

Minutes of the Fowey Town Council Annual Parish Meeting held in the Town Hall on Wednesday 29th April 2015

14/249 Present

The Mayor

Cllr J Berryman

The Deputy Mayor

Cllr Mrs R Finlay

Councillors

Cllr Mrs K Alexander

Cllr Mrs A Boosey

Cllr T Delves

Cllr Mrs C Eardley

Cllr Mrs S Gudmunsen

Cllr D Hughes

Cllr Mrs L McCartney

Cllr D Willmore

14/250 In attendance

The Town Clerk, Mrs Sally Vincent

PCSO Lloyd Paynter (part)

Tasha Davis (Community Link Officer)

29 members of the public

14/251 Apologies

Rosemary Stone (Community Support Officer)

14/252 Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 21st May 2014

It was proposed by Cllr Gudmunsen, seconded Cllr Eardley and RESOLVED that the minutes be confirmed and signed by the Chairman

14/253 Matters Arising not on the Agenda

None

14/254 Annual Report of the Town Council – Cllr John Berryman

I would like to open this report by stating that it has been a pleasure and privilege to lead this Council for the last 12 months, I admit however at times it has been hard work but still rewarding when you see the Council's plans coming to a satisfactory conclusion and at times very frustrating as it seems to take so long to get completion. My thanks go to all the committee chairs for their hard work during the year and to all the Cllrs. Special thanks to the few members of the public who have attended some of our full council meetings and sat through to the bitter end. We welcomed Lesley McCartney as a new co-opted Cllr in July and we hope you are enjoying your 1st year, Lesley.

Our special thanks to Cllr Hughes for his representation of Fowey at Unitary level. Also Special thanks also to our Clerk, Sally for the many hours she devotes to the work and to the smooth running of the Council.

Two transfers from CC to FTC have dominated this year, and previous years, they are Squires Field and the public Toilets both have yet to be completed, hence my comment on the frustration as to the time taken to transfer. Anyone would anticipate with all the property transfers undertaken by CC that the process would by now be

second nature and very straight forward, but I guess every application must be considered individually.

As I stated last year, Squires Field poses a major problem as a considerable annual cost will be incurred, maintenance of the field, pavilion and the newly equipped play area, also the surface of the parking area, insurance and rates, total annual cost in the region of £8-10,000 would not seem excessive. The asset at the moment has no earning capability.

Finally I come to the problem of the continued provision of the public conveniences in Fowey. I believe it was over 2 years ago we were offered and in principle accepted the freehold of 3 toilet blocks, Readymoney, Main and Caffa car parks. Caffa Mill has been completely refurbished but still closed, Readymoney has had last years' storm damage repaired and is open, Main Car Park is open and awaiting refurbishment, when that will happen is anyone's guess as we have no capital budget to cover the cost. As you are all fully aware the toilets on Town Quay are at the moment undergoing refitting and hopefully be re-opened in early May. On completion of the transfer we will be opening Caffa Mill toilets.

Our soon to be adopted ship HMS Montrose is undergoing a complete refit at Devonport at present. I will obtain the latest news on Thursday as the Mayoress and I are guests of the ships officers and will be given a short tour of the dockyard and HMS Argyll.

14/255 Annual Report of the Planning Committee – Cllr Mrs Anne Boosey

We have had a fewer number of planning applications this year, but some very interesting ones which have caused us to ponder deeply and think about reasons for approval or refusal, and having made our decision, with reasons, I think in most cases Cornwall Planning department have largely agreed with us; although at times we are still baffled, confused and, let's face it, cross with them!

I consider myself fortunate in having such a dedicated committee, most of them can understand the plans on line, which totally baffle me, in that they are small and impersonal, and I thank them for explaining some of the finer points that I miss. The comments are always pertinent and helpful and there are some lively discussions. I am sure that you are aware that the public are more than welcome at our meetings, and then you could stay seated and listen to the full Council meetings.

The new phases of Hill Hay are going up very fast now, I hope that time will prove me wrong about sewage schemes etc., but I am still not happy about it all.

There is really not much more to say, planning is planning, but the helpfulness of my committee has certainly made my role easier and I thank them.

14/256 Annual Report of the Environment Committee – Cllr Mrs Ruth Finlay

It has been another successful year with the work of the Environment Committee and I would like to thank my fellow members for their commitment and hard work over the year.

There are four different aspects to this committee

1. The Local Maintenance Partnership which is a partnership between the Fowey Town Council and funding from Cornwall Council, specifically for public footpaths.

