Town Council and that's through your stewardship as well Phil.

#### **Looking back & acknowledging impact**

- During 14 months over 18,000 individual grants given to residents
- Over 3000 welfare calls
- Over 200 food parcels delivered
- 2000 test & trace visits to residents
- £25,000 given to food banks
- £45,000 given to a community supermarket
- £10,000 given to infrastructure for social food development
- Hundreds of medication collections
- £3.2 million has gone to Attleborough businesses to support throughout pandemic. £2.6 million through direct government grant with a further ½ million discretionary grants from the Council for those who fell outside the governments initial grant schemes

#### **Immediate Priorities**

- Inspiring Communities Programme
- Support the roadmap, helping Businesses to “spring back”
- Continue to get as much money out to Breckland businesses
- Continue to keep people in work, and keep businesses open.

#### **Longer term Vision**

- An opportunity to work together to shape an ambitious future for the District
- An opportunity to collaborate and capitalise on significant investment through the SUE
- An opportunity to transform leisure provision in Attleborough

Cllr Leslie thought it was a real credit not just to Breckland but also to the resilience of local businesses themselves and the ingenuity in this particular time that we have so few shops empty on the high street and thanked Sam Chapman-Allen for everything he had done.

#### **006/2021) Open Forum (30 Minutes)**

There were no other matters.

The meeting closed at 19.56pm