



ANNUAL REPORT
2023/2024
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL

Message from the Mayor

This ***“Year in Review”*** will take us from March 2023 through until February 2024.

In 2023, the 6th of May saw the Coronation of our new King: Charles III.

The Coronation was closely followed by my mayor-making, an event of great importance to the town and to me, although it didn’t seem to attract quite as much media attention worldwide as the crowning of Charles and Camilla. Not entirely sure why, but never mind.

The mayor-making ceremony saw the chain of office being passed from Councillor Gill Cleeve, the outgoing and very successful mayor for the previous year, back to me.

Literally back to me, as this was to be my second term of office – the first was in 2019-2020. As I received the mayor’s chain, I couldn’t help but wonder how different it might be the second time around.

Last time the pandemic and consequent lockdowns put paid to most of my duties in the last three months of my term of office. This time – well, so far, so good.

Many of the events are the same as before but with new faces to greet, many are similar but some quite new and quite different. In no particular order, memorable occasions so far for me have been the spitfire flypast at RAF Cosford during their new regimental colour’s ceremony, a dinner in the Town Hall with the Worshipful Company of Glovers and reviewing the sea cadets from all over Warwickshire as they marched past the Town Hall. I was able to briefly greet the Chinese Ambassador to London and the Mayor of Stratford, Ontario, who both paid a flying visit to the mayor’s parlour with their respective wives.

Then there were the ‘Young Market Trader of the Year’ stalls to be judged, a refurbished pub, the “Dirty Duck” to be opened, the 200th Anniversary of the Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School (formerly the Willows) to be celebrated and the Rugby Club’s giant bonfire to be lit. We also lit the Christmas lights, and then along came the panto’s, the Carol Services and concerts. Helping with the Food Bank drives and visits to the Care Homes, Nicol Unit and the Police & Fire stations on Christmas Eve and Christmas day all reminded me that there is more than just one side to the Festive celebrations.

That’s just a small selection. It seems to have been a lot busier than the first time around, although dealing with it all is perhaps a little bit easier the second time you do it. But it’s not over yet.

We still have a Charity Ball and a Charity Fashion show to come as well as plenty of civic services and dinners and our own unique birthday celebrations for our own unique poet and playwright: William Shakespeare. All that and more before I pass on the mayoral chain to my deputy mayor, Councillor Jason Fojtik, in May.

This ***‘Year in Review’*** offers a monthly digest of the events I have attended together with a list of Mayoral engagements and a few pictures. It also summarises my Town Council meetings which are a significant part of my duties.

As an Annual Report, there are also certain things that need to appear and so the following items are appended: the Consolidated Revenue Account for the year end 31 March 2023, our current and future scheduled calendar of meetings and a breakdown of our staffing structure.

Talking of staff, this is one of my few public opportunities for thanking all the Town Hall staff for the tremendous amount of work that they undertake to ensure that the Town Hall and the Mayoral term of office both run smoothly and harmoniously. Without them things would grind to a halt in no time. So, thank you Caroline and Charles, Georgina, Lisa, Emma, Victoria and Tony and all the Outdoor Spaces Team. Finally, a big thank you and a final one, sadly, to Pat.

Pat Bojczuk joined our team in October 1997 and retired in January of this year. Pat has acted as housekeeper for 27 Mayors over this period and it just won't be the same without her. We all wish Pat a happy retirement.

My thanks too, to the Council's Chaplain, Reverend Doctor Paul Edmonson for his continuing and very positive support. Thanks Paul – you are an angel, well pretty close to one – in a nice way.

Finally, thank you too, to my husband and consort, Michael, who has supported me constantly throughout my two terms of office. I am seriously grateful for your help and encouragement.

So, as my 'second innings' draws to a close, I look forward to an exciting finish.

I shall miss it. Being Mayor has proved to be an incredible, although at times exhausting, experience. It's made incredible in large part by this town and the wonderful people in it - especially those who go the extra mile to make Stratford-upon-Avon such a great place to live in. Let's keep it that way.

