

# Highworth



## Town Council

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[www.highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk)

1.

**MINUTES OF THE  
HIGHWORTH TOWN COUNCIL  
ANNUAL ASSEMBLY  
3 MAY 2016**

### PRESENT

Councillor (Mrs) P M Webster (In the Chair)

Councillor: C A Adams  
P L Adams  
A Bishop  
(Mrs) J Bishop  
C Cahill  
(Mrs) J Clark  
G Edwards  
N Gardiner  
(Mrs) A H Livall  
(Mrs) M R Penny  
(Mrs) L Vardy  
S Weisinger

### IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs J Francis and two Members of the Public

### APOLOGIES

1. Councillors (Mrs) A M Durrant and G Evans (Work Commitments)

### MINUTES OF MEETING

2. **RESOLVED TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY HELD ON 5 MAY 2015.**



Highworth is a Fair Trade Town



Twinned with Wassenberg



Twinned with Pontorson

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## MATTERS ARISING

3. None.

## MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

4. Councillor (Mrs) P M Webster gave the following verbatim report:

"My Mayoral year has been a very enjoyable time. There have been plenty of opportunities to promote Highworth as the outstanding hilltop town it is. All the events I have attended have been very memorable.

One of the outstanding events was the dedication and unveiling of the Rex Warneford Victoria Cross. This was a great day and it was my pleasure to meet Lady Sarah Gooch and her husband. Sarah was High Sheriff of Wiltshire from March 14 to March 15. What an inspirational lady she is. I only wish I had her memory and enthusiasm for everything and everybody.

The celebration of the Queen's birthday at the Defence Academy was a very uplifting event. The fly past of a lone Spitfire was something not to miss.

Two events in particular have made me realise how lucky we all are and how we should be grateful for everything we have and do.

- The first was a very enjoyable dinner to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Swindon and District Branch of the MS Society. They raised over £4000 at this event. This went towards helping people through this little understood illness.
- The second was only last week when I went to the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary party for the Whitecross Club at Highworth Community Centre. This organisation receives no funding and is run by volunteers to care for mentally disabled people. They go out for dinners, bowling, cinema and more. All this is funded by a fantastic group of people who continually fundraise. What lovely people they are.

As you all know my charity for the year is The Prospect Hospice. I will report the amount I have raised after the Mayors Ball on 27<sup>th</sup> May. If you can't come, please donate a raffle prize. Since the invitations have gone out there will be an auction of 3 days in Krakow including hotel, flights and two excursions and a tour round the Houses of Parliament with afternoon tea and first class rail tickets.

If you can, please support my charity."

During her Mayoral year she attended the following events:-

- **WEDNESDAY 20 MAY 2015** - Mayor's Investiture, Chippenham Town Council, The Town Hall, High Street, Chippenham
- **WEDNESDAY 3 JUNE 2015** - The Defence Academy Cocktail Party to Celebrate the Birthday of Her Majesty the Queen, Joint Service Command and Staff College, Defence Academy, Shrivenham
- **THURSDAY 4 JUNE 2015** - Local Representatives' Briefing, The Royal International Air Tattoo 17-19 July, RAF Fairford

