



Coleshill Town Council



NHS bench purchased by Coleshill Town Council for Deanna Baker, in recognition of her 50 years service caretaking for the Town Hall

Report of the Town Council Annual Town Meeting

Wednesday 12th May 2021

**‘Our community,
coming together whilst staying
apart’**

'Unprecedented' is a term widely used when talking about 2020. The Coronavirus pandemic has impacted lives in a way that we could never have predicted but it has also brought the Communities together in new ways too; whether its banging saucepans on our doorsteps during clap for carers, a simple 'good morning' to a stranger whilst out on our daily walks or volunteering to help people in need with shopping and supplies. The Council is fortunate to have received reports from a wide array of people in and around Coleshill of the good deeds done and how Coleshill as a Community has come together.

The Town Council, Councillors and Staff have had to adapt to new ways of working ensuring that all of the facilities that we provide for the residents of Coleshill are still available and in good working order. During the initial lockdown of March /April delegated authority was given to the Town Clerk, Colin Greatorex, for the management of the Town Council – including the financial audit of 2019/20, which was successfully conducted, partly electronically, by Colin and Records Assistant Kate Clover. Since the end of the delegated authority in May 2020 the Council has successfully run committees, full Town Council and planning meetings via Zoom, and have been delighted to be joined by residents and guest speakers at some of these meetings.

Community & Partnerships

The Community Hub has remained open throughout the pandemic, via phone, email and 'doorstep drop-ins' and this service has seen a huge increase in people contacting them for assistance. Community and Partnerships Manager Helen Whittaker and Hub Co-ordinator Charlie Painter were presented with an award by the Mayor for their hard work in helping people in the community. There was a special Thank You from Patrick Foster-Smith, who said, "I would have been lost without Charlie and Helen in this lockdown, they gave me hope and were there for me when I needed them".



The Hub was given the honour of receiving a certificate from the High Sheriff of North Warwickshire in recognition of its hard work over the past year.



Charlie and Helen have also become accredited Mental Health First Aiders. The training means they now have the skills and knowledge to identify the early signs of mental illness and appropriately signpost people to the right organisations for help.

Helen was also successful with assisting the Ladies Keep Fit group with their funding application.

Procedures & Amenities

Though unable to receive the vast majority of regular hirers into the buildings during the national lockdowns, the Town Hall has increased its availability for the Blood Donor service and has hosted these extra valuable sessions. This challenging year has also meant tracking and keeping up to date with the everchanging Covid-19 restriction information appertaining to the hire of buildings, the running of cemeteries and use of outdoor spaces.

Whilst the buildings have been quiet, the staff have also taken the opportunity to make improvements. The Caretaker for the Community Centre, Jen Baker, has internally painted the whole building and new blinds have also been installed, as well as new plant tubs and hanging baskets.



Administration Assistant Julie Gregory has been archiving historical documentation and cemetery records and Records Assistant, Kate Clover has been computerising 120 years of grave ownership records. This was invaluable in assisting Deputy Town Clerk, Zoë Hillcox, with the smooth running of the cemetery administration from home.



The Council has seen an increase in the use of its public spaces, the Memorial Park, Football Pitches, Community Centre Park, Allotments, Cemetery and Croft have all seen a increase in the use of their facilities. Grounds staff have worked tirelessly to ensure that these areas have been maintained to a high standard, this includes the removal of heather beds and a holly tree in the Garden of Remembrance to improve the ground quality where cremated remains are scattered.

Changes have also been made to the Memorial Park with the removal of the planting beds by the skate park and the transplanting of many of these plants to other areas in Coleshill.

20 Cherry Trees were kindly donated by Coleshill resident Mrs Anne Henry in remembrance of her late husband Tony. These trees were planted around the Memorial Park in December and have all sucessfully bloomed this Spring.



Coleshill Town Council also successfully applied to HS2 and were granted in excess of 100 saplings or 'whips' to plant in and improve hedgerows. These have been planted at the Community Centre, Cemetery and Memorial Park.

Cemetery Warden, Andy Frame, has also spent a significant amount of time clearing undergrowth from and exposing old headstones in the Dell area of the Cemetery and behind the Garden of Remembrance,

this has encouraged an abundance of forget-me-nots in that section.

The influx of new applications received for allotments has been significant and Projects Co-ordinator Megan Davies and Head Groundsman Allan Taylor have successfully taken on many new tenants at a time when an outdoor space for many has become a sanctuary.

Planning & Development

After a busy previous year when the Wall of Answered Prayer and the Surf Park were approved there were few major developments. HS2 has been a project planned in more detail with worker's compounds appearing in Coleshill and Water Orton. There have been a number of Special Management Zone meetings online and Wessex Archaeological has had some online exhibitions and discussions.



