

Minutes of the Fowey Town Council Annual Parish Meeting
held in the Town Hall on Thursday 26th May 2022

22/13 Present	The Mayor	Cllr Mrs Lynn Simms
	Deputy Mayor	Cllr Patrick Hughes Esq
	Councillors	Cllr J Berryman Esq Cllr Mrs R Cooke Cllr Mrs F Day Cllr P Dellow Esq Cllr Mrs R Finlay Mrs Y Patterson
	The Town Clerk	Sally Vincent
	Cornwall Councillor	Cllr Dr A Virr
	Police	PCSO Jamie Ward
	Consultancy	David Orr

11 members of the public

22/14 Apologies Cllr Woodside

22/15 Minutes of the APM held on 21st April 2021

It was proposed by Cllr Hughes, seconded Cllr Finlay and RESOLVED that the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman

22/16 Matters Arising

None

22/17 Annual Report of the Town Council

The Mayor gave her Annual Report

During my year as the Mayor of Fowey the Town Council has supported a number of important projects.

In May the Town Council started negotiations with Andrew Weaver from Live Events South West to co-ordinate the planning for the Christmas Market. This process took some time because there were significant changes in the administration of the event, delays caused by the Covid restrictions earlier in the year and ongoing concerns relating to the pandemic. However, the 2021 Fowey Christmas Market went ahead and proved to be very successful and planning is already underway for 2022.

In June Cllr Ruth Finlay reported that she was delighted to confirm that the Fowey Town Team's application to the Town Vitality Fund had been successful and Fowey had been awarded £40,000. In December consultant Steve Sandercock was appointed to work with the Town Team on an Invitation to Tender for the Town Masterplan. I am pleased to say that four tenders were received by the closing date of 22nd March and it is expected that the

successful company will present its regeneration plans to the Town Council in October. Members of the public are, of course, welcome to attend this meeting.

Plans are also progressing well for the refurbishment of Squires Field Pavilion as a Community Hub/Public IT facility/Council office/library. Many thanks to Cllr Andrew Dellow, who is project managing the build.

For some time now Fowey Town Council has been in discussion with Cormac about the commissioning of a feasibility study for the Trafalgar Square, Webb Street, Town Quay and Market Street permanent summer road closures. The summer road closures over the past two years, possible under Covid Regulations, have enabled the pubs, restaurants and cafes to provide outside eating areas which has improved the ambience of the town and proved very popular. This feasibility study has now been produced and after consultation we expect that it will be completed in time for the summer.

Two important resolutions were tabled and resolved in November 2021.

In response to the current Housing Emergency it was resolved that Fowey Town Council will lobby government to:

1. End the 'Right to Buy' scheme for people living in Council Housing.
2. Scrutinise the principles of Affordable Housing with a view to creating links to local earnings and local rental accommodation.
3. Prioritise new homes for people who were born and raised in Fowey or who have lived in Fowey for at least 10 years. Priority should also be given to key workers in the area.
4. Second Homes:
 - a. To allow a multiplier of council tax which is ring fenced for local housing association projects or community land trusts.
 - b. Scrutiny of the principle of registering houses as businesses
5. Additions to our housing stock should be delivered to high sustainable living standards and offered with secure and humane tenancy agreements.

If this situation remains unchecked, we fear the fracturing of our communities leading to long term social identity issues, workforce problems, loss of family support networks and empty homes bringing a loss of economic vitality and sustainability of our community. Fowey Town Council urges Cornwall Council to declare a Housing Emergency based on this statement.

It was also resolved that 'Fowey Town Council recognises that climate change is already impacting on our environment. As a result of human activity the world is subject to more extreme temperatures, threats to wildlife and a loss of food sources. Carbon emissions need to be drastically reduced if we are to escape the worst effects of global warming. Whilst the whole world needs to take action, it is important that organisations, businesses and individuals in Cornwall initiate lifestyle changes which can reduce CO2 emissions. In order to focus our actions on climate change Fowey Town Council is declaring a Climate Emergency. This means in the first instance that we will continue to develop our Environmental Growth Plan, ensure that we support community groups engaging in activities that benefit the environment and ecology and provide information to the public about reducing CO2 emissions.'

Fowey Town Council has initiated a working group to plan for the Queens Platinum Jubilee Celebrations. Myself, Cllr Frances Day and Cllr Yvette Patterson are part of this group, which includes Scarlett Hughes, Fiona

Hughes, Lucy Daniel (Fowey Chamber of Commerce), Melissa Hartwell (Fowey Forum), Vicky Canavan (Squires Field Community Centre) and Victoria Clark (Readymoney Beach Shop). Arrangements are being made to provide events every day of the Jubilee weekend from 2nd to the 5th of June. Details will be published in the May edition of the Fowey News.

