

Minutes of the proceedings of the **ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE TOWN MEETING** for the Parish of Great Aycliffe, held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **THURSDAY, 23rd MAY 2013** at **7.15 p.m.**

PRESENT Councillor Mrs. B.A. Clare (Chairman / Mayor)
and there were 20 Electors present.

The Chairman (Mayor) of the Council opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the Annual Assembly of the Town Meeting.

1. **NOTICE OF MEETING**

The Notice convening the Meeting was taken as read.

2. **MINUTES**

It was proposed by Mrs M. Dalton, seconded by Mr. R.S. Fleming and

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Annual Assembly of the Town Meeting held on the 2nd May 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. **MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT**

The Mayor gave a verbal report of event, activities and works which had been carried out by the Town Council over the past year.

Information was given on the Neighbourhood Planning and the need to develop a Neighbourhood Plan under the Localism Act.

Environmental themed activities supported by the Environment Officer had been given to local schools and residents.

The Environment Officer and Town Pride Team have continued to improve the towns environment and had engaged in a number of projects:

- Maintaining and enhancing the towns natural green area.
- 38 public countryside events had taken place.
- 40 environmental workshops with local school groups had been carried out.
- 750 man hours of volunteers help had been given to improve the nature areas around the town.
- Weekly tasks were still being undertaken by the Probation Service to improve the area together with assistance from Community Groups such as Houghall College and various local Scout Groups.
- An Environment Week had been organised with the assistance of the Youth Council. They visited primary schools in the town, giving an interactive presentation on litter together with litter picks in their local community.
- A licence agreement with Durham County Council to operate and maintain areas of land and woodland which form part of the Great Aycliffe Way had been obtained.

The Council continues to provide leisure facilities such as Parks, Golf Course / Driving Range and the Sports Complex, however they also continue to provide a series of annual

events such as the Senior Citizens Excursions, Great Aycliffe Show, Firework Night, Fun in the Parks and the Santa Tours and Letters.

Support is also given to events run by local organisations.

Oakleaf Sports Complex

A number of refurbishment works and maintenance projects have been undertaken to keep the Sports Complex up to standard including cavity wall insulation and the replacement of the high level wood panelling in the sports hall.

Sporting activities are organised to encourage all age groups. The school holiday programme continues to be popular and a new Club for Over 50's has been developed.

Heats of the County Schools Cross Country event was again held at the Sports Complex with over 500 primary school children joining in.

Themed events and parties were organised for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee last year and a time capsule had been buried alongside a tree to celebrate the event.

Capital Works

Information was given on capital works which had been carried out in order to keep the Council's buildings and assets up to a required standard. In addition the following capital projects had taken place:-

- Fitness Equipment
- BMX Track – Woodham Park
- Re-surface of the Complex Exercise Track
- Extended the wheeled sports ramps – Town Park.

Partnership Working

The Council continues to further explore partnership working / joint procurement with Durham County Council.

A number of areas of land including nature areas and woodlands from Durham County Council have been adopted to help maintain and improve them. The Friends of Byerley Park Local Nature Reserve has been re-established.

Youth Council

The Council continue to support the Youth Council with officer assistance and a financial sum that enables the Youth Council to give grants, subject to approval by the Council, to organisations or individuals connected with children and young people.

Council Finances

The Mayor asked the Town Council Finance Manager, Mr. Dan Austin, to give a brief overview of the Council's Finances.

A detailed hand-out leaflet had been prepared of the Council's Finances and spending plans for 2013/14.

The report provided a summary of the Council's 2013/14 Revenue Budget showing how the precept had been allocated to meet the running costs of each service area as well as the Council's capital investment plans.

Information was included on the significant change in the Council's financial situation following the localisation of support for council tax.

The report also set out a summary of the Council's financial performance over the last two years to include details of actual expenditure, key information from the Council's Accounts and the outcome of the annual audit inspection.

Councillor Mrs. Clare thanked the Finance Officer for the excellent work he had carried out in connection with the Council's finances.

4. **LOCAL ORGANISATIONS**

(a) Aycliffe Youth Council

The Mayor welcomed Meghan Cummin and Charlotte Kirton to the meeting to give address the meeting on the work of the Newton Aycliffe Youth Council.

Information was supplied on the work carried out by the Youth Council and their recent elections and events which they had supported.

The Chairman thanked the representatives of the Youth Council for their excellent presentation.

(b) Rotary Club of Newton Aycliffe

The Mayor welcomed Mr. Roger Curtis (President) to the meeting to give a presentation on the work of the Rotary Club.

A short video was played on the good work carried out worldwide.

Information was supplied on the many events and monies raised to support organisations and groups within the town. Events such as the War Memorial Appeal, Santa Tours, Town Community Carol Service, International Study Groups, a Swimathon, the Community Fayre every two years and the Railway exhibition were only a few of the many events supported and organised by the Rotary Club.

Mr. Curtis asked if there were any questions and thanked the Council for allowing him to address the meeting.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Curtis for his attendance and for the excellent presentation on the valuable work carried out by the Rotary Club of Newton Aycliffe.

5. **QUESTIONS**

The Mayor / Chairman had not received any prior notices of questions to be asked at the Parish Meeting.

The Chairman closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance.

CHAIRMAN.