



TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT 2015 - 2016

Once again the primary focus for the last year was the continuing budget cuts at Cornwall Council, and their impact on service delivery and local councils.

In February this year, Cornwall Council advised local councils that it was withdrawing funding for public toilets as from 1 April 2016. Given the importance of maintaining these facilities in a high tourist area, the Council took the unanimous decision to fund the full cost during 2016 / 17 to enable a longer term solution to be found as part of the ongoing devolution discussions.

A major element of those devolutions discussions over the preceding year has been the future of St Just Library. In June 2015 a joint working party was established with representatives from Cornwall Council, the Town Council, Cape Cornwall School and the Friends of St Just Library to consider options to preserve a library service within the town. The agreed preferred option around the table was a potential transfer of the service to Cape Cornwall School, and discussions continued on the viability of this proposal until December 2015 when, at the request of the Friends Group, a public meeting was held to gauge local views on the option. It is fair to say that this has been an extremely challenging project trying to accommodate local expectations. Therefore, in January this year, due to other pressing matters facing the Town Council at the time, the Council took the difficult decision to stand back from direct discussions with Cornwall Council for the present time and allow the Friends of St Just Library to explore the potential for the service remaining in its present location. Those discussions are still ongoing: however, the Council will tonight be reviewing its position in the light of recent communications from Cornwall Council. However, I want to assure you all that the Council will keep the local



community informed in the weeks to come as the future of the library service, particularly in St Just becomes clearer.

At the same time as discussions were being held into the future of the library service, the Town Council submitted a further expression of interest to Cornwall Council regarding wider devolution issues including Nancherrow Centre, the public toilets and car parks and the existing Town Council building. There are currently a number of Cornwall Council owned buildings within the parish and the challenge is to ensure these resources are used as effectively as possible for the benefit of the local community, as well as continuing discussions with Cornwall Council on how it can best meet its required budgetary savings.

In June last year, the Town Council was informed that, as Cornwall Council was not the legal owner of the Pendeen Playing Field, it would no longer be able to continue to maintain the facility: again because of budgetary pressures. Ownership of the playing field has been the responsibility of a local board of trustees since the land was gifted to the local community from Geevor Tin Mine. Following discussions between all the parties it was agreed that the title deed would be transferred into the Town Council's ownership safeguarding this much loved facility for the residents of Pendeen. The legal process to complete the transfer is well underway and it's hoped will be concluded in the next few weeks. Recognising the importance of the play park to the local community, in January this year the Council also commissioned a play equipment company to carry out necessary repairs and install some new equipment. I am very pleased to report that all has now been installed.

In August 2015, I hosted my annual "Mayor's Sunday" event. It was a gloriously sunny occasion and once again, I was particularly pleased to see so many local groups and organisations represented. As I have mentioned many times before



these groups are the backbone of our community and the work of the volunteers who support them cannot be underestimated. The Council will continue in its efforts to support as many as it can.

July saw the annual Lafrowda Day celebrations: the Town Council continues in its financial support of the festival and this year has once again made a significant financial contribution to the Committee recognising the importance that the event has on attracting tourists to the town and supporting local businesses.

Also for a fifth year in succession the Town Council has been able to provide a grant of £2,500 to the St Just TIC to enable it to have extended opening hours during the peak tourist season.

In September last year, St Just in Bloom successfully achieved another gold award for the town, and in addition was also awarded the Ayers Cup. On behalf of the Town Council we wish to express our sincere thanks to all its members who give up so much of their time to make the town look so beautiful. I am also pleased to be able to report that the Town Council has once again agreed to support the group by providing the flowers for this year's displays, and grant aiding its continued work to improve the town's visual appearance. Let's keep our fingers crossed for another successful year. Well done to you all.

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 are now being 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 the Council has recently approved a programme of work to open up some additional silver paths working closely with Cornwall Council's countryside team.

Finally, as we look to the year ahead, the priority for the Council will be to conclude discussions on devolution matters in advance of the next local elections in May 2017.

I would also like to express my personal thanks to my fellow councillors and staff who continue to work hard for our local community.

Kevin McFadden
Town Mayor

23/05/2015