Civic Matters

Both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor civic appointments rolled over for a second year: Cllr. Adam Richardson as Mayor of Coleshill and Cllr. Caroline Symonds as Deputy Mayor. Cllr. Dave Reilly remained the Chair of the Community and Partnerships committee with Cllr. Susan Hammond as the Vice Chairman with Cllrs George Clayton, Colin Hayfield and Adam Richardson making up the committee. Issues looked at by this committee were HS2 grants/BLEF application, High Street recovery, the Parish Buzz service, the progression of enhanced CCTV for the town and the Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Chair of the Procedures and Amenities committee remained as Cllr. Caroline Symonds with Cllr. Sue Wallace as Vice Chairman and Cllrs. Tony Battle, Malcolm Sparkes and Peter Symonds completing the committee. The issues looked at by this committee were; the taking over the lease and responsibility for the Old Market Hall from the Civic Society, asset audits, charges, allotments and RoSPA reports.

The sub-group of this committee, the Outdoor Working Group, comprising of Cllrs. Battle, Symonds, Wallace and Head Groundsman Allan Taylor had fortunately still been able to meet when restrictions allowed. These on-the-ground meetings are invaluable for developing ideas for and ensuring the proper management of Coleshill Town Council maintained land.

For further information about issues dealt with by the Town Council all meeting minutes are available on the Town Council website on www.coleshilltowncouncil.gov.uk

Appointments of Chairmen and Vice Chairmen and selection of representative positions to outside bodies were usually decided at Annual Council. It was felt appropriate by the Town Council, given the current situation regarding COVID-19, to propose no alteration to these appointments. Though Coronavirus restriction meant the cancelling of much of the Civic Diary, there were a number of highlights during the year:

- The Mayor had written letters of appreciation for services maintained, in the height of the COVID-19 period, to voluntary organisations, retailers and the emergency service bodies.
- The Mayor had been invited to participate (at a social distance) in the badge awarding presentation for Coleshill Beavers as they were moving into the Cubs age group.
- In October, the Mayor visited a Coleshill resident, Mrs Ida James, as it was her 100th birthday celebration.



- He also visited Carter's Electrical on the High Street, when Mrs. Di Carter closed the business, after many long years, serving the town.

- Events in October attended by the Mayor were the Royal Leamington Spa Civic Service Sunday 25th, at All Saints Church in Leamington Spa. He also hosted a visit to Coleshill from the High Sheriff of Warwickshire, Mr. Joe Greenwell, on Tuesday 27th October 2020.

- On 4 November, (the day before the second Covid Lockdown) the Mayor attended and contributed to the pre-filming of the Coleshill Remembrance Service, in order to stream the service on YouTube. On Sunday 8 November,

the local public were then asked to stay indoors and commemorate this occasion privately or online.

- Though restrictions meant that Coleshill's Annual Remembrance Parade couldn't take place, the Town was still festooned with poppies from the Town Council, shops, Coleshill in Bloom and Maureen & Barry Gascoigne.



lockdown was ended.

- The Charity Quiz on 26 March had been well run by Mrs. Alison Core and enjoyed by several teams, including the Coleshill Angels one, which had finished as victors. Wine and Easter eggs were given as prizes. Messrs. Philip Seccombe and Andy Cockburn were thanked, by the Mayor, for their personal donations to his charity effort.



- The Mayor and Deputy Mayor had been pleased to attend a couple's 70th Wedding Anniversary commemoration event in the town.



High Sheriff of Warwickshire

Mr. Joe Greenwell, High Sheriff of Warwickshire, joined the Full Town Council online meeting in March to make presentations of certificates on his High Sheriff Awards for 2020/21, to those organisations nominated by the Mayor.



The High Sheriff presented (on screen) the award certificates to, the Community Hub, the Town Council Office & Caretaking staff and the Town Council Outside Services staff.

The Angels of Coleshill, co-ordinated by Cllr Caroline Symonds, also received an award for their services to the Community throughout the pandemic. They also organised a hugely successful Easter egg trail around Coleshill and made deliveries of eggs to the local care homes.



Deanna Baker 50 years Caretaking at Coleshill Town Hall

- The Mayor and Cllrs. Battle, Clayton, Hammond and P. Symonds were also on hand to unveil Coleshill Cricket Clubs new score board and stayed to enjoy the cricket club friendly match.

Awards presentation from the



Mrs. Deanna Baker celebrated 50 years of working as the Town Hall Caretaker in May 2020. Deanna, her husband Barry and their children are very well thought of by the Town Council and Coleshill community.

Deanna has received a bench from the Town Council in recognition of her service. The blue NHS Bench chosen by Deanna (see covering photo) is particularly poignant and recognises the work of the Emergency Services throughout 2020. The Baker family have a rich history within the Emergency Services including service at Coleshill Fire Station and a daughter working as a nurse, throughout the pandemic.



