

## OSWESTRY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015 at 7.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Oswestry.

**PRESENT:** The Mayor, Councillor J G Jones  
Councillors Mrs M E Chamberlain,  
Mrs E Channon, P A Cherrington, A Davis,  
Mrs R Evans, Mrs C Hawksley, V Hunt, J G Jones,  
D Kerr, M Lee, D P Milner, C Schofield, C Stokes  
and Mrs A Woof

**Also in attendance:** David J Preston, Town Clerk  
Seven members of the public

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from:

**Councillor S Mason**  
**Councillor J Price**  
**Councillor Mrs Best**

### 2. WELCOME

A welcome was extended by The Mayor, Councillor J G Jones.

### 4. MINUTES

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2014 - **ATM/01/14** – were confirmed.

### 5. POLICING AND CCTV

Inspector Amrik Klair, West Mercia Police, and Mr Jim Stafford, Oswestry CCTV Co-ordinator, attended to discuss town centre issues. It was confirmed that the new CCTV scheme went live on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2014. Since that time 12 new volunteers have come forward. Since 2001 over 10,300 incidents have been dealt with; 158 reviews had taken place of evidence, and 22 volunteers were now signed up.

It was noted that all CCTV volunteers are now police volunteers and those volunteers have recently been nominated for a national award for their outstanding contribution to local policing.

It was noted that a new radio link scheme for Pub Watch is to be relaunched. Shropshire Council had agreed to sponsor the scheme plus rent for every town centre pub that joins and takes a twelve month radio contract.

It was noted that the Oswestry CCTV scheme had been extended to monitor cameras for Selattyn & Gobowen Parish Council and that a campaign was imminent with the business sector to look at contributions towards CCTV.

It was confirmed that CCTV volunteers were still being sought; approximately 30 hours of training would be provided together with data protection and health & safety training.

Pub Watch is to be relaunched and the Landlord of Weatherspoons is to be the first Chairman. For the first meeting some 26 town centre Licensees attended and the membership is to be extended to the old Oswestry Borough area.

Numerous questions were asked and, at the conclusion, a sincerely vote of thanks were recorded to Amrik Klair and Jim Stafford for their work, in particular in respect of the introduction of new CCTV facilities for Oswestry.

## **6. PRIORITY AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

Jools Payne, newly elected Chairman of Oswestry Chamber of Commerce, provided a presentation on the priorities of the newly elected officers and committee of the Chamber and the opportunities for partnership working. Jools Payne confirmed that the Chamber is not a retailer organisation but it is committed to town businesses in their widest perspective. The recent Tesco announcement of substantial trading losses was referred to with the suggestion that the race for space was now over.

An endorsement was given for Oswestry Award Winning Business Retailers such as Booka, Gooseberry, Honeysuckle, etc. and also the explanation that the Chamber will work closely with professional services, the arts and craft, and destination dining venues, as recently established in the town. The Chamber is also engaging with educational establishments and Sarah Probert, from North Shropshire College, has joined the Chamber Executive. Jools Payne considered that Oswestry was a vibrant town, had a good retail mix, lots of opportunities and excellent events and festivals. In 2015/16 it was considered that the Chamber will outline its strategic priorities, consolidate relationships, and build key partners, act as a strong and active voice for Oswestry businesses, alongside growing its membership and strengthening its communications output. Finally, it was explained that the Chamber would meet on the first Wednesday of each month and all would be welcome.

**7. OSWESTRY AND DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY**

Saffron Rainey, Chairman of the Oswestry and District Civic Society, provided findings from the recent Society Project undertaking a review of Oswestry Townscape. The overview for Oswestry identified an aging population, good education, low property values, mixed employment, and a distinguished history. A number of recommendations were outlined around the themes of transport, public space, high street, markets, tourism, design, and future themes to address. It was explained that the Chamber would take forward the survey in the months to come but in summary, Oswestry has more advantages than many towns and it must use them.

**8. TOWN COUNCIL**

A detailed report by the Mayor on the Civic Year 2015/16 and the Council's recently adopted Corporate Plan that led to a number of questions and discussion.

**9. OSWESTRY TOWN CHARITIES**

It was agreed to note a report from The Clerk of the Oswestry Town Charities and Oswestry Town and Rural Parish Charities on the portfolio for 2014/15.

**Councillor J G Jones  
Mayor of the Town of Oswestry**