

# **NORMANTON ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

c/o Normanton Town Council, Town Hall, High Street, Normanton, WF6 2DZ

Tel: 01924 893794 E: enquiries@normantontowncouncil.co.uk

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024

The **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING** will be held on **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024** commencing at **6.30pm** at **Normanton Town Hall, High Street, Normanton, WF6 2DZ**.

Residents of the Normanton and Altofts area are welcome to attend the meeting to ask questions.

*Carol Appleyard*

Councillor Carol Appleyard

Mayor of Normanton 2023/24

## **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

### **AGENDA**

1. Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting 2023. **ENC A**
2. Mayors report on the last 12 months.
3. Issues raised by residents.

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## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023 at 6.30pm at Normanton Town Hall

Present: Councillor F Marchant – Mayor of Normanton  
D Johnston – Town Clerk  
37 Members of the public (6 non-residents)

### 1. Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting 2022

It was agreed that the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022 were a true record.

### 2. Mayors Report

The Mayor provided a report on the activities of the Town Council over the last twelve months:

I am delighted to present this report on the Council's activities to the Annual Town Meeting 2023.

This year we have tried something a little different, as we acknowledge that the Annual Town Meeting hasn't been well attended in the past. We do feel it is important to try to engage better with the community and so we used this meeting as an opportunity to reach our community groups and residents in a new way by offering a Coffee Evening with an opportunity for local groups to have a stall to promote their valuable work.

Normanton has a fantastic community spirit, and we want to celebrate that.

Over the course of the last twelve months, the Town Council has continued to provide its regular range of events and services.

### EVENTS

We were delighted to host our regular calendar of events in 2023 including the Party @ Haw Hill Park, Halloween, and Christmas events.

We were also delighted to take part in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations where we held a service of thanksgiving at All Saints Church, and we also presented the children in each primary school with a limited edition engraved wooden coaster to commemorate the occasion.

On Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September, Her Majesty The Queen sadly passed away. We had to jump straight into our emergency procedures including organising additional events such as church services, books of condolence, flower laying and the proclamation reading for the announcement of King Charles.

The events planned for the Gala had to be cancelled or postponed. A special protocol was put into place, which we had been preparing for over the course of the last five years or so. We were instructed that all celebratory events had to be postponed and that impacted on our annual Gala events.

We were fortunate to have been able to reschedule the Gala for the 1<sup>st</sup> October and were delighted with how many local groups supported the event.

#### SERVICES

The Woodhouse Community Centre has been open following its closure during Covid. Sadly, we are not back to our pre-pandemic usage levels, but we are trying to work with existing hirers and looking at some exciting new opportunities in the new financial year. The centre is now available to hire at no cost to encourage people to use the building.

Our Hanging Basket added a much-needed splash of colour and we have secured a number of new sponsors.

We have continued to deal with grass cutting at Woodhouse Community Centre and Norwood Street using our own staff which has been successful and the grass at Potts Terrace continues to be cut by WMDC and paid for by the Town Council.

#### COMMUNITY GRANTS

We have continued to support Community Groups by providing £6,000 in funding through the Small Grants Scheme. These grants provide much needed funding to small community groups in our area who do a wonderful job on a voluntary basis, particularly during these uncertain times.

Grants awarded in 2022/23 include:

Alice Bacon Trust	£500.00
Altofts Bowling Club	£286.99
Altofts FC	£500.00
Altofts Cricket Club	£500.00
Friends of Altofts Library	£473.89

Friends of Lock Lane Altofts	£300.00
Meet 'N' Eats Diner	£484.98
Normanton Nightingale Cheerleaders	£300.00
Normanton Knights	£493.56
Normanton St John Cricket Club	£500.00
Normanton Musical Theatre Society	£500.00
The Well Project	£500.00
1 <sup>st</sup> Normanton Scouts	£500.00
Miss Green Remembers	£160.58

## REPRESENTING THE COMMUNITY

During the last twelve months the Town Council has been working on the following issues:

- Local Plan 2036 and objections to various housing allocations in Normanton and Altofts including LP45, LP39 and LP770
- Community Governance Review – Boundary changes
- Consultation on Telephone masts at High Street and Kingston Drive
- Local Plan – Gypsy & Traveller Site Consultation
- Local Plan - Green Belt Consultation
- Planning Enforcement Consultation
- Taxi Licensing Policy Consultation
- Mass Transit Consultation from the West Yorkshire Mayor

## TOWN HALL REFURBISHMENT

The refurbishment of the Town Hall commenced in January 2022, and we are extremely disappointed to report that the work is not completed some 30 weeks past the agreed finish date.

We are now in legal discussions regarding the completion of the project, and we very much hope that the final pieces of work will be completed over the next few months.

The main aim of the refurbishment was to make the building accessible under the Equality Act so that all members of our community can access services and events at the Town Hall.

To achieve this, we:

- Created a ramped access at the front of the building which is compliant with legislation for wheelchair use and also provides easy access for pushchairs and people with mobility issues who might not be able to use the steps.
- Installed a lift which gives access to the Council Chamber on the first floor meaning that residents with mobility issues can attend meetings of the Council.

