

Minutes of the Annual Town meeting held in the Town Hall, High Street, Coleshill on Wednesday 17 April 2019

Chairman: Councillor Tony Battle, Mayor, in the Chair
Guest speakers: Sue Lappin (Country Market) and Simon Toon (Sergeant at Arms and Coleshill Remembers).

1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 18 April 2018 were agreed as a true record, as proposed by Peter Courts and seconded by Adam Richardson and the Mayor signed them.

As a matter arising, Peter Courts asked what had happened with the Carnival Committee accounts. The Mayor had heard from the Carnival Committee that the accounts were with the auditor but would be presented to the Council when they were returned.

2 COUNTRY MARKET – 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Sue Lappin said she was the newest member of the Country Market committee and was assisted by Janet Reilly (Marketing) and Christine Brown (Treasurer) who was also a founder member. Sally Jones, with her media experience, helped out with Press releases. Although the weekly market was now regularly held in the Parish Room, it started 50 years ago at the Old Market Hall, Church Hill, as a Women's Institute project.

It was then 23 years ago that the Country Market went independent run from the WI. There are only 3 still running in the county (Alcester and Leamington Spa being the others).

From 8am to 12 noon on all Fridays (apart from the January closure), the Country Market sells the well known cakes, jams and chutneys but perhaps less known was the offer of jewellery, cards, plants, bird food and gift baskets.

Janet and Sue had recently started an 'outreach service', where they took Country Market fare into the High Street to places where people were not always able to get out during the market's open hours. As the Parish Room had recently had a change of ownership, it was hoped that it could provide a sign above the entrance, visible from the High Street.

3 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

The report of the Town Council over the past year was circulated. The Mayor, Cllr. Adam Richardson and the Town Clerk spoke of some highlights and future plans for the Council.

The Mayor highlighted the successful grants scheme, "Memories Flow By" sculpture unveiling, cemetery extension purchase, Memorial Park games on the paths and the finger posts, now Town Council responsibility. On the Civic side, he had been delighted with the 100 Years Armistice service at the Parish Church, the Civic Service at the Catholic Church and numerous visits to voluntary organisation events. He had raised funds for his chosen cause of "Uniformed Youth Groups": a barn dance with the Scouts, a Coleshill Town Band concert, the Ale Tasters sampling at 9 pubs and the first Coleshill Local Arts Week (CLAW), drawing visitors to the Town Hall, Old Market Hall, the church and schools. The Mayor's Consort, Jayne Battle, had her own event of an "At Home", to celebrate voluntary organisations.

It had been a busy year for the Planning Committee and its Chairman, Cllr. Adam Richardson. There had been the big applications such as Blytheways and the former leisure centre site and the contentious ones like the chip shop moving from its previous smaller location to the site of the former HSBC bank. There had been presentations to committee from the HS2 Special Management Zone, the Coleshill Heritage Rescue Group and Smart Motorways team.

The Town Clerk outlined changes to Town Council staffing. Groundsman Phill Dubberley had retired after 25 years service, to be replaced by Andy Frame. Sterling cover had been provided by Deputy Town Clerk, Zoe Hillcox, during the Town Clerk's own 5-week sabbatical. The finances were now significantly depleted after the major spending on the Memorial Park, Town Hall double glazing and the purchase of 2 acres of cemetery land.

4 COLESHILL REMEMBERS - ARMISTICE 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Simon Toon recounted that Coleshill Remembers had, in 2013, initiated a programme that would entail 140 vigils for the fallen of Coleshill in the Great War, 100 years after each death in service. This had remembered all the names from Gallagher (first one in 1914 killed in Mons, France) through Nightingale (no record he had died as his real name was West) to the 3 Baskerfield brothers, who had died in 1916, 1917 and then 1918.

The Coleshill Remembers group was keen on a unified 140-name Great War Memorial as most of the names were currently featured separately in the War Memorial, within the Catholic Church, at the Old Market Hall and at the Coleshill School (on behalf of the Coleshill Grammar School). A single summarised list of all deceased would be useful as 4 of those soldiers were not commemorated anywhere and 2 of the names at the War Memorial had mis-spellings. The Parish Memorial was consecrated in 1921 and so it was a target to have a unified Great War Memorial agreed and commissioned by 2021, 100 years on.

Cllr. Sue Wallace proposed a vote of thanks on behalf of the town for the immense amount of time Simon had dedicated to covering all of the vigils (assisted by Jane Veevers and Mike Walpole). The meeting wholeheartedly agreed and the Mayor then presented Simon with a bottle of port and a framed picture on behalf of the Town Council.

5 RESOLUTIONS AND PROPOSALS FROM ELECTORS

A question was raised about decriminalisation of parking control for the town. The Town Clerk advised that the awaited Civil Parking Enforcement legislation had been delayed at Westminster. It was understood that North Warwickshire Borough Council was making preparations in readiness for when the legislation was possible.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Town Clerk advised that the Green and Yellow Tours were proving very popular with attendees but that they were open to Coleshill residents as well as visitors.

With no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.20 p.m.

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Chairman