

# CITY OF LICHFIELD

## ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the **Annual Town Meeting** for the Parish of Lichfield will be held in the Guildroom, Guildhall at **7.30 pm** on **WEDNESDAY, 24 MAY 2023**.

The meeting is empowered to discuss parish affairs and pass resolutions thereon. Any Local Government Elector for the parish of Lichfield is entitled to speak and vote at the meeting. Other members of the public may attend to hear the proceedings.

Attendees are asked to pre-register wherever possible by telephoning 01543 250011 or emailing the City Council – [enquiries@lichfield.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@lichfield.gov.uk)

Grant cheques have been distributed at past Annual Town Meetings, but payments for 2023 have been processed electronically and do not therefore form part of this agenda.

### AGENDA

- 1 WELCOMING REMARKS BY THE MAYOR**  
(Town Clerk to briefly outline the order of business and conduct of the meeting).
- 2 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON 25 MAY 2022**  
To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 25 May 2022 *(NB: This item is for matters of accuracy of the Minutes only; any 'matters arising' should be raised under agenda item 5 below)*.
- 3 CITY COUNCIL REPORT**  
To receive the Annual Report on the activities of the City Council in 2022/23.
- 4 ANY QUESTIONS ON THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CITY COUNCIL**
- 5 TO HEAR THE REQUESTS AND REPRESENTATIONS OF THE ELECTORS ON MATTERS WHICH AFFECT THE PARISH SPECIFICALLY**  
Under this item electors may discuss items affecting the parish especially, and may if they wish put forward motions for debate by the Meeting.

**Dated this 10 May 2023**

*Anthony Briggs*

**Town Clerk**

**Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held in the Guildroom, Guildhall, Lichfield  
at 7.30 pm on Wednesday, 25 May 2022**

**254 PRESENT**

The Mayor of Lichfield (Councillor Jamie Checkland, in the Chair), and attendees and electors as entered in the attendance sheets.

**255 OPENING REMARKS AND WELCOME BY THE MAYOR**

The Mayor warmly welcomed everyone to the Annual Town Meeting and introduced the Town Clerk who outlined for the benefit of those unfamiliar with the proceedings, the order of business and conduct of the meeting.

**256 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** *That the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 26 May 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.*

**257 CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22**

A copy of the Annual Report of City Council activities during 2021/22 was circulated for information.

**258 REQUESTS AND REPRESENTATIONS OF ELECTORS**

Mr Michael Hawkes read the following statement:

*I would like to say a few words this evening about the City Council's decision at its April meeting to support the placement of plaques to Francis Barber and Anna Seward in our city. I am a member of a number of community groups in Lichfield which I know would support this project – the Johnson Society, the Friends of Erasmus Darwin House, the Civic Society and the Lichfield District City of Sanctuary. I am very pleased that the placement of these two plaques is now going ahead.*

*Both Francis Barber and Anna Seward are significant figures in Lichfield's 18<sup>th</sup> C history. Francis Barber was the manservant, friend and heir of Dr Johnson. He was an elected constable ('dozenor') for Stowe Ward and is thought to be the first black schoolteacher in England. Anna Seward was a noted poet and an influential person in Dr Darwin's social circle during the Enlightenment period.*

*There are a number of reasons to recognise their role in our social history. The plaques to Francis Barber and Anna Seward will, I feel, help our younger people to understand the contribution made to our country by black people and by women – two groups who often do not appear in our country's recorded history.*

*Now that the two plaques have been approved in principle by the City Council, I would urge the Council to expedite their production and placement. I understand that funding could be met from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). I have informed Cllr Colin Ball that I am a co-signatory of the savings account of a small community group that is being wound up where the signatories have agreed that the balance (about £100) should be transferred to the City Council and earmarked towards the cost of the Francis Barber plaque. Could the City Council set a target date – say the 30<sup>th</sup> September – for the two plaques to be in place? I know that of number of people feel frustrated that the campaign to have the plaques especially to Francis Barber has taken so long.*

*I would also urge those city councillors who are also District Councillors to urge the Lichfield District Council to erect two information boards on the north and south sides of*

*Stowe Pool to highlight the historic significance of Dr Johnson, Francis Barber and Anna Seward. Reference could be made to the Johnson Willow, Michael Johnson's parchment factory on the pool's north side, the tannery on the pool's south side, Stowe House, Cruck House and Francis Barber's family home in Stowe Street. Such boards would be an excellent complement to the Francis Barber plaque. Again they would help to educate our younger people about our city's remarkable 18<sup>th</sup> C history.*

*Thank you*

The Town Clerk responded that a target date of September was desirable but dependent on many factors:

Francis Barber Plaque:

- It seems most likely the Barber plaque will be placed on Cruck House, with approval required from the Conservation Officer, and as the building is Grade II\* listed, also approval from Historic England.
- Once agreement from external bodies is in place the design and wording of the plaque will be finalised with partners; the finalised design will then need to be approved by Council as owner of Cruck House, manufactured and installed. There is no intention to delay from LCC's perspective, but the process is reliant on some external forces and, in its final stages, the schedule of Council meetings.

Seward Plaque

- This was originally a Townswomen's Guild (TWG) project, and to have it placed at The Palace, it needs to be approved by the Cathedral's Fabric Advisory Committee (FAC). When they met to discuss the plaque the FAC requested further information, the City Council and TWG are working on this currently.

In regard to monies, it was noted that funding the plaques wholly via CIL was a strong possibility, though still subject to Council resolution, perhaps meaning that the monies mentioned could be allocated to another worthy cause.

The Town Clerk confirmed that approaches had been made by LCC to LDC in regard to the proposed information boards adjacent to Stowe Pool, including the offer of possible funding, but no response had been received. The Mayor reiterated that funding for the LDC project may be available via request to the City Council's Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Working Party.

Further discussion followed with the potential for the Seward plaque to be located on Market Street, and a suggestion from Cllr D Robertson that wording potentially be included on the plaque to reflect Anna Seward's place in the lesbian poetic canon.

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS  
THE MAYOR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7.50 PM**

**CITY OF LICHFIELD**  
**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

This is a meeting of the local government electors of the parish of Lichfield, who have a right to speak and vote at the meeting. This is not a meeting of the City Council, but of the electors. The law requires however, that the City Council call the meeting, and that the meeting is chaired by the Mayor, if present.

People who are not on the current register of electors for the parish of Lichfield are welcome to attend as members of the public, but do not have a right to take part in the business of the meeting. At the Mayor's discretion non-electors may be permitted to speak, but the law states that only electors are entitled to vote.

The meeting is entitled to discuss "parish affairs" which is taken to embrace matters of public concern which affect the parish specially, but not those which affect the whole country or all parishes equally. Electors can discuss matters informally and ask questions. There is no requirement that these matters be put to the vote at the meeting.

However, if an elector wishes an item to be formally debated, the elector should put forward a motion in writing, signed by the proposer, and give this to the Mayor or Town Clerk either before the meeting, or as early as possible during the meeting. A motion needs to be worded in such a way that a person can vote either 'FOR' or 'AGAINST' it. For example: "This Meeting believes that ....." A motion which is carried at the Annual Town Meeting will be put before the next meeting of the City Council for consideration, but is not binding on the Council.

The meeting and debate will be conducted as informally as possible, but where necessary to assist the debate the Standing Orders and Rules of Debate of Lichfield City Council will be used insofar as they are applicable.

ANTHONY BRIGGS  
**Town Clerk**