22/18 Annual Report of the Planning Committee

Cllr Finlay gave her Annual Report.

Looking back at the work of the Planning Committee, over the past year from April 2021 when we were still in lockdown and meetings were by Zoom, like many people nationally, who were still able to work, were working from home. As restrictions were lifted, the UK housing market underwent a boom in sales. Thanks to initiatives such as the Stamp Duty holiday, sales per month and house prices started rising quickly and reached highs above pre-Covid levels.

The impact on holiday destinations, such as Cornwall was overwhelming and led Cornwall Council to draw up a £300 million action plan to tackle the housing crisis in Cornwall. The pandemic has brought about extraordinary circumstances and pressures, with this boom in house prices and the demand for holiday accommodation causing a significant and sudden reduction in the availability of homes to rent and a matched sudden escalation in rental costs. Private landlords have been moving away from long term letting and instead moving towards the short term holiday market. Together with the shift to working from home and moving into areas like Cornwall, this has put an unprecedented amount of pressure on the amount of open market housing available to rent or buy; which of course has been reflected in the housing market and subsequent planning applications in Fowey.

So how are we as a small Town Council and Planning committee dealing with these challenges? I believe we try to be fair and treat every application equally, reviewing it within the framework of Planning Legislation as laid out by central government, the Cornwall Local Plan and our own Fowey Neighbourhood Development Plan. However, we are seeing many more applications; for example complete demolition and rebuilding which of course is helped by the fact that a new dwelling benefits from 0% VAT while renovation and extension work is usually standard rate of 20% VAT. This demolition not only is very inconvenient to neighbours, it is environmentally unsustainable and also changing the appearance of parts of our town.

The Planning Committee has also had some extremely large and complex applications such as the Fowey Hall Hotel development, and having to juggle the difficult requirements of supporting businesses such as hospitality while monitoring the impact of development on our precious Area of Outstanding Beauty status.

There have also been some unfortunate misunderstandings this year about the role of planning in our parish – Cornwall Council is the statutory body who can pass or reject planning applications. Once a planning application has been registered, letters will be sent to immediate neighbours. An immediate neighbour is someone whose property adjoins the proposed site. Not someone who lives up the road or opposite. These letters will notify the neighbour of the proposed planning works. If you are a neighbour, the letter will inform

you how to provide comments. It will let you know that you have 21 days to comment.

So whilst Fowey Town Council is not the ultimate decision maker in planning matters, we take our role seriously as we are a significant Consultee who represents the Town's residents and businesses, however Cornwall Council have the final say.

Finally, I would like to thank the committee members for their hard work over the past year, firstly under the constraints of meetings by Zoom and the sheer number of applications which can take days to read through, onsite visits, discussions with planners etc. which we have had to deal with this year.

22/19 Annual Report of the Environment Committee

The Mayor gave her Annual Report

This has been a busy year for the Environment Committee.

In June it became obvious that the toddler Multi Play Unit at Squires Field playground needed to be replaced and the committee felt that it was vital that this was achieved. After lengthy research by Cllr Rhianna Cooke it was decided that the quotation of £7,986.00, plus vat for the Rhino play unit should be accepted. It was resolved to ask Full Council if they would approve an extra expenditure of up to £2,500 for this unit to be purchased and installed. At the November Finance Meeting Cllr Cooke was successful in requesting that the Committee allocate an additional £2,386.00 for the installation of the Rhino play unit and £390.00 for the removal of the old equipment. I am very pleased to say that the Rhino MPU was installed in January and I want to congratulate Cllr Cooke for her hard work in co-ordinating this project.

As part of its Environmental Growth Plan the Committee resolved to purchase 250g of wild flower seeds, to be scattered in the allotment orchard area to create a wild flower meadow. This will greatly enhance the biodiversity of the area and it will look wonderful. As this expenditure was funded by the people of Fowey, it was suggested that open days might be held at the allotments in the future for people to enjoy the orchard and the meadow.

Paul Finlay who tends the orchard is also cultivating Monterey Pine saplings to plant in the town to replace the old trees as they die.

The Committee also agreed to recommend a proposal that Fowey Town Council declare a Climate Emergency and this resolution was made and resolved at the November Council Meeting. On the 27th November the committee organized a successful Climate Action event at the Town Hall. This was supported by Claire Hoddinott, the Environmental Officer for the Fowey Harbour Commission, Margaret Gardener from the Friends of Fowey Estuary, Lucy Daniel from Plastic Free Fowey and the South West Coastal Path Association, Tim Caulfield and members of Edible Fowey and pupils from Fowey River Academy. Thanks go to Cllr's Ruth Finlay and Yvette Patterson for helping to run this event. We intend that this group collaborate again in the future.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations are well underway. Cllr Frances Day has organised for wild flower seeds in red, white and blue to be planted along the entrance road to Fowey, near the Tristan Stone. They will soon be in bloom. In addition, she is arranging for a number of trees to be planted at Squires Field as part of the Queen's Green Canopy.