- **SATURDAY 6 JUNE 2015** - The High Sheriff of Wiltshire Lady Gooch, Charity Concert for Swindon Cares, Christ Church, Old Town, Swindon
- **SUNDAY 7 JUNE 2015** - Highworth Civic Service and Dedication/Unveiling Ceremony for Rex Warneford Victoria Cross, St Michael's Church followed by the Podium, Highworth
- **TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2015** - RAF Civic Reception, RAF Fairford
- **WEDNESDAY 1 JULY 2015** - Relaunch of Restaurant Zara Zara, 10 Swindon Street, Highworth
- **SATURDAY 18 JULY 2015** - RAF Fairford Enclosure, Royal International Air Tattoo 2015
- **MONDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2015** - "Tops in Blue" Performance, RAF Fairford
- **SATURDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2015** - Highworth Produce & Craft Show, Warneford School
- **SUNDAY 25 OCTOBER 2015** - Royal Wootton Bassett Civic Service, St Bartholomew & All Saints Church
- **SUNDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2015** - Festival of Remembrance, Swindon Branch Royal British Legion, Wyvern Theatre, Swindon
- **FRIDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2015** - Highworth Town Council, Christmas Lighting Ceremony
- **SATURDAY 5 DECEMBER 2015** - Highworth Choral Society, Annual Christmas Concert, St Michaels & All Angels' Church
- **TUESDAY 8 DECEMBER 2015** - County of Wiltshire Carol Service, Christ Church, Cricklade Street, Swindon
- **SATURDAY 16 JANUARY 2016** - 50<sup>TH</sup> Birthday Party, Swindon & District Branch of the MS Society, Marriott Hotel, Pipers Way, Swindon
- **SUNDAY 31 JANUARY 2016** - The Saracens Head Hotel/Pub, Quiz Night, High Street, Highworth
- **SUNDAY 13 MARCH 2016** - The High Sheriff of Wiltshire, Lady Gooch, Celebrate the Rule of Law in Wiltshire, Salisbury Cathedral
- **SUNDAY 17 APRIL 2016** - Highworth & District Lions Club, 42<sup>nd</sup> Charter Anniversary Lunch, Wrag Barn & Country Club (**Mayor had to cancel**)
- **FRIDAY 22 APRIL 2016** - Highworth Artist Society Invitation to Preview Night, Highworth Council Offices
- **SATURDAY 23 APRIL 2016** - St George's Day Charity Concert & Marks & Spencer Buffet, Marlborough Town Hall, Marlborough
- **WEDNESDAY 27 APRIL 2016** - Whitecross Club, 35 Years Anniversary, "Year of the Disabled 1981", Highworth Community Centre, The Dormers, Highworth
- **THURSDAY 5 MAY 2016** - Concert to celebrate the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Highworth Warneford School, Highworth

### CLLR ALAN BISHOP 2015 - 2016 DEPUTY MAYOR OF HIGHWORTH

#### ATTENDED FUNCTIONS

- **TUESDAY 2 JUNE 2015** - Wiltshire Community and Employer Presentation and Lunch, "Cadets in the Community", Lydiard house, Swindon
- **SUNDAY 7 JUNE 2015** - Highworth Civic Service and Dedication/Unveiling Ceremony for Rex Warneford Victoria Cross, St Michael's Church followed by the Podium, Highworth

- **SUNDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2015** - Chippenham Civic Service, St. Andrews Church, Market Place, Chippenham
- **MONDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2015** - "Tops in Blue" Performance, RAF Fairford
- **FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER 2015** - Highworth Artist Society, Open the Preview Evening, Community Room, Highworth Town Council, Highworth
- **FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER 2015** - Highworth Twinning Association, Meet & Welcome Twinning to Highworth
- **SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER 2015** - Marlborough Civic Service, St Mary's Church, Marlborough
- **SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER 2015** - Highworth Twinning Association, Church Service, Planting of tree (and plaque) in Highworth Town Garden then dinner at Wrag Barn
- **SATURDAY 24 OCTOBER 2015** - Highworth's Got Talent, Highworth Warneford School
- **MONDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2015** - Highworth Nexus Project, Puddleducks, Highworth
- **FRIDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2015** - "Opening Service of the Field of Remembrance", Lydiard Park
- **SATURDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2015** - "Military Evening", "Pack Up Your Troubles", with Fish & Chip Supper, Highworth Methodist Church, Highworth
- **SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2015** - Highworth Remembrance Sunday, St Michaels Church, Highworth
- **THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2015** - "Living Together", Community News Report, Southfield Junior School, Highworth
- **SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2015** - Highworth Silver Band & Wrag Barn Singers Concert, St Michael's Church, Highworth
- **FRIDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2015** - Highworth Town Council, Christmas Lighting Ceremony
- **TUESDAY 1 MARCH 2015** - Paul Tilling HTC Groundsman Certificate Presentation, The Institute of Groundsmanship, Professional Development Qualification, HTC Chamber

