



SALTASH TOWN COUNCIL



Annual Report 2015/16

June 2016

REPORT FROM THE MAYOR SALTASH 2015/16 - COUNCILLOR BILL PHILLIPS

Well the usual busy year for the Town Council this year with a selection of Civic Events, starting with the Mayor Choosing at which I was sworn in as the Mayor, followed by my Civic service, the Regatta, Remembrance and our great Christmas event. The final event was the Mayfair which was in the town centre where it started many years ago.

One downside to the year was the loss of Cllr Martin Gee, who was a mainstay of the council and admired by all who met him. This meant the co-option of Cllr Julie Rance who is settling in well to council work.

Many changes are taking place in the town due to the devolvement of services from Cornwall Council, with now three sets of public toilets being under our control and a possible fourth set in the pipeline and discussions on play parks under way.

Discussions are also well underway for our takeover of the water front, which meant this year we decided to increase our precept to cover this and other responsibilities such as the takeover of all the green space in Pillmere.

Our staff are now back to full strength, working hard to keep up with all the changes taking place, including the employment of a Cemetery Warden now that our Churchtown Cemetery is open.

Town centre shops continue to rotate as one would expect from an ever changing market place with a few empty shops. One disappointment was the loss of two banks which again is the start of things to come I'm afraid as we change our habits.

We also as a council, after some trials and tribulations, managed to go to paperless meetings mainly planning being the driver due to Cornwall pushing that way, we have our big screen and I believe it will work.

Cllr Bill Phillips Mayor of Saltash 2015/16.

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. Festival funds were dispensed of over £3000 – to Groundwork (Saltmill), Royal British Legion (Remembrance), Speech & Drama Festival and Mayfair.
2. Community Chest funds amounting to over £4700 were agreed – to Junkyard, Saltash Youth Football Club, Saltash Youth Rugby Club, Dementia Voice, Heritage (Blue Plaque scheme) and Volunteer Service. In addition a separate grant of £5000 was approved to support the Citizens Advice Bureau.
3. P & R approved recommendations from the DOG (Devolution Options Group) Working Party, notably including recommendations from the Waterside Coastal Community Team. The intention for 2016/17 is for Saltash Town Council to take over from Cornwall Council a number of assets including the Pontoon, the Dinghy Park etc and the Jubilee Car Park. It is also intended to assume management and maintenance responsibilities, by means of the appointment of a "Waterside Steward".

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Policy and Resources Committee report continued

4. Councillor Training was arranged.
5. The thresholds for committee expenditure were re-arranged – to £5000 per committee or £2000 per Chair/Deputy.
6. Reports were received from P & R Working Groups – Neighbourhood Plan, Road Safety, Anti Social Behaviour and Property Working Groups. A Sustainable Transport working party was set up.
7. Policy & Resources committee adjusted and approved budgets for this and other Council Committees, and set a Precept for 2016/17 of £594,108, a substantial increase of 39%.
8. Cllr Bill Phillips was elected Chairman for 2016/17.

Cllr Joe Ellison, Committee Chairman 2015/16

SERVICES COMMITTEE

The responsibilities of the Services Committee have grown considerably and will probably continue to grow for the foreseeable future particularly as more tasks are taken up by Saltash Town Council that used to be a Cornwall Council function. The main target of the committee continues to be to provide as effective a service as possible at an affordable cost. Some of the committee's responsibilities are described below.

As well as the transfer of land and facilities from Cornwall Council, which is well underway, Saltash Town Council is taking over responsibility for maintenance of much of the public land in Pillmere.

On behalf of the Town Council the Services Committee, in co-operation with others, has continued initiatives to increase the footfall in the town, particularly in Fore Street, by supporting Town Centre events and improving the town's visual amenities.

The return of the May Fair to Fore Street should continue this process.

A smartphone based visitor's guide to Saltash has been produced and will continue to be supported.

Toilets

A decision has been made to take over and gradually improve as many of the town's public toilets as feasible. The Alexandra Square toilets will also be brought back into service. Although these changes will add significant costs to the budget public toilets are seen as an essential community facility for both residents and visitors. At the time of writing this report the Services Committee has taken responsibility for the toilets at Longstone Park, Belle Vue and the Waterside.

Weed Spraying

After much deliberation weed spraying (which used to be done on behalf of Cornwall Council) has been restarted within Saltash. A single spray was done this year. Future spraying will be continued and evaluated for its effectiveness.

Memorial Garden

The gardens at Alexandra Square have been transformed into a memorial garden in memory of all who have lost their lives in conflict. It has given us a place of peace and memory.

Allotments

The allotments throughout Saltash are going from strength to strength with the new allotments in Grenfell Avenue now available.