Fourteen Gold Public Rights of Way in the Parish have a total grant of £626 to be cut once in the year. We have to wait until nesting birds have fledged before we can allow our contractor to cut. This usually generates a number of cross phone calls and emails and this is the reason why there is a wait.

Grass cutting around the Town is part paid through an Agency Agreement, CC pay for four cuts per year and Fowey Town Council pay for five cuts. So the Town grassed areas, designated to be cut, are cut nine times per year at a total cost of £2,600.17.

Weed killing, CC do not pay for any weed killing around the Town, again Fowey Town Council weed spray twice a year at a cost of £1,410.00

The committee would like to thank our contractor Lanhydrock Garden Services who has worked hard for the Town over the past year.

2. Old Grammar School Garden. This popular and well-loved garden had been left for a number of years with no change to the planting or any improvement to the layout. Last year Fowey Town Council made the decision to improve this garden. May 2014 saw phase 1 of the redesign of the lower garden using local garden designer Ali Siddall. This first phase saw change to the pathways, to create a more meandering walk through the new beds planted with decorative grasses and seaside planting. Indeed the new garden was the focus of an article in the magazine Cornwall Today. Phase 2 of the redesign will begin in May, which will see some of the new seating and beds created.

3. Fowey In Bloom . One of the aims of the Environment Committee is to keep regular contact with the Fowey in Bloom group to support their activities and to monitor Fowey TC's grant of £500 to them.

This group took part in Cornwall in Bloom 2014 with 72 entries of which the Town Centre displays were judged "excellent". This very small group of volunteers help create a colourful and cared for town from spring through to the autumn which our visitors and locals appreciate. This small group need more volunteers and help from businesses with things like watering during the summer and on behalf of the Environment Committee we thank them for the work they do.

4. Allotments the One Acre field was handed over in December 2013 and work did not begin, due to the poor weather, not until March 2014. Between March and April last year there were a number of working parties to clear the field of brambles, gorse, trees and eventually to create the plots. The first season was very good considering how late everyone was in starting to dig their plots.

Sadly we lost our chairman of the Readymoney Association, George Cussons earlier this year. He was a very "hands on" chair, encouraging the new allotmenters and turned up to all the working parties. He will be sadly missed.

Orchard we decided to plant a small orchard of 15 Cornish Apples on the scrub ground to the side of the new allotments and with a grant from Councillor Hughes's local contingency fund, work began in early January this year. Once again a group of a hardy allotmenters braved the January weather to dig and then plant the apple saplings; I am pleased to say they have all taken.

14/257 Annual Financial Report – Cllr David Willmore

Fowey Town council finances are in a strong position; the precept was raised to allow us to cover the cost of taking over Squires Field, the refurbishment of the Toilets and associated legal fees that go with all of that, we have had to take legal advice on a few occasions which has had to be paid for.

We hope that the Town Quay toilets will be completed by 8th May and the Caffa Mill toilets will have had all legal work done for them to be handed over to the Town Council, a lot of time has been spent going over costing and quotes to make sure we get value for your money and the job comes in on budget.

£10,000 has been put in to the 'sinking fund' to be used in any unforeseen

circumstances to maintain the Town Quay and the Town Hall. Each year we look at all the leases, permits and licenses etc. and make adjustments where needed.

The Town Council now runs an accounting programme called Scribe which is available to all of the committees to see at their meetings via our laptop, and I thank our Town Clerk and Cllr Tony Delves for all their hard work in inputting all the figures and making it work.

All of the committees have worked very hard to keep to their budgets, which they have done; As usual the annual accounts are available for the public to see.

I would like to thank all the members for their hard work over the last year.

14/258 Report of the Town Hall Committee – Cllr Carol Eardley

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors, Sherlee Gudmunsen, Lesley McCartney and David Willmore, for their help and support and also our excellent Caretaker, Caroline Lewis, who achieves small miracles at times! Improvements and repairs continue one of which, the repair to the area around the window on the external, eastern elevation was recently completed to a high standard leaving it looking considerably better than before. The kitchen has a new microwave, cups & saucers, cutlery and glasses and we have further plans to renew other furnishings but this needs to be done gradually taking into account time and costs.

We have had another successful year of bookings which help to balance the books nicely, to the relief of the Finance Committee. These have come from Craft Fairs, rehearsals and performances by the Troy Players, Fowey Festival of Words and Music and private parties including a recent wedding. Believe it or not, the Hall can be made to look very attractive with some strategically placed flowers, ribbons and pretty lights. Bookings of the Town Hall can now be viewed and made through the recently re-launched Fowey Town Council website.

The Town Hall Committee is very aware of its responsibility of the upkeep of this very special, historic building and will endeavour to continue with this over the next twelve months.