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### LEISURE

5. Councillor (Mrs) L Vardy reported: The past year has been a very busy one with the new responsibilities for Grass Cutting and Street Cleaning. While there have been some teething troubles she has received only positive comments - until now when the very wet weather has delayed the start of the grass cutting. Once again the Fireworks Display was very successful and she thanked all those who attend every year. John Trollope Sports Aid Fund and The Rec will be reported on later in the meeting.

### GENERAL PURPOSE AND FINANCE

6. Councillor S Weisinger reported that over the last year GP&F has worked well and he would like to thank everybody for the support in helping make decisions that have benefited the people in Highworth. Thank you to David and his team for ensuring the decisions made by Councillors have come to fruition or are in the process of being so. A few of the things are as follows.

- Highworth Market.- Councillors started getting many complaints about how the Market was being managed. Eventually we managed to "retire" the current manager and replaced him with Richard Williams. The results are immediately apparent.

- Nexus Project - The Council agreed to fund this with £5000 per year for 2 years, feedback so far has been positive.
- Precept 2016/2017 - In spite of all the additional responsibilities taken on, the precept only increases by £0.60 per household.
- Brewery Street Car Park & Toilets - The transfer of the property and its surrounding car park has been completed and HTC is now the owner. The accompanying Financial Agreement has been signed. The Council has gone through the tendering process to install the new toilets and awarded it to local company 12 Design to carry out the work.

## ACCOUNTS

7. Expenditure during the Financial Year ending 31 March 2015 amounted to £417,638.00  
The Balance Sheet for the Town Council End of Year is shown below:

**HIGHWORTH TOWN  
COUNCIL  
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31  
MARCH 2016**

<b>31st MARCH 2015</b>		<b>31st MARCH 2016</b>	
£		£	
		<b>LONG TERM ASSETS</b>	
		Investments	
		Long Term Debtors	
		<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>	
		Stocks and Stores	
		Work in Progress	
2553		Debtors (Net of Provision for Doubtful Debts)	1672
1506		VAT Recoverable	2829
		Temporary Lendings	
398740		Cash In Hand	455274
<b>402799</b>		<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>459775</b>
		<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	
0		Creditors	0
		Temporary Loans	0
		Cash Overdrawn	0
		<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	
<b>402799</b>			<b>459775</b>
		<b>Represented By:</b>	
157232		General Fund Balance	156214
245567		Earmarked Reserves	303561
<b>402799</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>459775</b>
		<b>LONG TERM LIABILITIES</b>	
0		Loan Council Offices	0

The Council will consider the assessment of risks at the next GP& F meeting.

## ANNUAL REPORT HIGHWORTH CHARITIES

8. Mrs Janet Francis submitted the report on the accounts of Highworth Charities. A copy of the report and accounts is held in the Council Offices where it can be seen.
  - It was announced by Councillor G Edwards, Chair of Highworth Charities that Janet is to step down from her post as Secretary/Treasurer of the Charities after 23 years of service. Councillor Edwards thanked her on behalf of Highworth and presented her with flowers.

## REPORTS FROM BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

9. a. Councillor A Bishop: He reported that he is very pleased to have been re-elected to both SBC and HTC as a Councillor.

