

## M I N U T E S

of the

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

held at the Assembly Rooms, Alton on Thursday 3rd April 1986  
at 7 p.m.

\*\*\*\*\*

Present: Councillor C. O. G. Smith (Town Mayor)

Councillors Miss P. J. Bradford  
Mrs. A. Bartlett  
R. A. Booker  
J. H. Cleaver  
D. Crocker  
G. D. Stratford  
D. E. Townsend-Rose  
W. J. Tuck

together with approximately 10 members of the public.

80. Minutes

It was MOVED by Councillor Miss Bradford, SECONDED by Councillor Mrs. Bartlett and RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on the 28th March, 1985 which were circulated at the meeting, be confirmed as a correct record.

The Minutes were then signed by the Town Mayor.

81. Apology

An apology for absence was received from Councillor G. R. Slone.

82. Town Mayor's Address

The Town Mayor, Councillor C. O. G. Smith, opened the meeting by welcoming those present.

He then addressed the meeting by referring to some of the many items which had been dealt with by the Town Council during the previous year.

The Town Council's largest project at the present time was the restoration of the Town Hall which was progressing steadily.

It was still hoped that a start would be made both on the Town Hall and the enhancement of the Market Square in the current year.

He felt that these two projects, when completed, would prove to be an attractive focal point for the town.

It had been necessary to increase the Town Council's rate this year by 1p which he felt was a modest increase, bearing in mind that it had not been increased for a number of years.

Planning matters were of great interest and concern to the Town Council and comments were made to the District Council on every application.

Concern has been expressed about the number of schemes for the elderly as it was felt that too many such schemes would place an undue burden on the medical and welfare services in the town.

The Town Council had been able to give a number of grants to various organisations during the year and the Council were keen to help those who helped themselves.

Sport continued to be encouraged and this year had seen the introduction of netball on the converted tennis courts in Anstey Park. It was hoped to provide floodlighting during the year.

He was pleased that the Watercress Line was now operational between Alresford and Alton and felt that it would play a prominent part in attracting tourists to the town. The Watercress Line were to be congratulated on their achievement.

He welcomed the new County Councillor - Tony Barron - who was present at the meeting. He was the Town Council's link with the County Council and attended the Town Council's meetings.

An important local issue which had to be determined by the County Council was the route of the long awaited Western Bypass.

He did not think that Route 3 which was the route favoured at present by the County Council was the long term solution as it simply widened Whitedown Lane. He felt sure that if this route were pursued that the problem would return in a few years time.

The Town Council had supported the Chamber of Trade in its representations to the Dee Corporation regarding the supermarkets in Alton and it had been ascertained that there was no breach of regulations regarding a monopoly.

The Town Council had made representations to the District Council regarding the litter in the town and discussions were to be held with the Director of Technical Services.

Vandalism continued to be a problem but the Town Council's policy was to repair any of its property as soon as possible.

He stressed the need of the public to report any incident they witnessed to the Police.

Dog fouling was another matter of public concern and notices were shortly to be erected in Anstey Park in an attempt to persuade the public to keep their dogs under control.

The Town Council had agreed to the transfer of the lease of the Football Ground to the Alton United Boys Football Club. Alton Town would continue to play at Anstey Park and he wished the joint arrangement every success.

Representations had been made to the County Council regarding the dangerous junction of Drayman's Way which was also of concern and it was understood that this was being investigated.

He referred to the monthly surgeries which were held at the Assembly Rooms and gave the public an opportunity to see a councillor if they had a problem.

The Town Mayor concluded his address by inviting comments and questions from members of the public.

### 83. Public Participation

Mrs. Self said there was concern that with the closing of the Gateway restaurant where there were toilets, that there were no public toilets available in that part of the town. She also asked whether toilets could be provided at the Eastern end of the town.

Cr. Barker, who was an East Hampshire District Councillor, said there were no proposals to provide public toilets in the town at present but he would make enquiries of the District Council.

Councillor Booker thought that the public conveniences in the Lady Place Car Park were sufficient for that end of the town.

Mr. Carr criticised the arrangements in the Post Office which had recently been improved in appearance but the service in his view, was slower than ever and it was not uncommon to wait half an hour in the queue.

He also referred to potholes in the footpath in Ackender Road which had been there for sometime.

Mr. Carr referred to the removal of the traffic width signs on the Basingstoke Road leading to Ackender Road. He said heavy lorries were using Ackender Road and he felt they did not always see the small sign which was in the New Odiham Road.

Mr. Carr also referred to the lack of bus stops in the town centre, and in particular felt there was a need for a bus stop at the Basingstoke Road/Ackender Road junction.

Mr. Gostelow asked if the judging of the allotment trophy could take place on the basis of several inspections in the year as he felt it was unfair to judge it on one inspection in the summer.

Mr. Gostelow also mentioned the speed of traffic going to the Alton College.

The Town Mayor said this had been taken up with the Governors of the College and he understood extra notices and sleeping policemen were to be provided.

Mrs. Self questioned whether the Police could be asked to patrol the area in the mornings to assess the problem and she felt there might well be an accident one day.

The Town Mayor said the Police would be informed of the problem.

Cr. Barron, the County Councillor, reported that a firm decision on the route of the Western Bypass had not yet been made and that a further traffic census would be held before a decision was taken.

He said that the statutory traffic orders for the Market Square scheme would be confirmed shortly, the traffic management division was investigating the junction of Drayman's Way both from a pedestrian and traffic point of view.

He said he would investigate the state of the footpath in Ackender Road and the traffic signs.

Cr. Barker said he would look into the question of the bus stop at the Basingstoke Road/Ackender Road junction.

Mrs. Harckham referred to the Minutes of the previous year's meeting and said she was sorry that several problems were still with us i.e. Amery House site still derelict, Crown Hill site continued to be an eyesore in the centre of the town, Drayman's Way junction was still a problem and the fence adjoining the Lady Place car park still looked untidy.

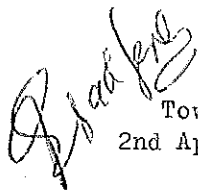
She referred also to the seat at the end of Kings Road which she had donated to the town and which had recently been vandalised. She was very sad that it had been destroyed as many elderly people enjoyed sitting on the seat.

She paid tribute to the way the Public Gardens was maintained and thought the staff should be congratulated on the standard.

Mrs. Harckham then commented that the litter problem had improved slightly and she concluded by thanking the Council for arranging the Town Meeting so that it did not clash with the meeting of the Alton Society.

There being no further questions the Town Mayor closed the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and for the many questions they had asked.

Councillor Miss P. J. Bradford then proposed a vote of thanks to the Town Mayor for the way he had conducted the meeting.



Town Mayor.  
2nd April, 1987