



## **BEDALE TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the 2021 Annual Parish Meeting**

**DATE:** Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021  
**TIME:** 7.00pm  
**LOCATION:** Ball Room, Bedale Hall  
**PRESENT:** Cllr Andrew Hallett, Mayor of Bedale (Chairing), Nick Reed (Town Clerk, minutes), and 22 others

#### **1) Welcome**

Cllr Hallett welcomed parishioners to the meeting

#### **2) Minutes**

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2019 were AGREED as a true record of the meeting. It was NOTED that the requirement to hold an annual parish meeting had been suspended in 2020 due to the Covid pandemic.

#### **3) Annual Report**

The Mayor delivered his report on the business of the town, and Bedale Town Council, for the year 2020-21, which is attached.

#### **4) Bedale Community Awards**

Community Awards were presented to business owner and local historian Mr Brian Hall, Bedale Town Council's retiring litter picker Dave Hewison, and the Bedale Covid-19 Mutual Aid Group. The citations, which were read out by Cllr John Noone, Cllr Hallett and the Town Clerk respectively, are attached to these minutes.

#### **5) Questions and comments from parishioners**

Mr Hall made a brief comment that a considerable amount of Bedale memorabilia was stored informally in non-public areas of Bedale Hall, and that this might usefully be curated into a public exhibition, perhaps to coincide with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The meeting AGREED that this would be an interesting plan.

The Meeting Closed at 7:30pm, with refreshments served afterwards.



### Chairs Report

The last 18 months or so have been difficult for us all and have seen many adjustments to the way we live our lives. Some of these adjustments will continue to be with us for some time to come as will the threat of Covid-19.

We were unable to have our Annual Parish Meeting in 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions on public meetings. Now that those restrictions have eased some-what we are now in a position to start holding those meetings again.

The past 18 months have seen the community come together to deal with the problems that were caused by the Pandemic.

The Bedale Mutual Aid Group of volunteers was formed to assist those in the community that were vulnerable or were having to self-isolate. Prescriptions being collected and shopping delivered were amongst the range of help that was provided. In recognition of the work of these volunteers the Group will receive a Community Award this evening.

Without singling out individuals, the Council would like to recognise the contributions and work carried out by all those involved in the Medical Centre and Care Homes. We should not forget those that kept our community functioning, including the shop workers, pharmacies, emergency services, bin men and posties. Our Library volunteers contributed as soon as they were able, providing books to be collected and delivering to those that were housebound or self- isolating. Our churches also played their part, making their services and even funerals available online for those that were unable to attend due to the restrictions in place at the time.

Local shops provided free home delivery and click and collect services. Some cafes and pubs provided free meals or soup to be delivered or collected for those most in need.

People were helping their neighbours with shopping and the tasks that they were prevented from doing due to having to isolate or concerns about going out. A real community spirit emerged with a willingness to pitch in and help others.

Taken all together, this was an amazing, up-lifting and heart- warming response to what was for many a desperate situation. Those that stepped up are to be applauded for their community spirit and it shows what can be achieved when a community pulls together.

Not being able to hold a car boot was for many of the charities a big disappointment as they rely on the proceeds to fund their activities. There was a delay to the start of the sales this year due to concerns over the gathering of large groups of people and the risks of transmission of infection. Since restrictions were eased, some sales have been able to



be held, while others have been cancelled due to the weather. Hopefully it will be possible to run a full calendar of sales next year.

It was the intention to provide a much-needed lift and raise the spirits by having a funfair on the Park. Unfortunately, the weather played a part and this much anticipated event had to be cancelled as the hirer decided that the ground in the Park was too wet to support the heavy vehicles bringing in the rides. There are plans on going to see if a funfair could be a regular feature each year.

The 'Rock the Town' music festival was another event to provide entertainment and get that feel good factor back. At least the weather was kind over that weekend. As this festival was well received and proved to be a success, it could pave the way for similar events in the future.