- He is a member of the following committees:

Planning  
 Licensing  
 Streetsmart  
 Adult Health and Social Care  
 Joint Strategic Planning Working Party  
 Wiltshire and Swindon Police and Crime Panel  
 Religious Education  
 Archaeological Advisory Body  
 Braeside Management Committee  
 Cotswold Country Water Park [Deputy]  
 Cricklade Country Way Partnership [Deputy]  
 Highworth Recreation Centre  
 Tenant Farmers' Forum  
 School Transport Appeals  
 Fairford Air Show Committee

- Saturday Surgeries are well attended and have dealt with the following:
- Small problems attended to in Highworth:

Leaking roof in Queens Avenue  
 Large tree causing lack of light in Cotswold Way  
 Newburgh Bungalow Central Heating problem where resident had to drain the system to run hot water,  
 New Wet-room at Newburgh  
 Resurfacing of Kingsdown Lane

- Tour of Fairford and Show
- Working with Fellow Borough Councillors to try and reduce speed limit in Inglesham

- Planning

- ❖ He was pleased to announce that work has started on the old Nat West building to convert it to a coffee shop
- ❖ He voted to grant Planning Permission to convert an old "holiday let" into a decent family home which was granted
- ❖ Attended an appeal by Blunsdon Parish Council to oppose the building of 67 homes adjacent to the Blunsdon House Hotel. The result is awaited but the signs are not promising.

b. Councillor S Weisinger: He reported:

Over the last year he has attended meetings for the following committees as a Ward Councillor:

Audit Committee (as Chairman)  
 Health, Adult & Children Overview Scrutiny Committee  
 Full Council  
 Joint Safety Committee  
 Localities Meetings  
 Regular Monthly Surgery  
 Attended Stanton Fitzwarren Parish Council meetings  
 Averages Task Group  
 Wiltshire Pension Fund Committee  
 Regularly met with Senior SBC Officers on cases relating to Highworth

He regularly deals with issues that residents contact him about.

c. Councillor Mrs M Penny: She reported she has attended the following Meetings:

As Chair, Adults Health: 2 meetings, one focussed quite a lot on bed blocking and the second on GWH finance and strike

As Deputy Chair Children's Health (including Schools)

Meetings with Inglesham to try to get the speed limit reduced. They have the agreement of Borough Council to reduce the speed limit to 50 and then after testing to reduce to 40 the year after. Inglesham wants the limit reduced to 40 immediately. This is against police advice which says it is better to have a 2 stage approach, if SBC ignores this advice it could be held for Corporate Manslaughter. Inglesham had a meeting last week and they are waiting for its response.

Attended Audit Committee

Attended Scrutiny Committee x 2

Attended Standards committee

Attended the last locality meeting, she is still awaiting the minutes from this but they put forward several projects for Highworth, some tree cutting, Pot hole filling, remarking of car parks. The

gentleman in Kings Ave with a disabled wife now has his dropped kerb; crossing St Michaels Ave in place of underpass,

Attended Full Council

Attended a SBC Twinning meeting, where funds were discussed for the Ocotol link who have visits planned for the next couple of weeks - Highworth seems not to be involved in these meetings but they are regularly tabled.

She has had a couple of meetings with Officers and Cabinet members regarding the Libraries and discussed alternative ways of running the libraries.

Had a meeting with SEQOL to discuss various topics including the fact that there will be no change to Newburgh house.

Attended Parish meetings at Castle Eaton and Hannington

She had a meeting with the Police about an overgrown tree in their grounds, which is going to be cut back.

Spoke to Head of Housing re the new plans for the social housing at the top of Brookfield - a meeting has been arranged.

Attended and spoke at the appeal for the Lindon Homes development at Blunsdon (which is green belt), this should be interesting to Highworth as if this is granted, against the wishes of Blunsdon PC and SBC, it again, like the Berkley Farm Development at Wroughton, been passed not in line with the Swindon Local Plan. This could open a free for all in Highworth and surrounding villages

Visited the Artists exhibition - which was of an excellent standard.

