

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORS OF THE  
TOWN OF BRANDON**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF THE**

**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

**YOU ARE ALL INVITED TO PARTICIPATE**

**TO BE HELD VIA ZOOM.**

**ON WEDNESDAY 5th MAY 2021 AT 6:30pm  
UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF COUNCILLOR  
PHIL WITTAM.**

**THE TOWN MEETING MAY BY LAW DISCUSS ALL TOWN  
AFFAIRS AND PASS RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING THEM.**

**SUCH PERSONS ONLY AS ARE REGISTERED AS LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT ELECTORS WILL BE ENTITLED TO VOTE AT THE  
MEETING BUT THE MEETING WILL BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC  
DURING THE PROCEEDINGS UNLESS THE TOWN MEETING BY  
RESOLUTION OTHERWISE DIRECTS.**

**AGENDA**

- 1. Apologies for Absence.**
- 2. To receive and confirm the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of Monday 13th May 2019.**
- 3. Chairman's Annual Report.**
- 4. To receive Reports from Charities – The Brandon Poor's Estate; The Edmund Atmere Charity; The Lingheath Trust Charity.**
- 5. To discuss matters affecting the Town of Brandon.**

**SIGNED.....**



**Chairman**

**DATED.....**

*29<sup>th</sup> April 2021*

## BRANDON ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting  
held on Monday 13th May 2019 in the Council Chamber, Old School House,  
Market Hill, Brandon at 6.30pm

**Present:** Cllr V Lukaniuk (Chair), Cllr G Brocklehurst, Cllr P Callaghan, Cllr D Palmer,  
Cllr M Rickard, Cllr P Ridgwell, Cllr E Stewart, Cllr C Whiteman, Cllr P Wittam

Local Government Electors of the Town of Brandon: 10+ members of the public all eligible to speak and vote on proposals.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** and approval of reasons tendered – None.
2. **TO RECEIVE, CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF MONDAY 14TH MAY 2018**

**Proposer:** Cllr E Stewart

**Seconder:** Cllr P Wittam

Resolution Record No: **BTC/22/13/May/19**

**CARRIED:** Unanimous

**THE MEETING RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 14TH MAY 2018**

### 3. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT ON THE YEAR 2018/19**

On agreeing to stand for Chairman, I was painfully aware of the looming pitfalls, especially Brandon Town Council's dysfunctional reputation, but in spite of all this plus opposition, threats, being labelled 'the worst Chairman' and the inevitable tensions of having 14 opinionated colleagues in the chamber who could, of course, all do a better job, I have endeavoured to find the middle ground, whilst at the same time ensuring the Council complied with the letter and spirit of the law. With BTC this has been no easy task, and I would have loved to see Councillors actually working together as a team instead of a number acting as prima donnas, though I suppose a reduction in the number of complaints to Standards might be seen as a step in the right direction.

Welcome to all Councillors, especially those new to the role, once you have signed the formal declaration of acceptance of your office you are part of the democratic framework of the country representing the interests of your community, the tier of local government closest to the people. You are unpaid volunteers and will be held accountable by the people of Brandon for things that happen locally, whether they are the responsibility of BTC or not, so a fairly thick skin might be an asset.

I must remind you that the Council is a corporate body, a legal entity separate from that of its members, its decisions are the responsibility of the whole body, and you are all only a one fourteenth part of that corporate body. Legally you cannot act individually or speak personally on behalf of Brandon Town Council unless resolved by a decision of the full Council.

Signed.....

Local councils have the legal power to raise money through taxation (the Precept) and a range of powers to spend public money, but in reality they have very few duties, nevertheless they should play a vital part in representing the interests of the local community and improving the quality of life and the local environment. Over the coming weeks I am sure you will come to terms with 'the rules', which whilst often frustrating and restrictive, are vital for keeping the Council from acting without legal power and therefore open to unnecessary risk which could lead, collectively or individually, to Councillors facing financial and legal difficulties. As with all decisions which have a legal implication Councillors have a duty to make themselves familiar with the requirements contained in the statutes and financial regulations.

I get tired of so often hearing the electorate and prospective Councillors ask "Well, what has the Council done?"

