

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, MARKET PLACE, NEWBURY ON MONDAY 21 MARCH 2016 AT 7.00 PM

1. WELCOME BY THE TOWN MAYOR

The Mayor (Cllr Howard Bairstow) welcomed those present for the presentation of the Civic Awards.

2. PRESENTATION OF CIVIC AWARDS

The Mayor and the other judges (Michael Spence Smith of sponsors Swift, Cllr Kuldip Singh-Kang and Mr Garry Poulson) presented the nominees for this year's Civic Awards with certificates of recognition for their voluntary services. There were 6 nominees for the Civic Award and 2 nominees for the Young Persons Civic Award. The overall winners were Rosemary Lister and Ashley Reade. Citations for each were read out by the Town Crier. Details of all those nominated are at Appendix 1. The Mayor invited those present to retire for refreshments.

3. MINUTES (NOTES) OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON 23 MARCH 2015

The Mayor reconvened the meeting. It was agreed that the minutes (notes) of the ATM held on 23 March 2015 represented a true and accurate record of that meeting.

4. TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE ELECTED MEMBERS OF NEWBURY TOWN COUNCIL (NTC)

The full Annual Report is available on request from Newbury Town Council and is published on the Newbury Town Council website. A presentation of that report was made by the Mayor, and the chairpersons of each Committee.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON THE ANNUAL REPORT

The Mayor invited Members of the public to ask questions on any items arising from the matters covered in the Annual Report.

Mrs Elizabeth O'Keeffe asked what the Council intends to do with the £59,000 provided in this year's budget for Neighbourhood Wardens, now that Sovereign Housing has indicated that it will not host the scheme after 30 June 2016. The Leader replied that this was work in progress and that the Council was working with Newbury BID and other parishes to explore solutions to meet the issues which would arise when the service ceased.

Mr Alan Mercado questioned why there was no advertising to promote this event and asked that the general public have an assurance that next year this event would be well promoted. The Mayor replied that there had been a brief press report in the preceding NWN on the Annual Town Meeting, in consequence of our press release, but sadly lacking public involvement. The Leader pointed out that the Council had issued a press release to promote the meeting and published details on the Council's website and on the Town Hall Notice Board. The Leader said the Council would review this year's meeting and see what lessons can be learned for next year.

Mrs Elizabeth O’Keeffe asked what would happen to the funding provided in this year’s budget if the public toilets at the Wharf and the Visitor Information Centre close. The Leader answered that this was a work in progress and that the Town Council was awaiting developments. The Town Council was unable to sustain the Visitor Information Centre because of the costs which could arise from TUPE claims but would work closely with Newbury BID to provide Visitor Information services for Newbury.

6. TO HEAR THE COMMENTS, REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ELECTORS

Mr. Alan Mercado told the meeting that Saint Bartholomew’s School was founded in 1466 from the legacy of Henry Wormestall in 1466 and that this year was the 550th anniversary of its foundation. He said that it was a school of which Newbury should be proud and listed some of the famous people who had attended St. Barts. He asked that the Town Mayor recognise this anniversary by communicating the Council’s congratulations to the Head teacher at the School.

The Mayor thanked Mr. Mercado for bringing this matter to the attention of the Council and it was agreed that the council would do as requested.

7. CLOSING REMARKS

The Mayor extended his congratulations to all the nominees for the Civic Awards and especially to the winners, Ashley Reade and Rosemary Lister.

He also thanked those who had attended and the members of the public for their questions. He encouraged them to engage with the Council by attending Committee and council meetings and reading the reports and agendas on the council’s website.

He further invited the public to support the upcoming events to celebrate the Queen’s 90th birthday, including the Beating of the Bounds, the lighting of the Beacon and the picnic in the Park which would be held on Sunday 12 June.

There were no further comments, requests or recommendations made and The Mayor closed the meeting at 9.11 pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____