

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF STOCKSBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, STOCKSBRIDGE**  
**ON TUESDAY, 10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2022**

**PRESENT:** Cllr. R Crowther (Chair), Cllrs. A S Law, J Staniforth, S Abrahams, M Whittaker and J A Grocutt

\*\*\*\*\*

1. Minutes of the Last Annual Assembly

Minutes of the last Annual Assembly held on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 were taken as read.

Proposed by Cllr. A S Law, seconded by Cllr. S Abrahams and

**RESOLVED:-** That the minutes be agreed and signed by the Chairman.

2. Matters Arising

There were no Matters Arising.

3. Chairman's Report

Apologies for Absence were received from Cllrs. M Milton and C Ward.

It is hard to believe that it's been a year since I became Mayor of Stocksbridge, taking over from my predecessor Catherine Ward. I'd like to start out by thanking the Deputy Mayor, Cllr. Joe Staniforth for his steadfast support over the last year. I'd also like to say a particular thank you to Teresa Bisatt and Karen Lindley for their unshakable work over the last year – the work done in the Town Council office supports not just the Council, but contributes so much to ensuring the Town itself works well and should not be underestimated. That's to say nothing of the monumental task of keeping me organised!

I think at the start of her report last year, Catherine said that it had been a funny old year. I think the same can be said about the last 12 months! When I became Mayor schools had only reopened for a few weeks and mixing of households indoors was still prohibited in the shadow of Covid-19. Much of the year has been characterised by the penumbra of the gradual 'unlocking' process, restoring bit by bit the ability to gather and carry out the activities that are part of the fabric of normal life – both pre-Covid and, I hope, that will remain part of the 'new-normal'.

Some of my first duties as Mayor were to present the Awards of Appreciation to those groups that had contributed so much to bringing our Town through the pandemic; the Stocksbridge Community Care Group, Stocksbridge Community Leisure Centre and of course our two Medical Centres. I was also delighted to visit local schools to present each with a certificate and book vouchers to help replenish books in the schools' libraries, in recognition of the incredible job they had managed to do not just in terms of the crucial job of educating our young people, but also in providing childcare for key workers during the tightest restrictions of lockdown.

The end of June saw the culmination of a campaign which has united the Town for some time; the campaign to save Hollin Busk. We had previously been successful in our long-standing and robust defence of this treasured local landscape and had convinced Sheffield City Council's Planning and Highways Committee that the land should not be developed. After a Public Inquiry at which I and many others spoke, we unfortunately lost the case, however despite the outcome I remain proud of the campaign we united behind and pleased with the part we as a Town Council played in it.

As restrictions eased and new arrangements permitted it, the Town started to come to life again. I was particularly pleased to host both the Royd Nursery Infant and St John's School Council in September and the Cubs more recently in this Chamber. Seeing the kids so interested in their local community was a real privilege.

There have been so many highlights to my term in office in addition to those already mentioned – the Sheffield Lord Mayor's Civic Service, the WI Christmas Party, the judging of the Christmas Card Competition (and handing out the prizes to the winners!), and more recently the reopening of the Housing Office and the return of the Northern Birman Cat Club Show at The Venue, and of course the Easter Bonnet competition at St Ann's Primary School and many other highlights besides.

Some things remain unchanged in our community – it's supportive, caring nature and the commitment of local residents to their Town are perfect examples of this and as we drift back towards normality it's been wonderful to see the activities of our community groups resume.

It's also that time of the year where we are reminded of things that are changing – the weather is rather warmer than it was only a few weeks ago, and with it the Town is buzzing with activity. As of last week we have a new City Councillor and South Yorkshire Mayor, and although we haven't had Town Council elections this year we will shortly have a new Mayor ourselves. I wish them all the very best in their new roles – particularly to our new Mayor, to whom I wish every success and happiness.

Finally, I'd like to thank you all for your support and your hard work during my time in the Chair. It has been a singular honour to have been the Mayor of my hometown, a place that is very special to me and to everyone in this room.

#### 4. Open Session

Cllr. JAG stated it would be good to invite the new South Yorkshire Mayor to attend a meeting to discuss the bus services in the area.

Cllr. SA was in agreement, noting it was an important issue and felt that a log of residents experiences should be kept to put to the PTA/Supertram, people were missing hospital appointments etc., due to buses not turning up.

Cllr. RJC felt that a log would be difficult to keep and that this would be better raised at the Transport User Group meetings when they were back up and running or the LAC North.

Cllr. JAG noted that the subsidy ends in September and felt things would only get worse at this point.

Cllr. SA informed that at the levelling up meeting all the funding went to North Yorkshire for transport with nothing for South Yorkshire.

Cllr. MW enquired if the Towns Fund could provide funding to run local buses to connect with other services.

Cllr. RJC informed that this had been tried in the past but had not worked well.

#### 5. Annual Citizens Awards and Presentations

The Chairman welcomed recipients of the Town Council's Annual Citizens Award to the meeting and was pleased to present a certificate and gift vouchers to the Stocksbridge and Deepcar Litter Pickers Group members. The award being presented as recognition of their community spirit.

The meeting then closed.

Chairman