



Annual Report March 2020-March 2021

Introduction



On March 10th 2020 Bollington Town Council held its annual Town Assembly in the Civic Hall. Little did we know that this would be the last time for many months that we would all meet together.

Less than two weeks later the Prime Minister announced that we should stay at home, protect the NHS, save lives.

Faced with the prospect of so many Bollington residents being asked to shield, and having no way to get their essential supplies the Town Council decided it had to do something.

That something was to set up a dedicated phone line and email address and to ask volunteers and those in need of assistance to make themselves known.

Bollington Community spirit really shone through and we were inundated with offers of help.

***Thank you to everyone who took the time to help their friends,
neighbours and complete strangers in so many ways.***

Our Meetings and Events

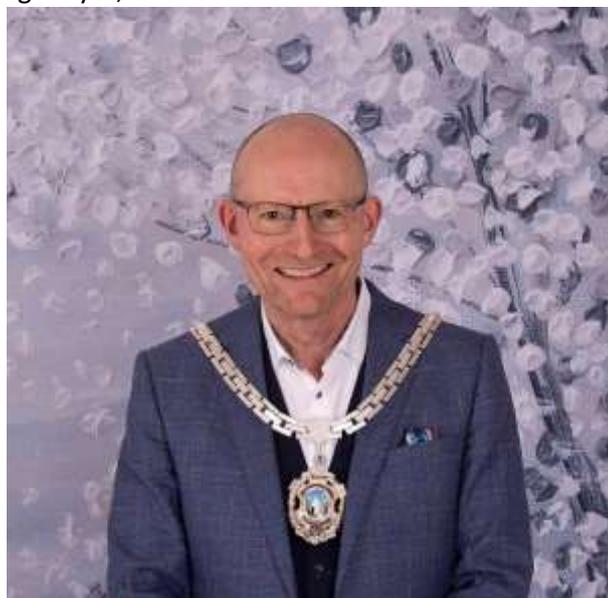


Bollington Town Council was quick to embrace the available technology and was up and running with its first online Council Meeting by April 21st. Many decisions had to be made quickly, not least on whether to carry on with the Annual Meeting.

But carry on we did and were one of the first in the area to hold a virtual Mayor Making followed by Civic Sunday online on June 7th.

The year was far from normal for the incoming Mayor, Councillor John Stewart but he was still kept busy judging scarecrows, gardens and floral displays, awarding commendations to outstanding members of the community and paying socially distanced visits to people celebrating special birthdays and anniversaries.

He laid a wreath at the Cenotaph on behalf of all the Bollington people who had to pay their respects at home and joined Councillor Angela Williams to distribute Christmas biscuits on behalf of the Senior Citizens Committee.



Here are a few of the Mayor's photos from this year



Although all our



*scheduled events had to
be cancelled the Town*



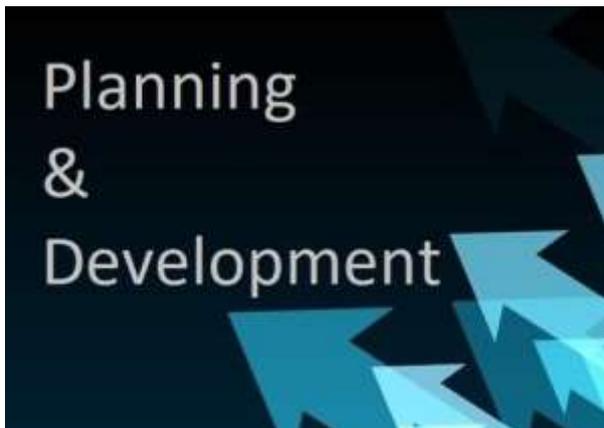
Council was still able to contribute to Bollington life by supporting events and initiatives run by residents and creating a new approach to our own.



Updates from our Committees and Working Groups

Despite the challenges of not meeting face to face the Councillors have continued to conduct their business as much as the restrictions have allowed.

Planning and Development



The Planning committee continues to meet monthly online and has notified and discussed over 100 planning applications in Bollington. The committee is committed to scrutinising and responding to the Cheshire East Planning officers on behalf of Bollington residents on all applications from simple requests to do tree works to larger developments.

The committee receives and notes members of the public's comments and all meetings are open for public participation.

The council has embarked on further consultation with legal experts and local residents against the removal of land from the town's greenbelt for development and has submitted further reports in support of this during the latest rounds of the SADPD consultation. We await with interest the outcome of the final stage of the process later in 2021.

Strategic Planning

The Strategic Planning Committee produces, monitors and updates the Town Council's Corporate Plan. This year Councillors have participated in a series of Strategic Planning Workshops to identify the key purpose and values and the outcomes will be soon be published.

It is also the Council point of contact for the Bollington Business Forum which has been instrumental in circulating information and advice on available grants, financial relief and training opportunities to help business survive the pandemic or diversify as a result of it.

Community, Services and Environment

The Community Services and Environment Committee serves as the forum for sub-groups and local community groups to have access to council. These include the Covid - 19 working group and the PCSO.

This year one of our notable achievements has been helping shape the proposals for the alternative Covid Christmas events that took place through December.



We have also established a strong working relationship with the community based group, Transition Bollington.

This has enabled their information on air pollution to be shared with other councils which has resulted in 2 local councils asking to establish a collaborative body to work towards cleaner air for NE Cheshire.

Transition Bollington has been working with our Sub-Committee to produce the Future Resilience strategy.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

A working group has been set up to look at how the Council can ensure it is itself inclusive and help to create a truly inclusive community.



