Minutes of the Baildon Annual Town Meeting

Held on Monday 26th April 2021 at 7pm via the Zoom virtual platform

# Present:

Baildon Town Councillors J. Ashton, A Clubb, G Dixon. D Reed. Baildon Town Council Officers, L. Winch Town Clerk, R. Gallagher.

# Representatives

Sonjia Peers - Hale, Laura Sewell - Baildon Youth Council, Chris Flecknoe – Walkers are welcome and Baildon Methodist Church, Richard Nottidge – Tree Planting Scheme, Paddy Gallagher – Men’s Health Group, Sarah Baxter – St Hughs, Jan Pollard – Baildon in Bloom.

# 1. Welcome from the Chairman of Baildon Town Council, Councillor Joe Ashton

The Chair of the council Cllr J Ashton welcomed all to the Baildon Annual Town Meeting.

# 2. To note apologies for absence

Baildon Town Council Officers Richard White, and Mark Scrimshaw gave apologies.

The Councillors present were introduced.

# 3. To receive annual reports from the Chairman and committee leads for the municipal year 2020/21

Cllr Ashton gave an overview of the work of the council throughout the last year including,

* The impact of the pandemic on the council
* Introduction of homeworking
* Cancellation of services and events
* Health and safety requirement, risks assessments and the re-opening of the toilets
* Introduction of remote council meetings on Zoom
* Scheme of delegation

Committee Chairs were introduced and gave summaries on the work the committees have conducted in the last council year.

## Cllr Dixon of the Economy Committee

This committee has responsibility for 3 main areas, including transport, services and community activity relating to the Economy.

* Transport - improving services at Baildon Station and funding of Friends of Baildon Station, who are an active group who do marvellous work.
* Funding of £10,000 to improve the bus services in Higher Coach Road, has been put on hold due to Covid - 19, however, the mainstream bus service has been improved, so the project is on pause.
* Cllr Dixon is the Leeds Bradford Airport (LBA) representative on the Consultancy committee, and we welcomed the Chief Executive to a committee meeting.
* Services and ongoing issues; Our award-winning Northgate Toilets continue to be a success and are supported by the Love our Loos group.
* Xmas lights and the switch on event did not go ahead, but the committee were able to support and fund the Baildon Santa Sleigh event.
* Support of community groups, including Baildon Ignition Group BIG (Baildon Chamber of Commerce), and Walkers are Welcome, which is a fabulous resource for residents and visitors.
* Two new exiting projects, Buy in Baildon, a long-term piece of work, and Cllrs Dixon and Hewitson are creating the Visit Baildon project, to enhance the visitor economy in the area and increase our digital presence.
* The Economy committee is a lively group with different points of views, and a thank you to Councillors and the community for their input.

## Cllr Reed of the Community Committee

The committee have continued to fund those groups in the community, who have worked tirelessly through the year to aid those in need in Baildon. Other work includes,

* Generosity of the community has been outstanding with the food bank at St Hughs, food collection points. Inspirational ideas to ease boredom including jigsaw swaps, arts and crafts, walking and talking exercises and on-line youth clubs.
* It was very sad to see the Baildon Community Link so quiet, but the volunteers have been overwhelming, and have given their time and commitment throughout the community.
* Community Development programmes can help breach the gaps within the community, funded by the committee. I have met with many of the resident associations throughout the year.
* Skylark funding for the Coach Road residents was granted for an outdoor shelter to hold outside events, Hoyle Court Residents Association have recently asked for funding for a small lending library to be built and I have asked the Men’s Shed who we also fund, to assist with building this.
* Sporting opportunities in the community, include golf, rugby, cricket and the committee have supported a new rounders team in Baildon at Jenny Lane.
* The Neighbourhood Watch group increases its numbers constantly and burglary numbers are reducing, there have been funded efforts to reduce quad bikes in the area by installing gates around Shipley Glen.

