

**Minutes of the Annual Town Assembly for the Town of Ringwood
held on Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7pm
at Ringwood Gateway, The Furlong, Ringwood**

Present: Cllr Andy Briers
(and entitled to vote) Cllr Luke Dadford
Cllr Philip Day
Cllr Gareth DeBoos (Town Mayor)
Cllr Mary DeBoos
Cllr Rae Frederick (Deputy Town Mayor)
Cllr Janet Georgiou
Cllr John Haywood
Cllr Peter Kelleher
Cllr James Swyer
Cllr Michael Thierry
Cllr Becci Windsor
District Cllr Jeremy Heron
District Cllr Rippon-Swaine
plus approximately 30 members of the public

In Attendance: Chris Wilkins – Town Clerk
Jo Hurd – Deputy Town Clerk

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Turner.

The Town Mayor welcomed those present to the Annual Town Assembly.

1. To Approve the Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the Annual Town Assembly held on 31st May 2023 were approved.

2. Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were none.

3. Presentation of Community Awards

The Town Mayor presented Awards for Outstanding Community Service.

Steve Benson

“We, Ringwood Town Council, desire to acknowledge your outstanding contribution to Ellingham and Ringwood Rugby Club and the wider Rugby Union family. For over thirty years, as a player, a coach and a committee member you have given skilled and self-less service. Your dedication to the sport and promoting wider participation is worthy of celebration. We loudly applaud and sincerely thank you for your passion and dedicated service to our community.”

Following Steve’s sad passing, the Award was accepted by Steve’s wife, accompanied by his children and grandchild.

Ringwood Carnival Committee

“We Ringwood Town Council, desire to acknowledge your tireless work to create an amazing event that draws large crowds year after year. From the Procession, to the Fun Fair and the Village Green everything is organised

with precision. This success requires a huge team effort behind the scenes throughout the year. Your dedication to making Ringwood Carnival great is worthy of celebration. We loudly applaud and sincerely thank you for your passion and devotion to the town.”

The Award was accepted by members of the Carnival Committee, all of whom were awarded individual certificates.

It was noted the Council had also agreed an Award for Chris Treleaven. As he was unable to attend tonight, it will be presented at the next Council meeting.

The Town Mayor thanked members of the Working Group who had considered nominations and made recommendations to the Council.

4. To Receive the Annual Report of the Town Mayor Cllr Gareth Deboos

The full report is attached as *Annex A*.

5. To Receive the Annual Reports of Town Council Committee Chairpersons

Cllr Andy Briers, Chair of the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee presented his report. The full report is attached as *Annex B*.

Cllr Philip Day, Chair of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee presented his report. The full report is attached as *Annex C*.

Cllr Mary DeBoos, Chair of the Policy & Finance Committee presented her report. The full report is attached as *Annex D*. In answer to questions about the Council’s Reserves, she confirmed that the General Reserve was sufficient and Allocated Reserves were in place for various purposes.

Cllr John Haywood, Chair of the Staffing Committee presented his report. The full report is attached as *Annex E*.

6. Accounts from the Parochial Charity

District Cllr Heron, a trustee of Ringwood United Charities, presented his annual report. He explained that it was not possible to present the accounts for 2023/24 at this time, but a signed copy of the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023 was submitted (*Annex F*).

The charity supports Clark’s Almshouses in Quomp; a Grade II listed building containing 8 flats. He gave an update on works to replace the chimney stacks and roof, which it was hoped would be completed in July after the installation of replacement bespoke ridge tiles. One flat had been refurbished during the year and improvements made to heating and fire safety in the building. It was a challenging time for the charity, which relied on income from the flats and modest investments, and they were always looking for funding opportunities.

7. To receive a presentation on Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Mary DeBoos, Project Manager, gave an update on the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan (*Annex G*).

The purpose of the Plan is to set out a vision of the town and to set policies that must be taken into account when making decisions on planning applications. There are 11 policies, including:

- Smaller Housing (R5): requiring provision of more 1 and 2 bed dwellings in new developments;
- First Homes (R6): requiring 25% of new affordable homes to be First Homes, which are sold at a 30% discount to market rate;
- Ringwood Design Code (R7): requiring development to be of a high quality design and respecting local character;
- Building for a Healthy Life (R8): requiring the use of a design assessment tool for all major residential developments;
- Zero Carbon Buildings (R10): requiring all developments to be 'zero carbon ready' to minimise the amount of energy needed to heat and cool buildings.

The Plan has now passed independent examination and would proceed to Referendum in July, when residents would be asked to vote 'yes' or 'no' as to whether the Plan should be adopted as policy.

If successful, the proportion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies available for Ringwood specific infrastructure projects will increase from 15% to 25%.

She thanked all of the team, mostly volunteers, who had undertaken a huge amount of work to get the Plan to this stage.

In response to a question, she confirmed a communications plan was in place to inform residents of the Referendum, which included the use of local papers and facilities, as well as online information.

8. To Consider Any Other Item of Business by Permission of the Town Mayor, Cllr Gareth DeBoos

The Chairman of Ringwood Carnival asked everyone to join him in a round of applause to thank Charmaine Bennett (Manager of Carvers Clubhouse and Events Manager) for all the great work she does at the Clubhouse and organising events.

The Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.00pm.