Congratulations to Deanna!

Coleshill Community

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock, has praised the rollout of the Covid-19 vaccination programme in Warwickshire Rural Primary Care Network (PCN), stating "It's incredible to see this community spirit, as people pull together to lead us collectively out of the pandemic. I hope you will join me in thanking and congratulating all those involved in your area for the part that are playing in this national effort."



Coleshill's Hazelwood Practice was singled out for praise; this is wonderful news and something of which they should be very proud.



The Mayor of Coleshill, Cllr. Adam Richardson was delighted to be able to receive his vaccination as part of the visit to thank the staff and volunteers at Hazelwood Practice.



Issues

Unfortunately there has been an increase in littering and dog fouling in and around Coleshill, especially in the Memorial Park. Throughout the summer lockdown periods the Memorial Park saw a dramatic increase in litter left by users of the park, one Saturday morning saw Park Ranger Chris having to pick up in excess of 400 small gas canisters used for legal highs –



this incident prompted the locking of the Memorial Park car gate between 8pm – 8am by the Town Council at the request of the local police.

Unfortunately excess litter is not the only problem that the Town Council has faced; the Cemetery Garages have been broken into three times in the past financial year. This has resulted in disrupted work for the grounds staff whilst their equipment is replaced as well as countless office hours lost filing insurance claims.

After each break in the council has added more security measures including CCTV and additional lighting, on the advice of the police.



There has also been an intentional fire set on the Memorial Park which resulted in the loss of the bucket swing and damage to the rubber flooring and balance swing.

Coleshill Town Council have been working closely with the local police force to attempt to combat this antisocial behaviour.

Financial Matters – 2020/21 income and expenditure balance sheet

4 May 2021 (2020-2021)

Coleshill Town Council BALANCE SHEET 31/03/2021

(Last) Year Ended 31 Mar 2020		(Current) Year Ended 31 Mar 2021
£	CURRENT ASSETS	£
0.00	Stocks and stores	0.00
0.00	Work in progress	0.00
0.00	Debtors (Net of provision for doubtful debts)	0.00
0.00	Payments in advance	0.00
23,391.57	VAT Recoverable	5,509.21
0.00	Temporary lendings (investments)	0.00
21,240.45	Cash in hand	47,253.02
44,632.02	TOTAL ASSETS	52,762.23
	CURRENT LIABILITIES	
0.00	Creditors	0.00
<u>44,632.02</u>	NET ASSETS	<u>52,762.23</u>
	Represented by:	
44,632.02	General fund Balance	52,762.23
	Reserves:	
0.00	Capital	0.00
0.00	Earmarked	0.00
0.00	Adjustments	0.00
<u>44,632.02</u>		<u>52,762.23</u>

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the council as at 31 Mar 2021

Signed _____
Responsible Financial Officer

Date _____



Colehill Town Council
Income & Expenditure Account
01/04/2020 to 31/03/2021

<i>(Last) Year Ended</i> 31 Mar 2020		<i>(Current) Year Ended</i> 31 Mar 2021
	Income	
	General Administration	2,133.02
	Office Rents	9,396.42
	Community Centre	3,722.25
	Town Hall	4,621.04
	Capital Projects - Community & Pa	7,121.00
	Community & Events	120.00
	Allotments	3,990.45
	General	62,212.93
	Staff Costs	11,528.82
	Precept	250,718.38
	Investment Interest	8,537.95
	Community Hub	10,210.37
		£374,312.63
	Expense	
	Staff Costs	196,547.19
	Community Hub	11,853.37
	Capital Projects - Procedures & An	3,256.60
	General Administration	24,564.12
	Caretaker's House Costs	4,897.24
	Community Centre	7,439.13
	Town Hall	26,394.38
	Capital Projects - Community & Pa	14,745.00
	Community & Events	14,810.29
	Allotments	4,215.16
	General	57,459.94
		£366,182.42
	General Fund	
51,525.30	Balance at 01 Apr 2020	44,632.02
424,432.97	ADD Total Income	374,312.63
475,958.27		418,944.65
431,326.25	DEDUCT Total Expenditure	366,182.42
44,632.02		52,762.23
0.00	DEDUCT Reserves Balance	0.00
£44,632.02	Balance at 31 Mar 2021	£52,762.23

For 2021/22, in order to achieve a more balanced budget and given the room hire income Covid-19 depletion, the budget headings of Grants Scheme, Star Awards, Mayor's Allowance, High Street Fund, Kitchen renovation, War Memorial slabs and Memorial Park fencing were all proposed to be zero.

It was hoped that there might be a half-year reforecast if the rental income situation allowed some of these spending areas to be reconsidered, during the 2021/22 financial year.

