

## **REPORT FOR FULL COUNCIL - JULY 2020**

Welcome to our first council meeting since March and I am sorry that the agenda is so large but that is the consequence for not having met for so long.

Well I don't know how other councillors felt when we went into lockdown in March, but I am afraid to admit that I didn't realise how Covid 19 would affect our lives, it really did, naively, take me by surprise. The pandemic meant that we as a town council, had to change our whole way of working.

The measures that we took were:-

- Setting aside £10,000 emergency funding
- for the staff to work from home
- the need to purchase more equipment, laptops and mobile phones
- changing the way in which we authorise payments, initially by myself, the Town Clerk and the Deputy Mayor and then approval from all councillors, all undertaken via email. Thanks to the perseverance of our Town Clerk earlier in the year we now have set-up internet banking which in retrospect, was a great move as we have been able to pay accounts on-line without the need to get cheques signed
- producing and delivering leaflets to all residents setting out our new way of working and our giving contact details
- paying for a whole page of adverts in the Wellington Weekly News enabling our local businesses to take advantage of free advertising for ten weeks

Although our ways of working had to be changed so quickly, I think everything has gone very well but this is down to our dedicated Councillors for delivering the leaflets and I know that many of you have been volunteering to help organise and deliver food parcels and groceries to the residents of the town.

Also our wonderful staff have been beavering away at home undertaking a great deal of work eg re-writing terms of reference for our sub committees, revamping the procedures and contracts for the Pop-Up Shop in readiness for re-opening this month and amending the tenancy agreements our Basins allotment site which we will implement on 29<sup>th</sup> September. Just to note, our office staff have now started going into the office more regularly on a staggered basis but the offices remain closed to the public and councillors.

**I WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL COUNCILLORS AND OUR STAFF FOR ALL YOUR WONDERFUL EFFORTS TO KEEP THE TOWN COUNCIL RUNNING SINCE MARCH.**

## **WHAT HAS THE MAYOR BEING DO DURING LOCKDOWN?**

As my consort has been shielding, I also did not leave my home and garden for six weeks and it was very surreal when I did first go out!!!

I have been in daily telephone and email contact with the Town Clerk to discuss issues, ways of working etc and also to a lesser extent, the same with the Deputy Clerk.

## **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS - JULY 2020**

**5<sup>th</sup> March.** Along with other councillors, our staff and children from local schools and playgroups and local residents, I presented a blanket to the police horse named Wellington at the Monument. It was a very wet and windy day and it was good to see such a great turnout in the circumstances.

**15<sup>th</sup> March.** Ian and I attended the county's legal service at Wells Cathedral to witness the signing-in of the new High Sheriff, yet another very wet and windy day!!

**22<sup>nd</sup> May.** The Deputy Mayor and I presented a cheque for £500.00 to Tim Potter to fund food boxes under his new initiative.

**30<sup>th</sup> June.** The Deputy Clerk and I attended Rockwell Green School to present the prize to Mercy for winning the Armed Forces Day poem competition that we launched with primary schools in Wellington as we could not celebrate Armed Forces Day in the Park as we would have done normally.

**1<sup>st</sup> July.** I had great pleasure in cutting a ribbon at the new shop "Nook and Cranny" in North Street which has been opened by Maxine and Charlotte. After renting our Pop-Up Shop in December and establishing successful trading, they have decided to rent and open their own shop. I, as I am sure we all will is to wish them success in their venture.

**2<sup>nd</sup> July.** Again with the Deputy Clerk, I had great pleasure in going to Wellesley Park School to present the prizes to the three winners of the entries for the Armed Forces Day poem competition to Gabriella, Milly and Summer. All the entries that we received were excellent with the pupils giving their take on what Armed Forces Day meant to them.

## **STOP PRESS**

**Affordable Housing in Wellington.** Last Friday I received an email from Jo Humble, the Affordable Housing specialist at the district council stating that LiveWest have contracted with the owner of Cornhill securing the delivery of 42 affordable homes on the site and that construction work on the site should re-start today. Is the end of the current ramshackle appearance in site after approx. 20 years?!!!

## **WEBINARS IN RESPECT OF HIGH STREETS**

Somerset West and Taunton Council are looking to hold two webinars in Minehead, Taunton and Wellington between 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> July.