



**TOWN COUNCIL
PRINCES RISBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 18TH MARCH 2021
INCLUDING THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
HELD BY VIDEO LINK VIA ZOOM AT 7.30PM**

Welcome and Introductions by the Town Mayor and apologies for absence

The following councillors were present:

Cllr M Walsh (Chairman)

Cllrs, A Ball, G Hall, J Coombs, L Byrne, T Murali, D Knights, A Smith, S Baxter and A Turner

Susanne Barter– Clerk, Kirsty Pope – Deputy Clerk, Jayne Mylchreest - Administration Officer, Cate Holloway - Bookings Officer Barney Heffernan - Maintenance Team Leader

Apologies were received from Cllrs I Pearce and I Mclauchlan.

65 members of the public attended the meeting by video link.

Tributes to the late Bill Bendyshe-Brown and Robert Powell

Cllr D Knights paid tribute to the late Bill Bendyshe-Brown Buckinghamshire Councillor and Cllr J

Coombs paid tribute to Robert Powell Maintenance Team Leader Princes Risborough Town Council who both sadly passed away.

Chairman's Report

What a year! I find myself writing my Chairman's address for the end of another Council year, and it would be fair to say that 2020 did not turn out as we had originally planned. The global pandemic has forced us to cancel, postpone, change, adapt and reinvent the plans we had as a Council in order to respond to urgent and ever-changing needs.

During 2020 our local residents, businesses, community groups, retailers, volunteers and Councillors have had to fundamentally change. High Street businesses have been in stop start mode all year and despite this we have seen an unprecedented level of resilience and adaptation. Our Risborough Basket scheme has helped sustain businesses and has also met the needs of residents who have been shielding or simply do not want to venture out.

As a Council we have worked hard to continue with our long-term plans. We have successfully purchased and let the old Nat West building, ensuring a vibrant tenant who will enhance our night time economy. We have put in place a significant renewal scheme to enhance and expand our community centre at Wades Park, coming on the back of the expansion of Risborough Springs. And we have developed our popular Farmers Markets and have ensured the town continues to be well maintained and attractive for visitors and residents alike.

Short films were presented to show the progress of 39 High St and the Community Centre.

Since we were elected in 2015, your Town Council has instigated one of the biggest and most successful development and renewal programmes for the Town ever seen. Over the last six years our Councillors have overseen the rebuilding of the iconic Market House; the development of economic assets such as 39 High Street; the establishment of Free Parking every weekend to encourage trade; the adoption of significant green policies that govern our town events and the rebuilding of the Community Centre; the re-establishment of a highly successful and appreciated events programme including a week-long Festival, Christmas lights events, Farmers markets, outdoor cinema events, town trails and promotions and family events; the continued support of the Thursday market, despite challenging trading conditions; the development of income for the town through hiring out our maintenance team for grass cutting and maintenance; and much, much more.



But we still have ambitious plans for the future. We will see significant funds to enhance and build infrastructure over the next few years. We want to ensure that investments that we make as a Town Council will both enhance the town and provide the vital services that it requires as it grows. Our experience over the last six years makes us ready to tackle these new challenges and we hope that you will support us in the forthcoming elections, so that we are able to continue our ambitious programme of activities.

It has been an honour and privilege to serve you as Mayor and Council Chairman over the last six years – I look forward to serving you in the future.

Grants

Cllr A Turner reported on the £74,000 worth of minor and major grants awarded over the last 6 years with recent awards of £5,000 for Covid-19 support and £1000 to the food bank.

Public Open Forum

Questions were raised regarding the following: -

- Trees and flowerbeds
- High St retailers during lockdown
- LED street light replacement programme
- Young people
- Staff
- Stream at St Dunstan's park
- Bledlow recycling centre reopening

Announcement of Major Grant Recipients

Short films were shown of the presentations to the recipients.

The Town Mayor to announce the recipients of the Princes Risborough Citizens Awards for 2020 and 2021

Short films were shown of the presentations to the recipients

The Mayor thanked the public for attending and the meeting closed at 9.15 pm