

**LEEK TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Annual Town Council held remotely on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

**Chairman:** Cllr. Coleman

**Present:** Cllrs: Benefer, Cawley, Johnson, Molson, Ottewell, L. Swindlehurst, M. Swindlehurst, Wales & Worthington

**Apologies:** Cllrs: Emery and Wood

Les Jackson (Leek Post and Times) was also present.

1. **Election of Mayor for the ensuing year.**

Cllr. Coleman thanked Cllr Wales, the Deputy Mayor of Leek for all the help and support he had given her throughout the year. Cllr. Sue Coleman proposed Cllr. Stephen Wales as Leek Town Mayor and this was seconded by Cllr. Matt Swindlehurst. This was unanimously agreed by all the councillors.

Cllr. Wales will hold office until the Annual Meeting in May 2021. The Mayor received the Chain of Office and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2. **Appointment of Deputy Mayor for the ensuing year.** Cllr. Wales proposed Cllr. Lyn Swindlehurst and this was seconded by Cllr. Mike Ottewell. Cllr. Swindlehurst was duly elected and received the Chain of Office and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

3. **The minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020** were received as a correct record.

4. **Mayor to Return Thanks For Election** Cllr. Wales thanked Cllr. Coleman for demonstrating true integrity for her nomination. Cllr. Wales stated that this term of office comes at a crucial time for our town as the wide-ranging effects of the Covid 19 crisis become more apparent. It is a very painful period in our history and there is a challenge for everyone in the town and its surrounding villages. However, our town, with its resilient and loyal townsfolk and its enterprising businesses, will bounce back. We just all need to be thinking carefully just where we spend our money and how we can best support local businesses. The town's own motto '*ARTE FAVENTE NIL DESPERANDUM*' translates to "Our skill assisting us, we have no cause for despair." The crisis has brought out the very best of human nature and here in Leek we have come together to help each other. The cloud of Covid will lift and we will step back into a different world – it will be one where Leek can be proud of its neighbourly and caring spirit. Cllr. Wales again thanked everyone.

5. **Deputy Mayor to Return Thanks For Appointment** Cllr. Lyn Swindlehurst thanked Cllr. Coleman for being a wonderful Mayor and said that her term of office had not concluded as it should have done. However, we would hopefully give Sue a celebratory send off when the crisis was over. Cllr. Swindlehurst congratulated Cllr. Wales on becoming Mayor and that they would work creatively during the year. Cllr. Swindlehurst stated: "My mum would have been so proud!"

6. **Vote of Thanks to Retiring Mayor** Cllr. Wales said that Cllr. Coleman had done the town proud and Cllr. Johnson stated that Cllr. Coleman had been an excellent Mayor and congratulated Cllr. Wales and Cllr. Swindlehurst on their appointments. Cllr. Coleman thanked the town councillors for their gift of flowers and said that it had been hard work being Mayor, but she had had a wonderful year. Cllr. Coleman stated that the role had given her an insight into Leek and the surrounding towns. Some of the Mayoral highlights had been the Christmas Lights event, local concerts and opening businesses such as Mo's Barbers and Polka Dot Travel. Cllr. Coleman thanked the Leek Town Crier, Bill Lomas and stated that he is a great asset to the town.

7. **Appointment of Committees** Cllr. Coleman and Cllr. Swindlehurst proposed and seconded the composition of Committees including respective Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

It was resolved that the membership of the following committees would be as follows:

a) General Purposes Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Lyn Swindlehurst

Vice Chairman: Cllr. Bill Cawley

b) Planning Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Ben Benefer

Vice Chairman: Cllr. Roy Molson

c) Allotments Committee  
Chairman: Cllr. Sue Coleman                      Vice Chairman: Cllr. Roy Molson

d) Events Committee  
Chairman: Cllr. Matt Swindlehurst              Vice Chairman: Cllr. Mike Ottewell

e) Friends of the Nicholson War Memorial Committee  
Chairman: Cllr. Ben Benefer      Vice Chairman: John Povey

f) Climate Emergency  
Chairman: Cllr. Ben Benefer                      Vice Chairman: Cllr. Bill Cawley

g) Finance Committee  
Chairman: Cllr. Bill Cawley                      Vice Chairman: Cllr. Stephen Wales

8. **Cheque signatories**

It was resolved that the signatories for the Natwest bank accounts remain the same (Cllrs: Benefer, Coleman, Johnson, M. Swindlehurst and Wales).

It was resolved that two cheque signatories – Cllrs: Sue Coleman and Lyn Swindlehurst would be added to the Co-operative Mayor’s charity account.

9. **Finance**

i) The Financial Statement and Report for the 12 months to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 was received.

ii) The payment of accounts for March and April were approved.

10. **To receive items for information** To report matters for information not on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas.

Cllr. Molson requested that town council meetings could be held in the council chamber as this would enable social distancing. The clerk would make enquiries about the availability of the council chamber.

The Annual Town meeting, when residents of Leek have an opportunity to address the Council, will take place remotely on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June at 7.00pm. This will be followed by the General Purposes Committee meeting.

Chairman.....

Date.....