



Hello Everyone,

So, next month sees me coming to the end of my term as Mayor of Malvern. It has been a very interesting year for the mayor as we are finally coming out of lockdown and things seem to be getting back to normal.

So, what have I been doing over the past few months?

During December, the Council approved the build of a new community hub at Victoria Park, selected a contractor and agreed to carry out a public consultation in early 2022.

The Town Council want to make a “go to” place at Victoria Park and therefore the consultation asked all the households of Malvern two very important questions:

“Are you in favour of a new building at Victoria Park?” and “Are you in favour of the funding model put forward by the Council?”

I am glad to say the overwhelming answer to both questions was “yes” and so we are busy planning the next steps, including demolition of the existing building and applying for planning permission for the new community hub. We hope to have the new building open by late 2022, early 2023.

The past few months have also been a busy period operationally. The refurbishment of Barnards Green bus shelter has taken place, largely completed by Town Council staff. The blue and yellow colour scheme, as well as being much brighter and inviting, also takes the bus shelter back to how it looked when it was refurbished in 1998. Projects are also underway in and around Rose Bank Gardens, including the refurbishment of the Victorian style bus shelter and surrounding walls by the entrance to the gardens, and the creation of a new water fountain to commemorate Jenny Lind.

Five new recycling bins have been purchased and installed as part of a pilot recycling project in partnership with Malvern Hills District Council and over £10k has been spent on new play equipment at Jamaica Crescent, Lower Howsell and Victoria Park. On a day-to-day basis, the Town Council works to keep the areas it maintains in good order.

I could not have done as much as I have during the year without the support of the Town Council staff, who make sure I know where I should be and when, but of course they do so much more than that behind the scenes. The office staff keep everything in order from allotment allocations to organising small and large public events. The operations staff take pride in doing as much work as possible in-house to keep our green and open spaces looking tidy and well-maintained.

The approach of summer sees the return of Town Council events, with (hopefully) a full Bands in the

Park programme on Sunday afternoons in Priory Park as well as events for the Queen’s Jubilee (5 June) and Armed Forces Day (26 June).

Of course, we are a Council of twenty councillors and although we have had some healthy debates over the year, we have not always agreed. But who said chairing a local council was easy?! Healthy debate is necessary, as it clearly demonstrates we do, in fact, debate things and not simply wave things through.

We are in strange times in the world now and I think the next few months are going to be challenging for us all, but you can be sure of one thing, Malvern Town Councillors and staff will continue to work hard in contributing to the fabric of Malvern and I say often, I cannot solve every problem in Malvern, but I will listen and do what I can.

I have met so many people during my term as Mayor and I have been humbled by how much local people really do care about their community. It has been a pleasure to represent Malvern Town around the county and to have met some of the Mayors from other local councils. This means we can share news about what is happening in our towns.

I have endeavoured to represent Malvern and the Town Council in the best way that I possible can; I have cut the ribbon on a number of new businesses, attended local group meetings to talk about the work of the mayor, been present at many meetings to represent the local community and also eaten a lot of cake and drank many cups of tea throughout the year.

Cllr Nick Houghton