



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As I look back over what has been a far from usual year, I would like to thank my fellow Councillors and our Council officers for their support and guidance.

During the whole time of the Covid 19 pandemic the Council has continued to serve Neston. Grants have been given to organisations that have been helping to support our vulnerable residents during this difficult time. Our staff have kept the essential routine of the Council going and we are grateful for their commitment

We have all had to become experts at attending virtual Zoom meetings. Phrases such as

'You're on mute!' or 'Is that a legacy hand?' have become all too familiar.

I can confirm here at Neston Town Council all meetings have been conducted calmly and respectfully.

Usually, one of the first Civic duties of the new Mayor is to take part in the Neston Female Society's annual parade around Neston. Not in 2020, alas. However, Neston pulled together and marked the occasion on Thursday 4th June 2020 by delivering to every member of the Female Society an afternoon tea. No mean feat with over two hundred members! Over forty volunteers collected the teas from Neston Community and Youth Centre. Thanks go to Hip & Harmony, Paisley Grey and Elephant for putting together the afternoon teas. I was lucky enough to be driven around Neston in a 1909 Paterson car to deliver some of the teas. Altogether an unusual and memorable day.

Neston market re-opened on 12th June after almost three months of shutdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The market is such an important feature of Neston life. Our loyal traders had managed to keep the regular food stalls together during the first lockdown when we had to close the market and worked closely with the Council to get things back to a new normal.

This year the charities I have chosen to help are Mathews Monk, a truly local charity with a long history in Neston, and CH64 Age Matters. To raise money for these charities I made washable, re-usable facemasks which were sold on the market. During the year Neston residents and other visitors to the Market were very generous and raised £1,400.00 for the charities. Well done Neston.

To welcome our children back to school I sent a letter to all our schools wishing them well for the coming academic year.

On Sunday 4th October 2020 we held a virtual Church service with the Revd. Alan Dawson officiating. It was attended by The High Sheriff of Cheshire, fellow Mayors Cheshire and North Wales, Borough Councillors, Local Mayors, and Neston Town Councillors. We arranged for an Afternoon Tea to be delivered to the guests and chatted virtually by Zoom after the service.

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions the usual Remembrance parade was cancelled. I attended the wreath laying service on Sunday 8th November and Cllr. Wastell, our Deputy Mayor, attended the brief ceremony on 11th November at 11am. Both ceremonies were at the Cenotaph in the parish church grounds. Cllr. Wastell and I consider it an honour to represent Neston at such events and were pleased to support the Neston British Legion as they navigated the unusual requirements for this year's ceremonies.

On Sunday 28th November, the usual Christmas Lights switch on was a very different event. Thanks to Hip and Harmony 'different' turned into a spectacular on-line extravaganza.

Our Christmas market took place on Friday 4th December and, once again, our market traders and market officers worked hard within the restrictions to create a festive atmosphere for shoppers.

On Good Friday, 2nd April 2021, we held our Easter market and although we were still not able to hold our usual special activities, we gave away pots of daffodils to shoppers as they walked around the market. People were thrilled with the gift. A small gesture that brought a smile to many faces.

Our officers and traders are to be congratulated for keeping our well-loved market open despite the difficulties they have had to work with this year.

Despite this being a year like no other, I have enjoyed my time as your Mayor and would like to wish my successor a successful year as Mayor of Neston.

Cllr Christine Warner
Mayor, Neston Town Council Chairman

GRANTS AWARDED DURING 2020/21

Neston Town Council's grants scheme is open to voluntary and community groups and organisations operating within the Neston area and is intended to

- enable local people to participate in voluntary groups and activities
- help the Neston area's voluntary and community groups improve their impact on the community
- ensure the provision of services needed by the residents of the Neston area, via the voluntary sector
- support organisations which meet the needs of people experiencing social and economic difficulties
- ensure that there is equality of access and opportunity for all Neston residents to the services it provides and funds
improve or enhance the local environment.

Koala North West	Family Support	£400.00
Hip & Harmony CIC	Virtual Classes	£500.00
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Chapter (West Cheshire) Ltd	Neston Virtual Coffee Mornings	£500.00
Chapter (West Cheshire) Ltd	Telephone Support Activities	£500.00
Little Actors Theatre Company	Over-50s Online Resources	£500.00
Little Actors Theatre Company	Online Theatre Workshops	£500.00
Amber Button	History Now (Phase One)	£300.00
Little Actors Theatre Company	Summer & Autumn Season	£2,500.00
Neston Air Cadets	Essential Equipment Replacement	£1,198.88
The Wirral Way Junior Parkrun UK	Automated external defibrillator	£1,050.00
Neston Community Cybercentre	COVID-19 protection	£500.00

TOTAL £8,948.88

DONATIONS PROVIDED DURING 2020/21

Hip & Harmony	Christmas in Neston	£7,124.99
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TOTAL £7,124.99

This Annual Report will be formally presented at the 2021 Annual Town Meeting being held via Zoom at 6pm on Tuesday 20 April.

The Annual Meeting of Neston Town Council will take place on Tuesday 4 May at 6pm via Zoom.