

# **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 29<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024 AT 7.00PM IN THE INSTITUTE, YONDER STREET, OTTERY ST MARY**

## **ATTENDANCE**

**Ottery St Mary Town Council** - The Deputy Mayor (Cllr Dean Stewart), Cllrs Vicky Johns and Peter Faithfull, Kerry Kennell (Town Clerk), Jane Bushby (Administrator) and Andy McGarty (Community Officer)

**Other Attendees** - Six members of the public

## **APOLOGIES:**

The Mayor (Richard Grainger)

### **1. WELCOME BY THE DEPUTY MAYOR – CLLR DEAN STEWART**

The Deputy Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting

### **2. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 24<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

The Minutes were approved and signed by Cllr Stewart as a true record of the meeting.

### **3. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE DEPUTY MAYOR AND OTHER COUNCILLORS FOR THE PERIOD 2022 TO 2024 (TO INCLUDE THE FINANCES/PROJECTS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL AND FUTURE PLANS)**

The Deputy Mayor apologised that an Annual Parish Meeting had not been held in 2023. 2024 marked the 50th anniversary of the formation of Ottery St Mary Town Council and an afternoon tea was held to mark the occasion with past and present councillors, volunteers and staff invited. The Council have run events to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee; the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III and the annual late night shopping and Christmas light switch on.

The Council have continued to invest in improving the services available to young people in the parish by introducing the twice weekly SPACE Youth Club and a significant donation to Action East Devon's Headlight project.

The Council has joined Visit Ottery as part of the Coast and Country project and is in the process of producing a map and website for the business community aimed at increasing visitors to the town.

The Council has run two further rounds of the Shop Front Fund giving grants to Devon Eco Boutique; Ottery Hound; Christopher Piper Wines; Coldharbour Farm; Coffee Bank; Ottery Osteo; Rabbit & Co; InFocus; Ottery Flooring Company; Grace Hair; White Opal and Sup Dawg.

As part of the Regeneration Project meetings have been held with DCC and summer consultation events are planned. The Council has successfully applied for a 20mph scheme to be applied throughout the town and is awaiting confirmation of when this will be set up. The Council obtained a UKSPF grant via EDDC and was able to install wooden planters throughout the town. The Council has a five year budget in place with costed out spending and the precept for Ottery St Mary Parish remains one of the lowest in East Devon. Over the past two years the Council has given community grants to the following organisations: Ottery Carnival and Tar Barrel Committee; Pixie Day; the Food and Families Festival; Tale Valley Trust; Tipton Times; Men's Shed; Ottery Help Scheme; Ottery Larder; Eager Beavers; Hospiscare; Ottery in Bloom; ARC; Ottery St Mary Silver Band; Busy Otters; The Institute; Citizens Advice; Ottery St Mary Cricket Club; Silver Otter and Ottery Writers.

The Council signed a 25 year lease with the Heritage Society for the Museum. Significant funds have been spend bringing all properties up to date. The Council continues to look at the best way to develop the Station Community Hub. The Council has agreed a strategic plan. The Council IT and administration has been updated. The Council now has a new committee structure and new website with improved social media activity. The Council has appeared on BBC Devon and Spotlight promoting Ottery businesses; fought to ensure the BT phone box outside of Sainsbury's is kept operational; worked with the local MP and County Councillor to campaign for Tipton St John Primary School; lobbied Post Office to extend opening hours; installed new signs on the way to Otter Garden Centre to warn of pedestrians; petitioned Coleridge Medical Centre. The Council intends to work on a Neighbourhood Plan Review; continue with their town centre regeneration plans and publish a Visit Ottery guide with map over the forthcoming year.

#### **4. REPORT FROM DEVON & CORNWALL POLICE**

No report had been received.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS REGARDING THEIR ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS DURING THE LAST YEAR AND FUTURE PLANS**

**Reports were presented by representatives from the following organisations:-**

- **Ottery St Mary Carnival and Tar Barrels Committee-** Eva White and Richard Shaw gave an overview of what is entailed in arranging the Tar Barrels event. A professional events management is engaged. Safety is a priority. The Committee thanked the Council for their support and shared their aim is to be self-sufficient.
- **Action East Devon** – Chris Botham gave an overview of Action East Devon Headlight Project and the peer support that they offer from the Station aimed at two age groups: 13-18 and 18-25. Action East Devon now have a professional fundraiser volunteering for them for four hours a week.
- **Gerway Action Group** – the group thanked the Council and DCC Cllr Bailey for their support. The group has been fighting the planning application since 2015. The group is awaiting a visit from the Planning Inspectorate. Their GoFund page has raised over £3,000 to date.
- **Ottery Writers** – John Hall talked about the first Ottery Literary Festival which was a great success.

#### **6. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

There were no questions raised

#### **7. MAYOR`S CLOSING REMARKS**

The Deputy Mayor thanked everyone for attending. He reiterated that as a Councillor he has enjoyed meeting with applicants and discovering what people do in a voluntary role. The Deputy Mayor thanked groups for being inspirational. The meeting was closed at 8.30pm.

Mayor's signature: ..... Date: .....