## REPORTS BY REPRESENTATIVES

- 10 a. Swindon Transportation. Councillor C Cahill reported that he has been in talks with Swindon Borough Council to try to get 'School' signs on Shrivenham Road and Eastrop; these will hopefully help to reduce speeding along these roads. He will also be attending a 7.00am meeting with an officer from SBC to assess the phasing of the Traffic lights, prompted by the number of drivers 'jumping' them.
- b. Local Consultative Group Police. Councillor (Mrs) M R Penny reported that there have been no meetings in the past nine months. A letter is to be written to the Police to ask if this Group is defunct.
- c. Highworth Youth Centre. Councillor (Mrs) A H Livall reported that the Youth Centre is open for 2 hours per week and run by two Youth Engagement workers and a Youth Support Worker plus Young Leaders. It provides social, educational and supportive activities to the approximately 20 attendees. Among the activities on offer are Cooking/food, arts and crafts, sports and games for young people of 13 years and above. Some of the attendees occasionally need more support and the trusted adults are able to provide this, and in some instances to the parents of the attendees.



d. John Trollope Sport Aid Fund. Councillor (Mrs) L Vardy reported that Ian Miller resigned from the post of Secretary to the fund after many years of tremendous service. Applications will no longer be invited for the fund but will be considered by the Full Council.

e. Nexus Project Councillor N Gardiner reported that the project successfully launched late 2015. The project was generously funded for a 2 year period with a £10k HTC grant. Now in its 9th month, the two sessions (Monday and Wednesday, 16:00 - 18:00) attract a regular crowd with 55-60 young people attending per week on average. Looking ahead, the project Board is wishing to apply for charity status so that more funding streams will be available to the group. Securing the future beyond the end of year two is now the focus for the project Board.

f. Town Twinning. Councillor G Edwards reported:

- Exchange visits between Highworth and Pontorson have continued over the last 18 months
- The highlight of 2015 was the visit of our friends from Pontorson in October when they presented a tree to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the signing of the Twinning Agreement. The Deputy Mayor, Councillor A Bishop, was present at the planting
- There are to be further Exchange Visits in 2016. Also local twinning events in Highworth, a Safari Lunch and a Musical Evening in September. The Wassenberg party will include a music group named FUR MANNE.

g. Executive Committee WALC. Councillor (Mrs) L Vardy reported that nothing of significance had taken place during the year but stressed the importance of belonging to the organisation.

h. Highworth Community Partnership Group (HCPG). Councillor N Gardiner reported:

- The group has continued to meet monthly and has offered continued support to Totally Locally, Nexus youth project and the Neighbourhood Plan. A recent initiative has been to support the Safe Places scheme that is being setup across Highworth.
- In recent months, HCPG has worked to draw awareness to the Swindon Borough Libraries consultation, having organised two town meetings and raised awareness for the consultation. This resulted in greater than 10x turnout for the Highworth consultations compared to other Swindon Library consultations.
- The group continues to meet monthly on the first Wednesday with a report provided at full council.

i. Fair Trade. Councillor (Mrs) A Durrant reported: None.

j. Working Party Neighbourhood Plan. Councillor (Mrs) P Webster reported that the Neighbourhood Plan is nearly finished with help from Swindon Borough Council and Liz Beth. A six week Consultation will commence on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

k. Highworth Rec. Councillor N Gardiner reported:

- 2015/16 has been on the whole a good year for the Rec. Monthly club membership has increased by 9%. Swimming lessons are at an all-time high and demand for new classes has been met through the leasing of 13 spinning bikes, now being regularly over subscribed.
- The subsidy from last year of £59k will be considerably down from last year as the centre moves very close to making a profit.
- Throughout the year, the board of trustees have been seeking a new business partner to take over the day-to-day running of the centre from SBC. This process was due to conclude in April though has been set back due to a bidder pulling out at a late stage. Through working with SBC and HTC, a 6 month extension was agreed and the trustees can report that they are having positive talks with other leisure management companies who wish to run the Highworth Rec.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

11. Councillor (Mrs) M Penny. A letter of Congratulations is to be written to the organising Committee of the May Day Market event.

She thanked the Mayor (Mrs) P Webster for her hard work throughout the year on behalf of the Council.

**MEETING CLOSED AT 8.10 PM**