As a Town Council, apart from the everyday business which, though considerable, largely passes unnoticed by the general public and many of the Council members, we have, at last, brought the purchase of the New Cemetery to a conclusion. This has occupied Councils literally for decades and I am ashamed at the amount of money it has cost Brandon over the years, but it has proved a delicate and lengthy negotiation. We can now look to the future and to developing the new Cemetery and preparing it for use, though this is not something that will happen overnight, it will take some time and involve considerable expense which will, unfortunately, impact on future generations.

Thanks to the retiring Council, following what can only be described as a difficult period, we have now built up an excellent and hardworking work force, be it the Town Keepers, the Office Assistant and not forgetting our Cleaner. My sincere thanks to each and every one of them, their efforts and contribution to the smooth running of matters are much appreciated by the Council and the people of Brandon.

My particular thanks to Graham, our Town Clerk. This is an incredibly difficult position dealing with Local Government Law, Staff and Public demands, whilst safeguarding and guiding Councillors, a job that requires not only patience, but a wide understanding of the parameters within which a Clerk is obliged to work. I think Graham will agree, it has been, and will remain to be, a very steep learning curve.

I take this opportunity to remind Councillors that the Clerk is not here to act as your secretary, he is Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer, he is there to ensure you all keep within the law and adhere to the Code of Conduct. For example Councillors are not permitted to instruct staff. All requests must go through the Clerk as line manager. You must understand it would be impossible and, as has already been experienced, potentially costly, if Councillors attempted to issue orders and interfere, however frustrating that rule might appear to some of you.

I must also take this opportunity to thank Tim Kent for his loyal and invaluable support as Vice Chairman over the past year. We have at times been swamped with legal documents that have demanded careful scrutiny amongst the many other matters that have required our attention, but hopefully, and along with Tim's professional experience, we have achieved the best we could for Brandon regards the New Cemetery. I must say legal documents are not my favoured reading, but it

Signed.....

has been well worth our careful scrutiny as we have both found errors and unacceptable clauses, all of which, I am proud to say, we have got amended. I personally will not miss the hours spent pouring over legal jargon!

I want you to also consider that not everyone who gives invaluable service to the people of Brandon wishes to be photographed, applauded or hit the headlines. I have discovered some who work away quietly and would like those people to be thanked for their efforts, because they contribute just as much, if not more to Brandon.

Over the last year, as Chairman, I have given of my time, stuck to the task, albeit in a different way to past Chairmen, but suffice to say I have endeavoured to give of my best, and Brandon Town Council has certainly swallowed up my time and much of my life, only you can judge whether that was worthwhile.

To the newly elected Councillors and those more experienced members returning for another term, remember, you are only here for the sole purpose of representing and working for the good people of Brandon and that requires you to, at the very least attend monthly Council meetings and listen to your electorate's needs, which might not always match your own aspirations. Much of what Councillors do in the course of their duty is routine, bureaucratic and hard work, but it is when plans come to fruition that satisfaction can then be enjoyed by one and all.

I wish all Councillors well, may you not flinch from the hard work, have infinite patience and vision, and most importantly, truly work as a team. I look forward to the future and being able to enjoy the fruits of your efforts. Thank you.

**4. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM CHARITIES – THE BRANDON POOR’S ESTATE; THE EDMUND ATMERE CHARITY; THE LINGHEATH TRUST CHARITY.**

The reports from the Charities were not available.

**5. PUBLIC FORUM FOR QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS ANY OTHER MATTERS**

A resident thanked the Council for the coming HGV ban. Councillors stated that the Community Centre had been sold for in excess of £200,000 and the flowerpot for £136,000. Cllr Lukaniuk will be investigating the return of this money to Brandon. In addition S106 money associated with Mount Pit Lane set aside for cycle ways has not been utilised. Cllr Ridgwell commented that Network Rail were spending £600,000 on Masters House at Bury St Edmunds Station – why not Brandon? Cllr Brocklehurst stated the Breckland Society are in conversation with Greater Anglia regarding the future of the Station. Cllr Stewart stated Friends of Brandon Station tried to get it preserved without success.

The meeting closed at 7:00pm

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