Over the past few years we have been trying to find a suitable site for the Rachel Sculpture, which was commissioned by Richard Ryan and will be created by the well-known sculptor John Doubleday. Fowey Town Council is keen to site the Rachel Sculpture and is confident that it will be an asset for the town. Initially the sculpture was going to be sited at the Lime Kiln garden but because of structural issues the site was found to be unsuitable. At our February meeting we considered the possibility of the sculpture being sited at the Old Grammar School Garden, but it was decided that in its present form the sculpture was too large for the site. However, I am pleased to say that Richard Ryan and John Doubleday are willing to make adjustments to the design of the sculpture which might make it possible for it to be sited in the top section of the garden.

22/20 Annual Financial Report

Cllr Berryman gave his Annual Report

As a Council we are always trying to improve the town and this, I'm afraid, costs so we have had to increase the precept for 2022/2023 by 5%, which in the light of other recent price rises seems modest. We are very fortunate that the assets we have managed to recover from Cornwall Council over the years are now earning the Council in the region of £77,000.00 per year, which is a direct saving on the precept. We have requested that Windmill is the next asset devolved to the town as, although it will not generate any income, we are well aware of the area's importance to the community.

The development of the pavilion at Squires Field is another project and will be a great asset for the community. The vision is that it will house publicly accessible IT facilities, a library, a small meeting space with a kitchen and an FTC office base. We are extremely grateful to the anonymous member of the community who donated a significant amount of money to enable this scheme to get off the ground. The work is being project managed by Cllr Andrew Dellow and his expertise in this field is a great benefit to FTC. I hope that by the time this report is published we will be going out to tender for the work.

When monies become available improvements are planned for the play area at Squires Field. Cllr Rhianna Cooke is actively working on this and has already secured a new MUGA for the younger children.

The very popular concept of restaurant seating on the Town Quay will be repeated again this summer, along with the closing of Trafalgar Square, Webb Street, Market Street and the quay itself. The income from this will help towards financing the ongoing improvements to the Town Hall, which have been exacerbated by the granting of a Civil Ceremonies Licence for the Hall. Many people would like to get married in Fowey but have a limited budget so we hope this initiative will be a great success.

Another significant piece of work at the moment is the creation of a Fowey Town Masterplan. FTC, led by Cllr Ruth Finlay, applied for Vitality Funding and we were very fortunate to secure £40,000, given that other successful applicants are much larger towns like Falmouth and Newquay. This money basically pays for consultants/town planners/urban designers/architects to create designs to regenerate the town centre, with a particular focus on Town Quay, Albert Quay, Caffa Mill and Whitehouse. The work went out to tender and the Town Team (FTC, Fowey CIC, Fowey Forum, Fowey Harbour

Commissioners, Cornwall Cllr Andy Virr) has identified the successful bidder, David Orr Consultancy, who will deliver the final designs in October 2022. Throughout the process the public will be encouraged to share their thoughts on all aspects of the Plan.

In conclusion, we have all been busy and it will not stop. Fowey is a wonderful place to be but very demanding on volunteer Councillors. I would like to thank all the members of the Finance Committee for their commitment during a year that turned out to be somewhat different from the one budgeted for.

22/21 Annual Report of the Town Hall & Quay Committee

Cllr Hughes gave his Annual Report

The highlight of the year has been our first Wedding. Samantha and Peter were married in the Town Hall in March with bridesmaids Viv and Emme and best man Jason Penprase. The Town Hall looked amazing, having been decorated by the bride and her sisters. Our fabulous Town Crier announced the wedding beforehand and performed a 'cry' in Trafalgar Square afterwards, then led everyone to a reception at Gallants.

We've talked about doing weddings for many years, so it's great to finally have this in place. Special thanks to Kathryn Oram of the Cornwall Registration Service who was very helpful with supporting the planning team through the process. Kathryn was very supportive of the Town Hall as a venue and thinks it will really add to the options for people looking for ceremonies in Cornwall. There are lots of barns and country houses available; however not many places in the heart of a town, especially one as lovely as Fowey.

James Dowrick has installed new lighting in the Town Hall and Restormel Decorators have painted throughout. We have had the Quay railings repainted and Zac Harris has redesigned and replanted the flowers on the Quay. James D is also repairing the festoon lighting. Unfortunately, we are concerned that the bunting may have caused extra damage to the lighting during high winds. The bunting will therefore be renewed in a different format this year.