In response to requests to improve the recreational and fitness facilities in the Park there has been the installation of equipment to address this. This has proved very popular and is being well used. Plans are well advanced to expand upon these improvements and install a range of accessible equipment both in the enclosed play area for younger children and a swing designed for wheelchair users near the fitness equipment. I understand that certain residents of The Millings are looking forward to trying out the new equipment. It is hoped that these items will be installed by the end of November. To enhance the seating in our public open spaces and to commemorate the anniversaries of the end of conflicts in two World Wars memorial benches were installed at Bedale Park, Burrill Road and Southfields.

In order to address concerns about heavy goods vehicles on certain of Bedale's roads the Council has progressed and seen the implementation of a weight limit on vehicles using Wycar.

The Council has also supported the requests from South End residents to North Yorkshire County Council to extend the disc zone from the Market Place to the Masonic Hall. This extension of the zone is now in place and is helping to alleviate the concerns that residents had raised over parking outside of their homes. Feedback from these South End residents is that things have got very much better for them regarding the parking issues.

A challenge that the Council had to deal with earlier in the year was that of the major flooding of the park at Southfields. This area is prone to surface water after prolonged rainfall but the amount of water and the length of time that it was taking to drain away was exceptional. Contractors were brought in to pump the water away and it took several days to reduce the level. Discussions are ongoing with specialist surveyors, contractors and the site builders to find a lasting solution.



One notable success was the case submitted by Council in opposition to the planning application to build an Extra Care Facility at Queen Anne's Drive. Though it was felt that Bedale would benefit from such a facility, the Council agreed with local residents that its scale was totally inappropriate for that location and its impact on the lives of those living in its vicinity would be unacceptable. The Council's stance was supported by Hambleton District Council and when the application went to Appeal it was supported by the Inspectorate who rejected the application. No further plans for the development of that site have been submitted to date.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the Bedale Litter Busters who continue to turn out once a month to litter pick and tidy up around the Park, the Beck, the streets and ginnels and make such a difference to the look of Bedale. They also tackle the areas on the approaches to the Town. You can see the difference that they make when you drive through the outskirts of other towns. The Town Tidy that they organised was a great success and in addition to their usual focus included replanting the tubs that you see outside of local businesses. Over 90 people and children turned out for this event, the children asking when the next one was going to be as they had enjoyed it so much. At the end of the Town Tidy, awards were presented to the children who had taken part on the day and throughout the year in recognition of their contribution. The Litter Busters have also taken over the redundant Telephone Boxes, one is now a plant exchange and there are plans for the other. Is there no stopping them? We certainly hope not.

Where so many towns are seeing more and more empty shops in their High Streets it is encouraging to see that there are some new businesses that have opened up throughout Bedale which are proving to be popular with residents and visitors. There is still some work to be done to get the remaining properties filled. Bedale is noted for and has a lot to offer through its speciality shops. (Small is sometimes better?) The emerging café culture with its pavement tables is proving popular it is starting to give Bedale a more welcoming and upbeat look and will encourage visitors to spend more time in the town.

Christmas will soon be upon us and it is planned for there to be a Christmas Market in the Market Place at the end of November. The road will be closed for the day to allow for more stalls and provide a safe traffic free environment. There will also be entertainment throughout the day. Our Christmas lights will be switched on in the evening. More set pieces have been added and the strings extended to include part of South End and Bridge St. Bedale is noted for its Christmas lights and this year should be no exception.

Looking ahead to next year, in June we have the celebrations to mark The Queen's Platinum Jubilee with events planned in the Park and at St. Gregory's. Later on in the



summer, we are planning to present an Illuminated Address to RAF Leeming. This is in recognition of the close ties and long association that Bedale has with RAF Leeming and is the equivalent of granting the Freedom of Bedale with all its rights and privileges. We can look forward to a parade, military band and hopefully a flypast.

Bedale may have been perceived to have seen a decline in these recent troubled months, but the outlook is positive, things will and are getting better. There is much to look forward to.

Thank you.

Cllr Andrew Hallett

Mayor of Bedale



## Community Award

### CITATION

Bedale Town Council wishes to acknowledge the valuable contribution made to the community of Bedale by:

### **Mr Brian Hall**

Brian was born in 1934 and has lived in Bedale all his life. In doing so, he established himself into the Bedale community early in his life, through sport and more recently, as a font of knowledge on Bedale and its history. A keen cricketer, golfer, greens bowls and squash player, to name but a few. He was part of the group who enabled the move of Bedale Golf Club to its present location, from Firby. He was also instrumental in the growth of Bedale Sports Association, with its modern facilities for a wide range of sporting activities.