Gritting

As stated in previous reports the committee produced a Cold Weather Plan including the provision of extra grit bins in Saltash and guidance on the Town Council Website. Once again last winter was not as cold as two years ago so actual cost has been minimal when compared with funding predictions.

Cllr David Yates, Committee Chairman 2015/16

BURIAL BOARD & BURIAL AUTHORITY

Since the opening of Churchtown Cemetery the cemetery committee has now been split in two.

1. St Stephen's cemetery is now controlled by "The Burial Board".
Co-Chairs Councillor Bob Austin & Mr Barry Jones
2. Churchtown Cemetery is now being controlled by "The Burial Authority".
Chairman Cllr Bob Austin - Vice Chair Cllr Jean Dent.

St Stephens Cemetery

1. There is now no more room for new graves, the cemetery is still open for second burials, children's graves and burial of cremated remains and is likely to be for many years.
2. There has been no increase in burial fees for 2016/17 in fact there has been no increase in fees for four years.
3. There have been several cherry trees that have died and had to be taken down. These will be replaced wherever necessary.
4. We are still having problems in repairing the Harrison tomb and still continuing negotiations with Cornwall Council (who has this responsibility).
5. Grass cutting is becoming more of a problem as CC reduce the cutting regime from 3 to 2 cuts per year. In the short term more communication must take place between the Church Wardens and CC to communicate particular dates to cover church events. In the long term we are asking the STC devolution group to investigate the possibilities of the TC to take over the cutting of this grass and including it with the payback team regime.
6. It has been agreed by the Burial Board that work will commence as soon as possible on Kellywithe wall after final agreement with Full Council. The budget is in place.
7. Now the cemetery is closed to new graves the soil pile in the SE corner of the cemetery is to be removed and the full Devon hedge returned back to the way it was.
8. We are now very much dependant on the Community Payback scheme. It has been recognised that both cemeteries are far too big for one warden to maintain the current required level, so therefore it is essential that work continues to keep the cemetery maintained.

Churchtown Cemetery

1. Since the opening of the Cemetery (Jan 16) we have had 10 burials.
2. The authority has agreed a new plan to be drawn up by Chris Wells to include all graves and allotments.
3. The main gates have now been re varnished by the warden.
4. The damaged notice board has been reordered under cover of the TC insurance.

Cllr Bob Austin, Burial Board Co-Chairman 2015/16

STAFFING COMMITTEE

The Staffing Committee continues the work of ensuring that we are supporting our staff correctly and meeting all legal requirements. We meet bi-monthly to focus on approving/reviewing staffing policies, responding to issues raised by staff and councillors. We continue to review staff training and health and safety issues.

Cllr Mrs Jean Dent, Committee Chairman 2015/16

Where your money goes

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Burial Board	29285	33535	-
Burial Board – St Stephens	-	-	16631
Burial Authority - Churchtown	-	-	28647
Policy & Resources (Office)	9720	16125	15176
Policy & Resources (General)	60137	74308	109420
Policy & Resources (Property)	32756	35901	41625
Services	77570	54340	118305
Staffing	153271	178696	177507
Planned budget	321084	348756	459356
Precept	281355	295328	430510

Membership of Saltash Town Council 2015/16

North

BRADY John
 *ELLISON Joe
 PHILLIPS Bill
 RUSSELL Lee

South

COOT Matt
 *FRANK Hilary
 HOOPER Sue
 KILLEYA Adam

East

BICKFORD Richard
 GEE Martin (Dec'd) To 6th September 2015
 *HOLLEY Derek
 RANCE Julie Co-opted 30th November 2015

West

*AUSTIN Bob
 CHALLEN Gloria
 DENT Jean
 YATES David

SHEPHERD James

* Indicates Cornwall Councillor

Contact details for all Councillors available from the Guildhall, Town Council noticeboards & website

Administration

The Town Clerk is Ray Lane.

The Council Office is situated at the Guildhall, 12 Lower Fore Street, Saltash PL12 6JX
 Opening hours are 9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday and at other times by appointment.

Telephone: 01752 844846 Email: enquiries@saltash.gov.uk Website: www.saltash.gov.uk

Meetings of the Council

The Town Council meet on the first Thursday of each month at 7.00pm at the Guildhall. There is a fifteen minute period at the start of each meeting during which members of the public may ask questions of the Council. By giving notification at the start of the meeting, the public may also speak about items on the agenda at the appropriate time at the invitation of the Chairman. In addition, meetings of the Council are held on the third Tuesday of the month to discuss planning applications.

Saltash Town Council has adopted the Code of Conduct in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.