14/259 Police Report – PCSO Lloyd Paynter.

It seems amazing how quickly the past year has flown by and I find myself preparing my second “Annual Police Report” for the Council AGM.

There have been yet more changes to our Policing Team during the past twelve months. I will remain as the PCSO covering Fowey, Golant and Polkerris. PC Andy Barnicoat is still the Neighbourhood Beat Manager for the area but he has also taken on responsibility for St Blazey and Tywardreath as well as continuing to covering Lostwithiel. Sergeant Innes Dowlen is still the Neighbourhood Team Leader for our area but also has to cover St Austell, he works from the St Austell Station. In charge of the sector at this time is Inspector Ed Gard. Inspector Gard knows the area very well having previously been the Sergeant in charge at St Blazey.

Recorded Crime analysis

For the purpose of these statistics I have used figures from 1st May to 30th April for each year. The past twelve months is not entirely accurate as, owing to the date of the AGM I have used a cut off date of the 26th April, allowing me suitable time to prepare this report.

	2014/2015	2013/2014	2012/2013
Crimes Recorded	85	58	78

Detections	25	8	17
% of Detections	29	14	22

The crime classifications are as follows;

1	Communications Act 2003	Restorative
Justice/Detected		
3	Destroy Damage Property	All undetected
1	Non-accounting Fraud	On going
13	Assault/ABH	1 Restorative Justice/Detected, 3 Detections, 1 ongoing.
12	Criminal Damage	2 Detections
1	Possess and Offensive Weapon	1 Detection
1	Distribute/display Visible Representation	1 Detection
5	Thefts by finding	All Undetected
5	Theft from Motor Vehicle	1 Detection, 1 On-going
2	Theft from a Vehicle other than m/v	1 Undetected
1	Racially/Religiously Agg Harassment	1 Undetected
5	Common Assault	1 Restorative Justice, 2
No further action taken		.
2	Possess a Class B Drug	2 Detections
2	Theft of Pedal Cycles	1 Undetected, 1 On-going
11	Theft (Other)	1 Detection, 2 On-going
2	Theft of Fuel	Both Undetected
2	Dog not under proper control	1 Restorative Justice, 1 On-going
1	Burglary Non Dwelling	1 Detection reclassified as Theft
1	Assault a Designated Person	Undetected
1	Burglary Dwelling/Intent to Steal	Undetected
2	Attempt Burglary/Dwelling	Both Undetected
1	Sexual Assault Female	Historic/For awareness
only		
1	Driver of a Vehicle involved Accident	1 Restorative Justice
3	Theft from a Shop	3 Restorative Justice
1	Theft in Dwelling	One Undetected
1	Send Public Communication	No further Action
1	Harassment without Violence	1 Undetected
1	Drunk and Disorderly	Detected/Court Pending
1	Dogs Dangerously Out of Control	On-Going but likely to be
no crimed.		
1	Drive/Attempt to Drive above Limit	Charged to court

A further 5 crimes originally recorded were deducted from the reported figure as they were later no-crimed.

Unlike previous years, Domestic Crime has now been included in this year's figures. Previously this type of crime was shown as "Non Crime Domestic" and not shown in our reports. This would account for the Assault/ABH figure increasing. So, in conclusion, despite recorded crime increasing, the Parish has seen just over one

and a half crimes per week. When you consider the size of the parish and the amount of people who visit the area in the summer months, Fowey remains a very low crime area.

Other Matters

I am still looking in to setting up a Parish Police Surgery with a view to holding it on a monthly basis in the town. I have been running a similar venture in Golant for several months and it has proved very successful. I am aware that having a meeting point offering parking for visitors is vital, therefore the Library is looking the favourite. I hope to be able to sort out something more concrete really soon, time permitting. And finally, I would like to say a big thankyou to the good people of the Fowey Boatwatch for the sterling work they do in helping to reduce Marine Crime. Both the Fowey and Golant volunteers are very pro-active and we now have an excellent network of communication allowing incidents to be circulated efficiently. I look forward to working with you in the forthcoming season.

Last year's Regatta Week seemed to run really well with very few issues. I am aware that Inspector Gard is currently working on planning the event from a Police perspective for this year. Let us hope for another highly successful week.

14/250 Report of the Cornwall Councillor – Cllr David Hughes

Most people are aware that, over the six years since the formation of Cornwall Council, Central Government finance to the Council, initially over half the £ 1 billion per annum required to provide services, such as education, children, adult social care and roads, has been reduced by 50%.