## Cllr Clubb of the Environment Committee

The committee is responsible for a wide range of funding and support of external groups including,

* Bracken Hall Countryside Centre (BHCC) received a Rural Development Grant in September 2020 and thanks is given to Eddie Nash for persevering with this application. A new multi-functional hub will increase the usage of BHCC with a glass courtyard between the classroom and exhibition room. A new management structure has been created with volunteers being involved with the decision making.
* An idea from residents to create a community amenity at Pennithorne Green, planting trees, spring bulbs, clearing the stream, planting bird friendly shrubs and the installation of some benches. We hope to see a difference in the next 2 years with a beautiful gateway to the moors.
* Tree planting is vital both nationally and internationally, thanks to Richard Nottidge, who came to the council with an idea to plant more trees in Baildon. This year has been more difficult, but we continue to persevere.
* A proposal from a resident, for a cycle track at Sandals school, have met with a largely positive response from local residents and local cycle groups, therefore planning permission is being sought.
* There is a need for improvements to playgrounds in the area; Jenny Lane playground facilities have not been improved over the years and providing a better playground there is a priority.
* A new Environmental policy has been approved by the committee, which is now waiting for the approval of the Full council.

## Cllr Clubb of the Planning Committee

The Bradford Local Plan is proposing lots of houses in Baildon. The plan is required by central government and a number of areas will be impacted especially along West Lane with over 120 houses being planned. A response was formulated by the committee, requesting further community facilities, and we have criticized the development at Meadowside.

## Question from the audience

John Turner – Residents are concerned about the reservoirs, what will happen to these sites in the future?

The Town Clerk stated that Bradford Council are currently undertaking criminal proceedings re this land and Baildon Town Council continue to seek engagement on behalf of residents.

Cllr Debbie Davies confirmed the Clerks statement.

# 4. To receive questions and comments on the reports from Baildon residents.

There were no questions at this time.

# 5. Presentations from Baildon Town Council staff re Bracken Hall and Baildon Library

The Town Clerk read out a short report on behalf of Richard White the manager of Bracken Hall Countryside Centre and Rachel Gallagher the Volunteers Co-ordinator. (Available to read separately)

# 6. Presentations from local volunteers and community organisations who have received funding from the council.

## Sonjia Hale spoke on behalf of Laura Sewell of the Baildon Youth Council

The youth club has been a lifeline to those youths who would normally use the ICH and the youth club and council. The users have had to transfer their skills to the virtual meetings. At first this was difficult but it has improved, and as restrictions have eased, they have met using Covid guidance. St Hughs have helped with accommodation when allowed. It has empowered the young people to take control of what they need to do with the youth council. The funding granted allows Laura to remain in the role and support those who require the service.

## Sarah Baxter St Hughs

St Hughs are fortunate to receive funding from the Community Committee. The way we operate community development at St Hughs, we try and look at how the community can solve its own problems, and we have been able to find solutions close to home. I.e., the food bank has been fully stocked by people from Baildon who can afford to feed those that cannot. We have created a system where people can pick up a food parcel, and we can then speak to them face to face and find out what their issues are to prevent further need.

The Community Kitchen has made meals in St Johns and delivered these to socially isolated residents. 447 meals have been made and delivered in 15 weeks, and has been a lifeline to people, an opportunity to talk, get a newsletter, and have a chat with our 8 delivery volunteers. The future for the centre, is for people to overcome the psychological issues around coming back into the building, where they can feel safe and supported.

## Jan Pollard Baildon in Bloom

When the pandemic started, it was at a crucial part of the year, hanging baskets were not made and hung, as we were not sure if they could be watered. The large planters were planted up, and we had to cancel the scarecrow day, which is a fundraiser. The costs of not doing the hanging baskets, was offset. The autumn planting is paid for from a previous Scarecrow Day. This year, the hanging baskets will be back up ready for June. The autumn planting has been lovely, but it was a very dry spell. The scarecrow Day will not be run this year for 2 reasons, as you have to start organising in Jan /Feb and we did not know how restrictions were going to be, two, most of our sponsorship comes from local businesses and we dd not feel it was right for sponsorship when they have had a difficult time.

We would like to thank the council for their funding, it makes a difference to the village and those sat in the square enjoying their surroundings. The benches in the village are in a poor state of repair, and we would like this addressing urgently.

Separately, we would like to thank Mr Richard Nicholas the treasurer of St Johns, who has done fabulous work throughout the year.

