

WHALEY BRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Mechanics Institute, Market Street, Whaley Bridge, High Peak, SK23 7AA

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Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held at 7:30pm on Friday 26 April 2024 in The Meeting Room, Mechanics Institute, Market Street, Whaley Bridge

Present: 7 Town Councillors, 1 Borough & Town Councillor, 1 County Councillor and 1 other resident of the Town.

The meeting was chaired by Town Cllr Hall, with minutes taken by Town Clerk A Fox.

T2024/01 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Town Councillors Gilmour, McCarthy and Taylor.

T2024/02 Minutes of 2023 Annual Town Meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 28 April 2023 were accurate and the chairman was authorised to sign them.

T2024/03 Annual Report by the Chairman of the Town Council

Cllr Hall, Chairman of Whaley Bridge Town Council, presented his Annual Report for 2023/24, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

T2024/04 Town Council Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

The Town Clerk reported that the statement of accounts was completed but advised that they had not yet been approved by Council.

T2024/05 Report from County Councillor.

Cllr George presented her report to the meeting.

T2024/06 Reports from Borough Cllr Lomax

Cllr Lomax presented his report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. No report was received from the other Borough Councillors.

T2024/07 Police Safer Neighbourhoods Team

There was no police attendance at the meeting however the April crime statistics had been provided to the meeting. It was noted that the statistics are a monthly report rather than an annual report.

T2024/08 Matters of interest raised by the public

Cllr Thomas commented that the Amenities Society now launched its first round of funding and copies of invitation to express interest passed to the Mechanics, Footsteps, Scouts and Rvd Francis Eccleston. Cllr Thomas noted he had resigned from the Audit and Regulation committee at HPBC after doing five years. He has been impressed by the diligence of its members to scrutinise the Council over this time.

Cllr Hall commented that a small group are looking at starting a business hub to be located in the centre of Whaley, supplying desk space to home workers. They are aware that some people are still stuck at home and are trying to assist people who may need some respite and a chance to socialise in an office environment. They are looking for a location and any grant funding to cover the first year. They have done one in new mills which they hope to replicate, and any help would be appreciated.

T2024/09 There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.47pm

Signed as a true and correct record of the meeting

.....Chairman Date.....

Chairs report 2023/24

A few words on what has happened in Whaley this year, thanks to all of you on the council for what we have achieved.

I was grateful to be able to call on our very able vice chair, counsellor Thomas to chair several meetings during to my illnesses.

Councillor Thomas should also be congratulated for driving the neighbourhood plan through and getting it passed at the referendum.

We have seen the completion of the work on Bridge 42 which now looks very smart and the subsequent re-opening of the town centre with appropriate funfair by John Prichard our long term councillor who retired this year.

We continued to support Homes for Ukraine whose success reflects the compassion of Whaley bridge residents

Work continues on the Toddbrook Reservoir restoration by Canal & River trust contractors Keir with the prospect of the reservoir part being completed in the summer 2025 with the whole project wrapping up in the autumn of 25.

We will need to continue to monitor and ensure that the whole project is completed including, building the new sailing club the extensive landscaping to return Toddbrook Reservoir and the Memorial Park back to public which includes the play park and football pitch surrounds.

Whaley 4wards

We continue to support the sterling work done by Whaley 4wards throughout Whaley ably led this year by Ian Kidd.

The Mechanics Institute

Successfully replaced the boiler.

Lift installation progress,

The plans for the installation are complete and agreed, we have initial cost estimates, the management team has been appointed, the council committee has approval to go to tender and apply for grants although we have sufficient reserves to fund it directly.

Meanwhile the library is again under threat of closure due to the government under-funding of Derbyshire County Council.

In July Allison Lugg our Administrator gave in her notice following many years of successful service.

Our new administrator Yevheniia Tsesak has settled in. Yevheniia is from Ukrainian and very competent.

Cllr Lomax's report 2023/24

I have continued to serve on Community Select committee as well as being Vice Chair of Development Control. I have investigated housing and the Parkwood Community leisure arrangements.

Most meetings have continued to be held on Teams. This has the benefit of reducing costs and travel, and perhaps even more importantly, the carbon footprint of holding meetings.

I have attended the Town Council meetings throughout the year where my regular reports have been provided.