



TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT 2016 - 2017

Once again the primary focus for the last year has been the devolution of services to local councils, community groups and organisations as a result of the continuing budget restrictions within Cornwall Council.

In January this year, the transfer of Pendeen Playing Field into the Town Council's ownership was finally completed a process that has taken nearly two years. The Council has already invested over £7,000 in improvements to the play equipment, together with the refurbishment of the picnic tables and benches. Regularly monthly ground maintenance and periodic equipment inspections are now being carried out by the Council's contractors.

The Town Council has also completed maintenance, refurbishment and marking with St Just Town Council badges of all its street furniture. It is the Council's intention to commit to an annual maintenance programme to ensure that its street furniture remains "fit for purpose" for the many tourists that visit the town and surrounding villages. As the seats and bins are now clearly marked "Maintained by St Just Town Council" I hope that the new Council will see this through.

In March, the Council gave its approval to provide three-year financial support to the Friends of St Just Library in support of the devolution of the library service in St Just to the group. The Council has agreed to commit £7,500 over the next three years, £1,000.00 more than the group had requested as a demonstration of this Council's commitment to the continuation of the service locally and as a gesture of "goodwill" to the many volunteers who have committed so much of their time to ensure the success of the project. This is a significant commitment for the Council and was not,



initially, its preferred option, but by joining the Board of Trustees we hope to ensure that the project will be successful and bring long term benefits to the town.

Other devolution matters have centred around this Council's "in-principle" decision to proceed with the freehold purchase of the Council building and the Lafrowda Car Park. A total combined capital purchase of £268,000. The package also includes the transfer of Pendeen Car Park, public conveniences, recycling facilities, street lighting and bus shelters into the Town Council's ownership at nil cost. This decision is probably the most significant and challenging that this Council has had to make, and there is still considerable work to be completed before the final decision is taken by the incoming Council. On 27 March, we were advised that the Town Council's request had been discussed by Cornwall Council's Devolution Steering Group which had recognised that there were still considerable issues to be addressed, and given the limited resources available within the Council, together with other competing priorities it was unlikely that significant progress would be made until its current work programme had been completed. It is unknown at this time what the timescale is for the delivery of these projects; but I am confident that the new Town Council will keep the local community fully informed of progress.

The Council is also in the process of formalising its ownership of the Plain-an-Gwarry with the land registry. It came to light recently that despite the Council having maintained this Scheduled Monument for a considerable number of years, it was not legally owned by the Council. This Council has taken the necessary steps to regularise this oversight, dating back to 1974 – thereby securing the future protection of this historic site. In addition, the Council has also made an application to Historic England for Schedule Ancient Monument Consent to enable the continuation of a programme of maintenance to the perimeter wall. An announcement is expected in the coming weeks.



July saw the annual Lafrowda Day celebrations: once again the Town Council has continued in its financial support of the festival by grant aiding the festival and in August the annual Mayor's Sunday event saw many local groups and organisations attending.

September last year, St Just in Bloom successfully achieved another gold award for the town. In recognition of the group's continued success, the Council has agreed to pass over the advertising case in Bank Square to house a plaque acknowledging the group's achievement.

Last year the Town Council also took over responsibility for maintaining the whole of St Just graveyard. This, and many other areas such as Boscawell Corner and the Plain-an-Gwarry continue to be maintained by Far West Garden Services on behalf of the Council.

Over the past year the Council has continued to work closely with the local policing team, in particular PCSO Andy Tonkin. Regularly bi-monthly "drop-in" sessions continue to be held in the Council Offices where members of the public can come to discuss Police or housing issues.

Maintenance of the parish's footpaths continues under the Local Maintenance Partnership Scheme, and will again include parts of the Coast Path. The Council has also once again set aside additional money to fund extra clearance work and to carry out an extra cut on the gold footpath network reflecting the economic importance of the footpaths to the local business community as they attract many walkers to the area.



One of the main projects for the new Council over the coming years will be the development of the new Neighbourhood Plan for the parish. The Council received “area of designation” approval on 24 March, the first step in the process. Community engagement will be instrumental to the success of the process and I hope that members of the local community will work constructively with the Council in development of the plan in protection of this unique place in which we all live and work.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank everyone who served on the outgoing Council and to pass on my best wishes to the incoming Council and the challenges it will face over the next four years.

Dave Stevens

DeputyTown Mayor

15/05/2017