## Paddy Gallagher Men’s Health Group

There are 2 therapists who have been given funding to run the Men’s Mental Health group in Baildon for socially isolated men. The pandemic highlighted the ethos of the group. Men suffering from mental health difficulties, previously met for monthly meetings held in St Hughs, in a small group who were supportive of each other, helping manage their isolation and re-engage with the community.

When Covid came we were concerned with how they would manage moving to the online platform, but sessions were run throughout the year. Comments included ‘the group work so hard for me. It took me a step up to see how you grow personally in a safe and well managed space’ The men have gone on to feeling more engaged with other men within the community, thank you for the funding from the council.

## John Anderson Friends of the Earth

Grateful to the Town Council for funding for the swift bird boxes, from the Skylark funding. The co-operation with Cllr Alan Clubb for drawing up of policies, re the environment, and there is great liaison between the group and the council.

Cycling, a 20mph limit and new outline plan makes Baildon a destination of choice for all cyclists. Work progresses with the West Yorkshire combined authority for connectivity, from Baildon Station and cycling. Working with Friends of Baildon Station for mass transit possibilities. Our last 2 campaigns, concentrated on composting and the Leeds Bradford Airport changes. We were disappointed that the Town Council did not support our objections to the changes at the airports and we do ask that the council should oppose this change, we hope that this will be looked at again.

## Chris Flecknoe Walkers are Welcome & Methodists

Walkers are Welcome – The group are very grateful for the funding for the fundamental things required for the group. The aim is to help people to walk for health and wellbeing and also for people to come to Baildon and use our facilities. We have 2 publications this year, Baildon Foot Nav walking routes to 11 towns and villages around Baildon, encouraging people to walk rather than drive a car. Our group are cooperating with local towns for the Welcome Way a circular walk, which covers 38 miles, 1st edition of the book sold out, with a 2nd edition on its way. All publications can be found on the website.

We know people are reluctant to walk on their own, so we have taken out walks of 6 people, which are booked up within 36 hours. Other work conducted includes footpath clearing with the Countryside Service, and repairing footpaths, Gill Beck Valley bridge co-operative enterprise.

Wesleys and the Methodist church had to shut down throughout the year. The church has been meeting online, but with no singing. The 40 groups that used to meet in Wesleys had to stop, meeting online or Zoom to keep going. The café and church have kept in touch with vulnerable users. We are grateful for two lots of funding, including the new windows for the toilets at the centre, which have been completely refurbished and the café, which needed to cover the costs of operation which is non-profit making. It was a possibility that the café would close without the funding from the council. It will open on the 17th of May with seating outside and there are groups booking back into the centre.

# 7. Open Forum

## Stuart Illingworth Baildon Ignition Group

Thank you on behalf of BIG, it’s been a tough year for most businesses, hoping to have a better 2021. In 2020 we were meeting regularly at the Baildon Club. For the last few years, the funding has been from members, we invited everyone to do a zoom meeting but there was little appetite for this, but last week a meeting did take place and was enjoyed by those attending. Hopefully, meetings will begin again later this year. Thanks to the Economy committee for their funding and support.

## Michael Skelton – Litter

There is a group of 40 volunteers from Litter Free Baildon, led by Dave McDougal, and litter was continued to be collected throughout lockdown and over 1,000 sacks were collected. Thanks to Dave McDougal.

## John Turner Chairman of the BHS

The group have received grants for solar panels for the sales huts and prevent break-ins at the allotments by installing solar panels to power a security system and lighting at Thompson Lane. The Charlestown site will also receive the same. The group continue to promote horticulture and gardening in Baildon. We have taken over the management of the 2 redundant telephone boxes, working with the council to turn one into a mini greenhouse with a brewer theme, which will create a garden as you enter Baildon. The Station Road box is in a process of refurbishment, which will contain plants and advertise the BHS.

Current membership is 200 with 140 plot holders. Charlestown has a community plot, for those on the waiting list, which has grown from under 10 to 40. We have halved the plots and let them out to people on the waiting list. We have created a disabled plot, with a ramp, Cockerel noise has been minimised and we now have members who have joined the rare breeds society. Thank you for the funding given to us. Thank you to Richard Nottidge and committee members for their hard work.

This concluded business for the 2021 Annual Town Meeting and the Chair thanked all for attending and those who have played a part in putting the event together and contributed to the event.

**The meeting finished at 9pm.**