The conversion from District and County Councils to a Unitary Authority has achieved over £190 million of savings by cutting out duplication and stream-lining the system. Further savings have been achieved by moving staff out of expensive leased properties and Council properties with very high maintenance costs into fewer, Council-owned properties. This was the rationale for building the new offices in Bodmin, which are expected to recover their cost, in savings, within 5 years, with further on-going savings.

Over the past two years, further large savings have been made both by reducing the number of costly "interim" and "agency" staff employed and by a major, top-down restructuring exercise. The new Chief Executive is on a significantly lower salary than his predecessor: the number of Directors has been halved, from 6 to 3: comparable changes have been made down through the organisation.

Whilst the savings achieved have been significant, unfortunately this has resulted in hundreds of redundancies. Since the workload has not diminished, it has also meant that council officers have to shoulder even bigger workloads. It is to the enormous credit of these officers that, under such pressures, they have continued to provide a high level of service in a professional manner.

However, whatever Westminster politicians may say, there is a limit to the savings which can be achieved without loss of front-line services. We have now reached a situation in which Cornwall Council has to consider which non-statutory services to cut, reduce or devolve to Town and Parish Councils in order to produce a "balanced budget", which it is obliged by law to do. Cornwall has opted to prepare a 4-year budget, based on reasonable expectations of revenue and expenditure, in order to provide the best possible continuity of services, at the lowest cost, over this time-scale. Whilst, this is unpalatable both to the public and Councillors, we consider it to be the most responsible approach, as we see no realistic prospect of an improvement

in the situation in this period.

An inevitable consequence of this policy has been the “devolution” of responsibility for such things as public toilets, allotments and weeding to towns and parishes, which has resulted in increased costs to them, which they have had to cover through increased parish council tax. Personally, I consider this to be a “stealth tax” by local government as they take the credit for reducing their Departmental expenditure by passing the cost, and blame, down the line. Towns and parishes have little opportunity to resist as the public; quite reasonably, have come to consider such services “essential” even if the law does not define them as such.

I am confident that the present Cornwall Council, its Cabinet and officers are doing their utmost to salvage the best from the wreckage of our Local Government, in spite of all the efforts of doctrinaire elements in Central Government. Fowey Town Council, its Clerk and officers and I accepted the realities of the situation early on and have worked hard to obtain the best possible outcomes for Fowey, especially the transfer of allotments, Squire’s Field and the toilets to FTC in order to preserve them for the community. I would add particular praise for the Clerk, whose efforts to resolve the many and complex problems which have arisen have been well beyond the call of duty. The allotments are now ours and the transfer of the other assets is “nearly there”. However, as a result of the cuts and restructuring in County Hall, the bureaucratic system is moving unbearably slowly, to the frustration of all.

On a local note, I would like to propose a special vote of thanks to Martin Eddy, until last month our Area Network Manager, who has taken early retirement. In all his duties he always gave much more than was required, but in the case of Fowey, his contribution to ensuring the smooth transfer of the Du Maurier Festival from being highly dependent on local authority subsidies to its successful independent existence was immense. Apart from putting in many more hours than he was paid for, his “behind the scenes” work in easing the project through the “system” probably went un-noticed by all but a dedicated few.

I am sorry if this report seems a little negative, but I think that it is important that the people of Fowey realise the harsh realities of the situation within which we operate. I am proud to represent Fowey on Cornwall Council and promise that I will always seek the best outcomes for our community in these testing times.

The Mayor invited specific questions on any reports and Tony Ryde queried the position with regard to the integration of Social Care and the NHS in Cornwall and also the Social Care budget. Cllr Hughes assured the room that the Social Care budget was ring fenced and accounted for over half of Cornwall Council’s expenditure. However, although he considered that the whole situation needed a new perspective he apologized that he was not qualified to give a specific response to the question as it was outside his area of expertise.

The Mayor then invited Tasha Davis to introduce herself and she explained that he post replaced that of Martin Eddy, who had taken early retirement but that she was termed a Community Link Officer as opposed to his title as Community Network Manager. Tasha stated that she was very much looking forward to working with the Town Council and the residents of Fowey.

14/251 Public Participation and Presentation by Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Cllr Finlay gave the following resume of the progress of the NP to date
November 2014 Fowey Town Council decided to withdraw from the Castledore Neighbourhood Plan and seek re-designation in December 2014.

The purpose of our Neighbourhood Plan is to:

- To create local planning policies for Fowey Parish which development proposals need to adhere to;
- To protect against inappropriate and speculative development and to provide greater control over development;
- To bring forward action on facilities and improvements, which are needed by the town and parish of Fowey.

As well as three Fowey Town Councillors, we quickly got a small group of local residents and a local landowner involved in our steering group and set about writing our terms of reference.