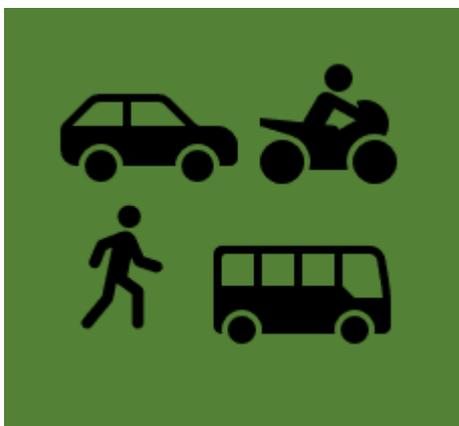
Facilities and Infrastructure Committee



The Civic Hall and the Town Hall have been closed to the public for much of the pandemic and were only able to open when the restrictions were lifted enough for activities to take place in Covid-19 secure ways. We continue to work with the regular users and field enquiries in readiness for restrictions lifting through the coming months.



Transport and Highways Management



The Transport and Highways Management working group has met throughout the pandemic and worked hard to develop safety schemes to enable social distancing around the town. Not all the ideas we hoped to implement were installed by Cheshire East highways but the process was useful as an exercise to understand safety around the town and will feed into wider discussions taking place on how we can strive for slower traffic and better options for active travel in the future

The Emergency Resilience Group has been producing a plan of action for future emergency situations, where the Town Council can offer a local level of support to residents and the emergency services.

Finance and Grants

Income for the year ending 31st March 2021 will be approximately £217,000 and expenditure will be £242,000

This means around £25,000 will have been taken from our unallocated reserves

What was the money spent on?

- Town Hall staff continued to help with enquiries from residents, by phone and by email and provided the administration for the Covid 19 Emergency Response.
- Civic events and council meetings continued online.
- Christmas festivities and decorations through the Town were financed.



- New events and initiatives by the Council and by local residents were introduced or supported.
- Voluntary and charitable groups throughout the town were supported financially. A full list of bodies awarded grants this year is attached to the Finance Report.
- Thousands of bulbs have been planted and new floral planters are to be installed near the Recreation Ground.

Audit Committee



The purpose of the Audit Committee is to provide oversight of the workings of the Council and its committees relating to compliance with standing orders, financial regulations, transparency, probity in public life, appropriately managing risks and compliance with internal controls.

The Committee has met three times during the year and the Council has been given a clean bill of health by the External Auditor.

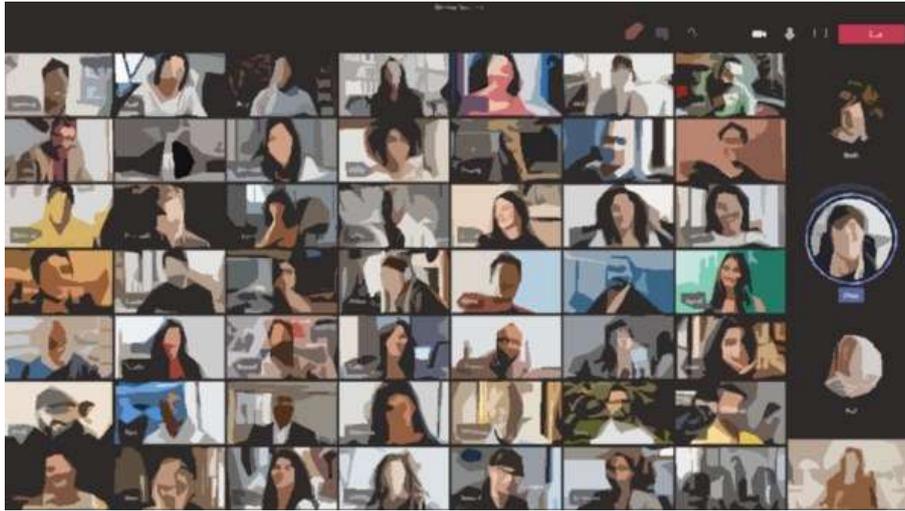
Personnel Committee

The purpose of the Personnel Committee is to advise the Council on personnel and staffing matters and to make recommendations to Council for appropriate action.

This last twelve months has brought new challenges to the committee with the introduction of working from home for staff while the Town Hall is closed.



Town Assembly

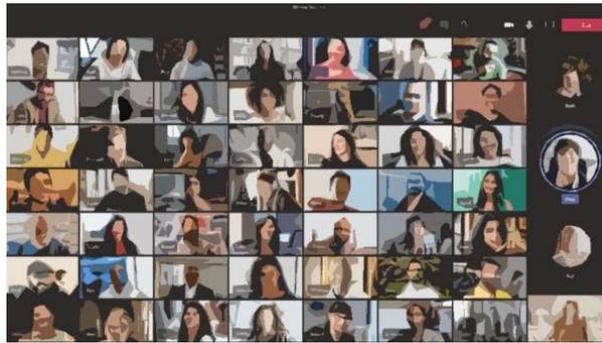


This year our Town Assembly will be online via Microsoft Teams.

It takes place at 7.30pm on Tuesday 9th March and you can join online on any device connected to the internet using the Teams App if you have it, in your browser if you don't or you can dial in on the telephone to listen at your phone provider's local rate.

You can register to attend by emailing enquiries@bollington-tc.gov.uk or you can call 01625 572985

We will send out joining instructions nearer the time.



Ask us a Question!



There will be a Q&A session at the Town Assembly. If you have a question to put to our Councillors please use our [question submission form here](#).