We had a cake and tea fundraiser for Ukraine on the Town Hall in April. It was great to see so many people and the Town Hall busy again, especially being enjoyed whilst also raising money for such a critical cause. Just over £1,200 was raised for the Disasters Emergency Committee.

We would still like to obtain disabled access into the Town Hall and reconfigure the space above the museum, however, have not progressed this so far. Holding weddings and other ceremonies will bring in revenue, enabling the Town Hall Committee to be more confident in a few years' time of exactly how much we can invest to do further work. Use of the Town Hall had declined by 50% prior to the pandemic and we are hopeful to return to prior usage levels, hopefully beyond what it used to be. This year, the council is also managing the building project in the pavilion at Squires field. It is therefore sensible to complete this first and review expenditure thereafter.

Cllr Lynn Simms, our Mayor, organised a Climate Action Event at the Christmas Market. Claire Hoddinot from Fowey Harbour Commission, Margaret Gardener from Friends of Fowey Estuary, Lucy Daniel from Plastic Free Fowey and Tim Caulfield from Edible Fowey all presented information. Students from Fowey River Academy submitted Environmental Research Projects and Art works exploring ideas about positive changes which could

protect the environment.

With the Christmas market in 2022 in the Hall we will focus on stalls for high quality, locally produced artwork and artisan products, our aim being to complement the main market tents and provide stalls to small, local producers who realistically would not be able to rent a stall profitably in the main market. All in all, it has been a great year for the Town Hall, and we look forward to seeing many more exciting events.

22/22 Annual Report of the Cornwall Councillor

Cllr Virr gave his Annual Report

Network Highway Schemes Following concerns raised regarding parking on Hanson Drive, a proposal has been sent to Highways for an all-year round parking restriction. The Highways scheme is open for further suggestions from residents and town councillors.

Traffic Reduction Through Town The designation of Access Only down Lostwithiel Street has made some impact in reducing traffic through town. This is a welcome improvement for pedestrians in town.

Fowey Regeneration I am very much looking forward to the outcome of the Town Regeneration design work. The funding we won for this project has allowed this to happen and hopes to improve some of the town areas for pedestrians, outdoor dining and reducing the impact of traffic.

Covid 19 The pandemic has once again significantly impacted on the life of Fowey. School has been disrupted, businesses have been stretched and tragically lives have been lost. Thankfully rates are now dropping, and life is returning back to normal.

Devolution The Waterside assets are shortly to be devolved to the Harbour Master. I have every confidence in the Harbour team to vastly improve areas such as Caffa Mill and look forward to seeing the Whitehouse Pool being repaired and brought back into use.

Events It was good to see the return of Fowey Regatta and the Christmas Market. Thanks to all the volunteers and local businesses that support and make a success of these events.

Town Council Many thanks for all the hard work of the Town Councillors in supporting our town. Much appreciated.

22/22 Annual Reports from FTC Representatives on Other Bodies

None

22/23 Annual Police Report

PCSO Ward gave an update on the changes to the Neighbourhood Policing Team and supplied the Annual Crime statistics (attached at appendix 1)

22/24 Presentation David Orr Consultancy

David Orr gave a comprehensive presentation on the structure behind the consultation on the Fowey Town Masterplan and the scope of his brief from the Fowey Town Team. Whilst the exercise was a way of obtaining the views of the public at this stage, the town would be in a strong position to apply for funding for some or all of the proposals in the future as and when opportunities arise. He confirmed that the proposals in the Plan would be

based on public responses during the consultation and urged everybody to participate. The online portal was still available for comments, details of the link were available on the Town Hall/Quay notice boards, the FTC website, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Alternatively comments could be sent to him or the Town Clerk for onward transmission. There would be a Design Workshop on 23rd June and everybody was invited to participate, venue to be confirmed.

22/25 Public Questions/Participation

Members of the public raised, *inter alia*, the following points

- The meeting this evening had not been adequately advertised
- The Town Team risked alienating people at the top of the hill if all the attention was based in the town itself
- The Town Team must take the public with them
- Not everybody has access to the internet
- Word of mouth is a tried and tested way of sharing information in Fowey

Responses to these points were

- The meeting had been advertised on the FTC website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Cllr Finlay would produce some posters advertising the Workshop and hopefully this would help
- David Orr/The Town Team were not trying to exclude any residents; the funding is for Town Centre Public Realm improvements
- This is a one-off opportunity for the town. David Orr/The Town Team are anxious that everybody has a voice.
- Lack of internet access is clearly an issue. The Town Team will do all it can to advertise in other ways e.g. Fowey News, posters
- David Orr/The Town Team would urge everybody to share information by word of mouth.

Meeting Closed