We next applied for a grant from “Locality” and received £2,570.00 to be spent by the end of the financial year. With this funding in place, we began our programme of “community engagement.” It is an essential part of the Neighbourhood Plan process that the local community and all key stakeholders are involved, this is vital for its success and ultimate support through the referendum.

January 2015 We published our first newsletter which explained what a Neighbourhood Plan was and also asking for volunteers.

February 2015, The steering group next planned our launch exhibition for February 7th in Fowey Town Hall. This exhibition had a remarkable set of old photos which had been transferred to slides showing old Fowey from the turn of the 19th Century with a set of slides taken at similar spots to show the new Fowey in the 21st Century. We asked people for their views and opinions in an initial questionnaire and also asked people to put their “first impressions” onto “post it” notes. There was an excellent turn out on a cold afternoon.

The “initial questionnaire” was included in the Fowey News and was distributed to the parish. The results of the questionnaire was summarised and placed onto our new Fowey Neighbourhood website. Feb 25 we met up with residents of Polkerris to talk about their involvement in the Fowey parish Neighbourhood Plan.

During March and April 2015, we have been in touch with some of our key stakeholders, the Chamber of Commerce and the Fowey Harbour Authority, so they can understand the N Plan process and discuss how they can be involved.

Cllr Hughes stated that he could not overemphasise the importance of Fowey having a NP; it would carry serious planning weight at a national level and was parishioners one chance to have a say in the shaping the future of their community

The Mayor then invited questions from the floor.

Heather Hunt, the President of the Fowey WI, noted the unfortunate closure of the Fowey Bowling Club and said that she considered it to be an ideal venue for a Community Club. Several organisations had already expressed an interest, including her own and had also offered practical help for maintenance and suchlike. Heather queried if FTC would consider allowing the Club to be used for such a scheme. The Mayor assured her that the town council would consider any suggestions for the future use of the Club as soon as ownership had been transferred to FTC. The Clerk

suggested that Heather may like to get together with the other interested parties and put together a business plan for the Council to consider.

Jill Greenway queried if FTC had any knowledge about the closure of the Sports Hub at the school, which was where she usually played badminton. She explained that she had spoken to the headteacher, Mr Perry, and he had assured her that he wanted the Hub to reopen to members of the public but the Academy Trust would have the final say, due to possible safeguarding issues. Lucy Black confirmed that the Academy Trust had issued a statement earlier in the day that a decision would be made by the Trust Board in May.

Marcus Lewis queried if there was any up to date information about the reopening of the Caffa Mill toilets. The Mayor advised that FTC was still waiting for CC to complete the transfer process and until then any decisions about the facility was in the hands of that authority. Marcus responded that it was disgraceful and a ridiculous situation and that FTC should be doing more to sort something out. The Clerk assured him that FTC was doing everything in its power, with emails and phone calls being exchanged on a daily basis. She was hopeful, however, that matters would be brought to a conclusion in the near future.

Luke Pascoe clarified that the Youth Football Club was interested in the Squires Field Pavilion and not the Bowling Club. He confirmed that the Club would be happy to look after and maintain the building and that grant funding was available from the FA. David Willis queried the situation with regard to the damage to St Catherines Parade caused by tractors crossing the path. Cllr Hughes confirmed that enforcement proceedings had begun but that it was a bureaucratic process and nothing would happen overnight. Any photographic evidence with times/dates would be appreciated by the officers dealing with the matter. The Mayor clarified that existing access to the fields could not be stopped but that the responsibility to repair any damage to the footpath lay with the farmer concerned. He had spoken to the landowner and he was hopeful that concrete would be laid across the path between the gates to solve the problem.

Deborah Willis asked if a charge would be levied to use the towns toilets and if not, why not. The Mayor responded that there would be a 20p charge on the refurbished facilities. FTC had yet to make firm decisions on the future of the main car park and Readymoney facilities.

Tony Ryde asked if the provision of affordable housing was going to plan at Hillhay, given the issues with the original development. Cllr Boosey reported that an enforcement investigation was currently underway as it appeared that 3 bedroom units had been turned into 4 bedroom units without permission. Tony asked how many affordables had been allocated and were occupied. While he did not know the exact number, Cllr Hughes advised that the planning permission dictated that a certain number of affordables would have to be sold to trigger the start of the next phase of the development. Tony asked FTC to keep its eye on the ball as past experience had shown that leaving matters in the hands of Wainhomes was not a comfortable place to be.

As were no further questions the Mayor thanked everybody for attending and invited all present to join the NP Steering Group for a glass of wine.

Meeting Closed