Councillor Kate Rolfe
Mayor, Stratford-upon-Avon 2023/2024



*Councillor Kate Rolfe
Mayor of Stratford-upon-Avon
2023 - 2024*



*Mayor, Cllr Kate Rolfe and
Consort, Mr Michael Rolfe*



*Councillor Jason Fojtik
Deputy Mayor of
Stratford-upon-Avon
2023 - 2024*

YEAR IN REVIEW

MAY 2023

- It was proposed, seconded, and resolved that I be elected as 478th Mayor of Stratford-upon-Avon. A Civic Sunday service was held on 21st May



- Council appointed Members to Standing Committees.
- The following meetings were held during the month:
 - Planning Consultative Committee
 - Annual Meeting and Mayor Making



- Mayoral Engagements:
 - Mayor Making
 - Civic dinner
 - Civic Sunday Service
 - TS Gurkha
 - Mayor Making (Whitnash)



Civic Dinner



Mayor Making (Whitnash)



Mayor Making (Whitnash)

Local Elections were held on the 4th May and seven new Councillors were welcomed to the Town Council.

Albany Ward
Cllr Lindsay MacDonald



Darlow Ward
Cllr Letty Petrovic



Guildhall & Bridgetown Ward
Cllr Sam McNaught Barrow



Orchard Hill Ward
Cllr Dani Hunter



Tiddington Ward
Cllr Louisa Smith



Welcombe Ward
Cllr Iain Duck



Welcombe Ward
Cllr Zoe Rashwan



JUNE 2023

It was a busy first month for Mayoral engagements:

- The Worshipful Company of Glovers Reception Dinner at the Town Hall
- Stratford Musical Theatre Company production of Calendar Girls
- Swifts and the Story of Life on Earth
- The Descendants of the 6888th Postal Battalion
- Stratford upon Avon Boat Club Regatta
- Armed Forces Day
- Shottery Summer Fete
- Polish Institute Evening supporting Ambulance Aid
- Re-opening of The Dirty Duck
- Beer and Cider Festival
- Escape Arts Heritage Centre re-opening

- The Town Council approved the Annual Accounts for Year ending 31st March 2023
- The Town Council approved the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 31st March 2023
- The following meetings were held during the month:
 - Finance & Audit Committee Meeting
 - Youth Town Council Meeting
 - Planning Consultative Committee Meeting
 - Personnel Committee Meeting



Glovers Reception Dinner



SMTC – Calendar Girls



Boat Club Regatta



Heritage Centre re-opening

Armed Forces Day

On the 24th June, the Town Council gathered to show their support for our Armed Forces – those who are currently serving, their families, Cadets and veterans. The Mayor welcomed her Cadet for 2023/2024 – Leading Cadet William Stanley (Will) of Stratford upon Avon Sea Cadets.



Chinese Ambassador Visit

The Mayor welcomed the Chinese Ambassador for the United Kingdom and his wife, Mme Hua Meil to the Town Hall. This was Ambassador Zheng's first visit to Stratford upon Avon.



The Town Hall held a Wedding and Event Open Day. Many visitors were welcomed to our historic building on this day.



JULY 2023

Mayoral Engagements:

- Alveston Primary School Summer Fete
- Fun Regatta, Stratford Boat Club
- Stratford Gin and Rum Festival
- Songs of Praise
- Dance Show, Stratford Primary School
- Under Katyn Stage Play, Bear Pit Theatre
- Garden Party, Guild Cottages
- Living with History, book launch
- Scouts District AGM
- Mayors Bowling Match
- Canning Court Car Home, re-opening
- Dugdale Society Reception
- Remembrance Service for The JAVA Far East Prisoners of War Club 1942
- The following meetings were held during the month:
 - Community Services Committee
 - Planning Consultative Committee
 - Civic, Heritage & Events Committee
 - Town Council



Fun Regatta



Garden Party



Mayor's Bowling Match



Fete openings & Dugdale Reception



JAVA Remembrance Service



Songs of Praise

An invitation to RAF Cosford for the presentation of the new 605 (County of Warwick) Squadron Standard, the reformation of No. 2 School of Technical Training and a celebration of RAF Cosford's 85th Anniversary and their Majesties Coronation.