- Installed disabled toilets on the ground and first floor to ensure that visitors to the building have all the facilities they may require. These toilet areas also feature baby changing facilities.

Our second aim was to create useable community spaces and meeting rooms that are available for the community to use, whether that is a meeting space for organisations, community events or a space for private functions.

To achieve this, we:

- Created two large multi-purpose community rooms on the ground floor.
- Created a servery area which is accessible from each community room to facilitate the service of drinks during events.
- Created a smaller meeting room on the ground floor for 6-8 people.

In order to provide this usable community space on the ground floor, our administration offices were relocated to the first floor, in a section of the building where it is not possible to create access for disabled people and would otherwise be an unusable space.

Our third aim was to make the building more efficient with energy usage and hopefully reduce our carbon footprint and future running costs.

To achieve this, we:

- Installed replacement energy efficient windows on the first floor.
- Installed insulation in the ceiling void to prevent heat loss.
- Disconnected from the old, unreliable gas boiler which we had no control over.
- Installed new energy efficient heating and cooling systems so that we only pay for the power that we consume, as opposed to the percentage of total bill method which was previously used for our utilities.

This project was funded through savings achieved as a result of careful budget management and our specifically earmarked reserves. We did not increase the precept to fund the refurbishment works and have already budgeted for the ongoing maintenance costs within our existing budget. We have also not taken on any loans to fund the works.

We have a vast number of community groups using the building at no charge including monthly Coffee mornings, weekly bingo sessions, and community group meetings.

COUNCILLORS

I would like to thank all the Town Councillors who have served Normanton Town Council over the last twelve months and express a warm welcome to our new co-opted Councillors. Our Councillors are unpaid, and they serve because they want to make a difference and because they want Normanton and Altofts to be a good place to live and work.

#### STAFF

We have a very small team of dedicated staff in the office who carry out all the administration for the Council from organising meetings and taking allotment rent to organising events and inspecting allotments. I would like to place on record my thanks to them for their work during a challenging year.

#### MAYORS CHARITY FUND

I have been very well supported by Urban Airsoft who have once again chosen to support the Mayors Charity by holding raffles at their shop on Exchange Street.

With their support and through the events I have organised, I have raised almost £2500.00 so far which will be used to support mental health charities, the Well Project, and other local good causes.

During my year as Mayor, which doesn't end until mid-May, I have been honoured to attend a great number of events, both locally and across the Yorkshire area.

It has been an absolute pleasure to represent the town I love.

### **3. Issues Raised By Residents**

Residents raised the following issues:

- Thefts in shops and burglaries  
The Police were in attendance and confirmed that operations were in place to provide reassurance, target hardening advice and additional patrols. They were developing the intelligence that had been received.

It was important to report all crimes to the police as reporting things on social media is not official and will not be picked up by the police.

It was reported that there was not enough feedback coming back to those who were victims of crime.

Residents and business owners were encouraged to raise these issues with the Police at the PACT meeting.

- **Lighting in Lock Lane Park**  
Friends of Lock Lane Altofts thanked the Town Council for their recent grant and reported that there was no lighting in Lock Lane Park and there were concerns about anti-social behaviour.

- **Drug Use at Haw Hill Park Bowling Club**  
It was reported that there was evidence of drug use in the new shelters at Haw Hill Park which had been reported to the police but no action had been taken. Damage had also been caused to planters.

The Police were supposed to be putting in some additional patrols to keep an eye on the area.

- **Reduction in Bus Services in Altofts**  
Residents raised serious concerns about the loss of bus services in Altofts including the 125 which ceases on 1<sup>st</sup> April and the 186 which was being reduced.

District Councillors reported that they had been working with the Combined Authority to have the funding extended for these bus services.

Unfortunately, some busses were being removed as they were not financially viable. Busses are managed by private companies and they are suffering from increased costs along with reduced passengers.

Meetings had been held with Arriva and it was reported that driver retention was improving but they were not yet at full capacity.

- **HGVs at Pope Street**  
It was reported that HGVs are constantly breaching the weight restriction at Pope Street, despite the new signage which was recently installed after a two year campaign.

Viamaster were recently contacted by the District Council to remind them of the weight restriction and asking their drivers to comply.

Anyone who sees a lorry breaching the weight restriction can take the registration and company and email it to the District Councillors.

- **Speeding on Church Road**

Residents asked if a speed camera could be installed at Church Road.

It was reported that the average speed was actually 28 mph. There were discussions taking place with a view to bringing forward some plans in the near future.

- Zebra Crossing at Church Road

It was suggested that a zebra crossing should be installed near One Stop.

The District Councillors reported that they were working on a crossing further down the road and a feasibility study was being carried out.

- Parking Issues at Princess Street

It was reported that there were ongoing issues with parking at Princess Street with cars visiting a nearby business, parking inconsiderately on pavements, double yellows, in resident only areas and on the grass.

This was worse on Wednesday evenings and Saturdays.

- The Well Project

The Well Project thanked the Town Council for their support over the last year and made reference to the Easter event which was coming up.

- Talking Newspaper

The Talking Newspaper thanked the Town Council office staff for all their support and making them feel welcome when they visit.

It was agreed that all the issues raised would be brought to the attention of the relevant parties.

In the absence of any further business, the Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.