Brian took over the running of Halls Fish and Chip shop from his father, Henry and mother, Molly. The business started in 1934 and is the oldest, original, family owned and operated shop still in operation in the town today.

Brian has always had a keen interest in local history, its buildings, and its characters. He was a key contributor to the book "Reflections of Bedale", which raised several hundreds of pounds for local charities. In contributing to "Reflections of Bedale", he sourced many pictures and postcards of Bedale, Aiskew and Leeming Bar. He has given talks to a wide range of organisations on the topic. But be aware, if you invite yourself to view his collection, give yourself plenty of time, as he is passionate about it!

He also continues to be active within the community, being a member of the Rector's Four and Twenty and being supportive of local charities such as the Bedale Minibus. He remains active, even at 87 years young, in supporting the community in which he lives. An inspiration to us all.



## Community Award

### CITATION

Bedale Town Council wishes to acknowledge the valuable contribution made to the community of Bedale by:

### **Mr David Hewison**

This Community Award is presented to David Hewison in recognition of the many years of service that he has given to Bedale Town Council and the people of Bedale.

David started working for the Town Council in August 2004 in a Caretaker role which included the responsibility for litter picking in Bedale Park; he also took on the public open spaces including those at Stapleton Close and Burrill Road. That Bedale Park is such a fine open space, able to be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike, is due in no small part to his efforts. Such was his commitment to seeing things done right for the town and its residents that he often did a lot more than he was paid for. He served many years as caretaker for the Park toilets and Bridge Street toilets, which has presented many challenges over the years, often going above and beyond the call of duty.

Now that David has decided to retire it will be difficult to find a replacement with the same work ethic and level of dedication to his role that he has displayed. He will be much missed.

David, a talented musician, is also recognised for his fundraising activities for various local charities including the Friarage Hospital. He has also performed for the residents of local care homes and intends to continue to raise funds for local causes.

Bedale Town Council would like to thank David for his years of service to the Council and town and wish him a long, happy, and well-earned retirement.



## Community Award

### CITATION

Bedale Town Council wishes to acknowledge the valuable contribution made to the community of Bedale by:

### **Bedale Covid-19 Mutual Aid Group**

This Community Award is presented to the Bedale Covid-19 Mutual Aid Group in recognition of the help they offered vulnerable people around the town during the pandemic.

The Mutual Aid Group was launched on 16th March 2020, a week before the country went into lockdown. Within 24 hours, 600 local people had joined the Facebook group and after a fortnight, more than a third of the townsfolk were group members. Nearly 200 Bedale residents registered as volunteers, with over a hundred regularly and actively involved in supporting those in need.

A telephone helpline was swiftly established with 21 group members monitoring it on a rota basis, ensuring that the most vulnerable people in town had access to food, medicine and advice. Once the helpline number was publicised, a steady stream of requests came in, mostly for prescriptions and essential shopping.

Between March and August 2020, over 430 helpline requests were fulfilled. However, that figure significantly underestimates the amount of help provided. Many volunteers who originally came into contact with people in need through a helpline request, continued to support them throughout lockdown with weekly shopping and prescription collection without the group's involvement. Some of those relationships formed in the early days of lockdown continue to this day.

The group's volunteers also looked after finance, volunteer coordination, IT, phone companionship, and compliance. Online systems were set up so that all activities could be audited, and management consultants assessed and improved the group's procedures. A sub-group of health professionals was formed to advise on health issues.

Something the Mutual Aid group became known for was delivering hot food to those who otherwise would have struggled to have it. Hall's Fish and Chips





and the Hummingbird Café offered free food to those in need, with the tireless David Oakes co-ordinating and delivering the food five days a week. Special thanks are due to David and the businesses for going beyond the call of duty to ensure the most vulnerable got treats as well as essentials.

Bedale's response to the coronavirus crisis shows that community spirit, teamwork, good deeds and selflessness are alive and well in the town, and the Town Council is delighted to award the Community Award to the Bedale Covid-19 Mutual Aid Group.