AUGUST 2024

Mayoral Engagements:

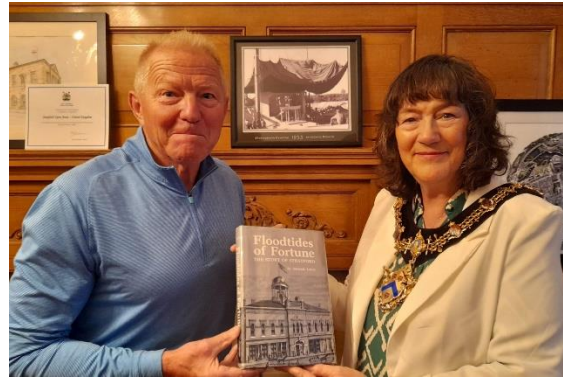
- Charity Fundraising event for the Air Ambulance
 - MK1 Cortina Club National Show
 - Opening of the Hearing Care Clinic, Boots
 - Bell Court Live Music Event
 - Perfume Judging – Stratford U3A
 - Rotary Duck Race & window competition
 - Meeting the Mayor of Stratford, Ontario
 - Judging of the Young Traders Market
 - Net Zero Food launch
- The following meetings were held during the month:
 - Planning Consultative Committee Meeting (x2)
 - Personnel Committee Meeting



Rotary Duck Race



Bell Court Live



Mayor of Stratford, Ontario



Young Traders Final & Winner



Net Zero Food launch



Perfume judging

The Town Council offered its congratulations to former Mayor and long-standing Mace Bearer, Mick Love MBE on his appointment as President of Stratford upon Avon Municipal Charities. The presentation was made by Warwickshire High Sheriff Mrs Sophie Hilleary and Mayor, Cllr Kate Rolfe.



SEPTEMBER 2023

Mayoral Engagements:

- Whitnash Civic Dinner
- Stratford in Bloom Awards Evening
- Heritage Open Day Events
- Shakespeare Hospice AGM
- Macbeth at the RSC

- The following meetings were held during the month:
 - Finance & Audit Committee Meeting
 - Planning Consultative Committee Meeting
 - Youth Town Council Meeting
 - Civic Heritage & Events Committee Meeting
 - Town Council Meeting



Stratford in Bloom Awards Evening



Whitnash Civic Dinner



Hospice AGM



Heritage Open Days



OCTOBER 2023

Mayoral Engagements:

- Legal Service, Warwick (marking the start of the legal year)
- Stratford Boxing Club
- Mop Opening
- Launch of Hudsons Antique Centre
- 200th Anniversary Ball – Holy Trinity Primary School
- Stratford Herald Business & Tourism Awards
- Leamington Civic Service
- Trafalgar Day Parade & Service
- Cherry Orchard Production, Bear Pit

- The following meetings were held during the month:
 - Planning Consultative Committee Meeting (x2)
 - Personnel Committee Meeting
 - Community Services Committee Meeting



Mop Opening



Trafalgar Day Parade & Service

NOVEMBER 2023

Mayoral Engagements:

- Samaritans 70th Anniversary
- Bonfire and fireworks, Rugby Club
- Parliament Week – Stratford Guides Visit
- Iqbal and Shakespeare Celebration
- Armistice Day Commemoration
- Interfaith Service, Commonwealth War Graves
- Remembrance Sunday
- Children of Courage Awards
- Christmas Lights switch-on

- The following meetings were held during the month:
 - Civic Heritage & Events Committee Meeting
 - Youth Town Council Committee Meeting
 - Planning Consultative Committee Meeting
 - Finance & Audit Committee Meeting
 - Town Council Meeting

- Launch of Scouts Christmas Post Delivery Service
- Cookie Sale
- Christmas Supporter Evening, Shakespeare Hospice



Samaritans Anniversary



Bonfire & fireworks, Rugby Club



Cookie Sale



Parliament Week – Guides Visit



Iqbal & Shakespeare Celebration



Launch of the Scout Christmas Post

Remembrance Sunday



Christmas Lights Switch-on



DECEMBER 2023

The Mayor, Councillor Kate Rolfe and her consort Michael Rolfe, wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a wonderful, happy and healthy 2024.

Mayoral Engagements:

- Stratford Foodbank, food drive at Tesco
- Community Advent Carol Service
- James & the giant peach performance
- Victorian Christmas Market opening
- Festive Civic Heads Dinner
- Holy Trinity Church, Christmas Carol Concert
- Chamber Music Society Concert

- The following meetings were held during the month:

- Community Services Committee Meeting
- Planning Consultative Committee Meeting
- Personnel Committee Meeting



Victorian Christmas Market opening



Food Drive, Tesco



James & the giant peach



Festive Civic Heads Dinner

During the festive period, we paid visits to the following venues:

- Canning Court
- Alveston Leys
- Scholars Mews
- Margaret Court
- Stratford Fire Station
- Community Kitchen, Ken Kennet Centre
- Tiddington Court
- Trinity Manor
- Stratford Bentley Nursing Home
- Stratford Police Station
- Nicol Unit, Stratford Hospital



Christmas Visits 2023

JANUARY 2024

We would like to wish everyone a very happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. Let's all strive together to make 2024 even better than 2023! Mayor, Cllr Kate Rolfe and Consort, Michael Rolfe

Mayoral Engagements:

- Stratford Rotary visit
- Chamber Music Society Consent
- Marlborough Civic Reception

- The following meetings were held during the month:
 - Planning Consultative Committee Meeting
 - Finance & Audit Committee Meeting
 - Civic Heritage & Events Committee Meeting
 - Town Council Meeting



Chamber Music Society Concert



Marlborough Civic Reception

The Town Council said farewell in January, to a long standing, respect and much-loved member of staff, Pat Bojczuk who retired after more than 26 years as Housekeeper at the Town Hall!



February 2024

Mayoral Engagements:

- Bridgetown School Panto
- ILEAP Christmas Party
- Shipston Mayor's Civic Event
- Launch of the Baby Bank Shop
- Warwickshire Vision Concert
- Coffee Morning for Ukraine Medical Aid
- Tiddington Players Panto
- Coventry Civic Service
- 25th Anniversary Celebrations, Shakespeare Hospice
- Launch of the Literary Festival
- Mayor and Chair's Ball
- Shipston Civic Service

- The following meetings were held during the month:
 - Planning Consultative Committee Meeting (x2)
 - Community Services Committee Meeting



Message from the Deputy Mayor

I am eagerly anticipating the opportunity to serve at the Town's 47th Mayor, having spent an enjoyable year as Deputy Mayor and actively participating in various community events. As someone who is Stratford born and bred, I take immense pride in representing the community where I have deep roots. I am committed to fostering local initiatives and community groups, enhancing the quality of life for residents and preserving the unique charm that makes Stratford-upon-Avon special. I look forward to the responsibilities and challenges that come with the role of Mayor and looking forward to working with the Community.

I have been a Councillor since 2015 and I am currently Ward Councillor for Clopton.

Councillor Jason Fojtik

Deputy Mayor Engagements:

- Stratford upon Avon Boat Club's Wheelpower Event
- Launch of Community Cinema
- Art Exhibition, KES
- Choral Society, Holy Trinity Church
- Stratford Symphony Orchestra
- Holy Trinity Christmas Carol walk through event
- Loan Agreement signing with Shanghai Museum of Art and Culture, SBT



Elected as Deputy Mayor



Wheelpower Event



Loan Agreement Signing



Art Exhibition

Appendix 'A'

Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council Members



Albany Ward
Cllr Lindsay MacDonald



Avenue Ward
Cllr Richard Vos



Bishopton Ward
Cllr Victoria Alcock



Bishopton Ward
Cllr Roger Harding



Brookside Ward
Cllr Toby Lee



Clopton Ward
Cllr Jason Fojtik



Darlow Ward
Cllr Letty Petrovic



Guildhall & Bridgetown Ward
Cllr Jenny Fradgley



Guildhall & Bridgetown Ward
Cllr Sam McNaught Barrow



Hathway Ward
Cllr Liz Coles



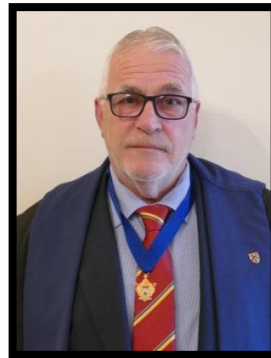
Orchard Hill Ward
Cllr Ian Fradgley



Orchard Hill Ward
Cllr Dani Hunter



Shottery Ward
Cllr Gill Cleeve



Shottery Ward
Cllr Bill Dowling



Tiddington Ward
Mayor, Cllr Kate Rolfe



Tiddington Ward
Cllr Louisa Smith



Welcombe Ward
Cllr Iain Duck



Welcombe Ward
Cllr Zoe Rashwan

Appendix 'B'

CALENDAR OF MEETING 2024/25 AT THE TOWN HALL

Community Services Committee Tuesday (6:30 pm) 5	Planning Consultative Committee Tuesday (6:30 pm) 16	Finance & Audit Committee Tuesday (6:30 pm) 5	Civic, Heritage & Events Committee Tuesday (6:30 pm) 5	Personnel Committee Tuesday (6:30 pm) 6	Town Council Tuesday (6:30 pm) 8
	21 May 24 18 June 24	4 June 24		25 June 24	Annual Meeting & Mayor Making Friday 17 May 24 (noon) 11 June 24 (To approve Annual Accounts only)
2 July 24	9 July 24 30 July 24		16 July 24		23 July 24 (Annual Photograph)
	20 August 10 September 24	3 September 24	17 September 24	6 August 24	24 September 24
15 October 24	1 October 24 22 October 24 12 November 24	19 November 24	5 November 24	8 October 24	26 November 24
3 December 24	10 December 24 7 January 25	14 January 25	21 January 25	17 December 24	28 January 25
18 February 24	4 February 25 25 February 25 18 March 25	4 March 25	11 March 25	11 February 25	Town Meeting Thursday 7:30pm 6 March 2025
15 April 24	8 April 25 29 April 25 20 May 25			6 May 25	1 April 25

Annual Meeting and Mayor Making (unless General Election decrees otherwise) Friday 16 May 2025 at noon at the Town Hall.
Civic Sunday – Sunday 18 May 2025.

Appendix 'C'

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

STRATFORD UPON AVON TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023, that:

	Agreed		Yes	No*	*Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No			
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓				prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓				made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓				has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓				during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓				considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓				arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓				responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓				disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No		N/A	has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

13/06/2023

and recorded as minute reference:

MIN 21.2 (a) REFERENCE

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

Kate Roife SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

CANDY SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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Appendix 'D'

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

STRATFORD UPON AVON TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	88,928	99,632	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	527,576	556,242	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	483,684	448,031	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	355,893	404,787	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	644,663	560,117	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	99,632	139,001	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	145,473	218,059	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	11,217,436	11,166,328	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2023 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Kate Roife SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

06/06/2023

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

13/06/2023

as recorded in minute reference:

MIN 21.2 (b) REFERENCE

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Kate Roife

Appendix ‘E’

