

Hatherleigh Town Council Chair Report May 2019

Welcome everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting 2019. I present this report having completed a third year as chair of this Council and Mayor of Hatherleigh. And once again I hope everyone feels my position in these roles has been satisfactory.

One major difference on a personal level is taking fulltime employment with West Devon Borough Council. My role is a Mobile Locality Officer working in the south of the borough. Although this has obviously cut my volunteer time, I feel having different positions in different councils has helped develop a better understanding of how council processes work.

For the majority of the year the Council has had a full complement of 10 council members though in the past couple of months we lost two, Cllrs. Madders and Bailey changed their residential status. Local elections on May 2nd showed Cllrs. Trenaman and Kimber declined to stand for re-election. We are though notified of a newly elected member Kay Walters who we hope to welcome tonight bringing the Town Council membership to 7, with 3 vacancies.

A word on Cllr. Trenaman who is not joining us again. Ian has been a very active and respected member of this council for approximately 20 years. I'm sure I speak for everyone here it is with regret that we are losing him. His contributions in discussion were very considered and he holds local knowledge that no doubt we'll have to get in touch to tap into from time to time.

This report is a brief review of the past years tasks, issues and achievements undertaken by this Town Council team. Some bullet points:

Air Ambulance night landing site -

What an important addition this is for our town. The haste of which was made possible by the actions of Cllr. Back for his attentive work liaising between this Council, the Devon Air Ambulance Trust and Hatherleigh Town Football Club. And particularly Mrs Caroline Munn who took on the fundraising campaign organising events, and seeking donations from individuals and businesses. A thank you also to Andrew Lane for his free planning services.

Planning -

The end of the year brought decisions on two major planning applications. The first being notice of refusal of 80 homes on Runnon Moor Lane. And last month the outcome for the controversial development of the market, with decision by West Devon Borough Council planning committee giving unanimous approval.

This Town Council by majority support felt it could now support the application in light of the amendments made to the initial planning proposal. And although we are embracing the changes that are going to happen to the market it is tinged with sadness at the loss of this invaluable space that the town has come to expect over many decades. We therefore thank and appreciate the good will of the owner, Greg Vick, for the benefits this free space has brought to the community.

The Tuesday pannier market and fur and feather auction itself is continuing to run successfully every week, now under a new temporary market manager. And we hope and expect that the developer Kingswood homes will continue to liaise with us to work through any issues and ensure that the Tuesday market continues to operate through the build.

Streets -

Devon County Council have continued to honour their commitment to install yellow lines as detailed in our traffic/parking document without the need for a full traffic order, saving money for the Town Council. We have so far received little complaint.

Project free Car park -

An issue still ongoing. We reached the stage in autumn where it was felt too costly to take on the purchase of the area, and were presented with an annual leasing figure of over £9,000. Therefore discussions have paused for reflection on this, while awaiting the decision on the markets future, and to review any impacts from installation of yellow lines.

Toilets -

Due to financial pressures West Devon Borough Council undertook a major review of the boroughs toilet facilities with a view to close or sell the buildings. This Council felt public toilets are essential for any town and as such in order to keep Hatherleigh's toilets open we decided to take on the running costs in incremental stages over a period of 4 years, after which point we will take full financial responsibility.

A few other actions to note

We've had a new noticeboard erected after the wooden one blew down in winds.

Additions of a new bench on the Ruby Trail. And Litter and dog bin additions.

Councillors once again took part in the primary school litter pick.

The town has seen changes to its Doctors Surgery with Ruby Medical Practice taking a lease in the old bank building – officially opened by myself as Mayor. And members of the Town council attended a ceremony to welcome the new vicar, Leigh Winsbury, to Hatherleigh.

Once again thanks and gratitude to Mr Farley our volunteer Road and Snow Warden for his monitoring and action if necessary.

Thanks to Mr Cole, Mrs Rewse, Mr Edwards, and Mr Moorcroft for their work keeping Hatherleigh clean and tidy.

This is also an opportunity to thank the many groups in Hatherleigh volunteering their time to keep Hatherleigh such a vibrant and busy place to live.

Gratitude and thanks once again to all councillors for their commitment to the council, to Rosemary our exemplary clerk for advice and support.

And in particular thank you to our WDDB representative Cllr. Patrick Kimber for his input and support he gives to the town, I'm very pleased to see him elected for another 4 years. And I'll take this opportunity to welcome his colleague Cllr. Clare Kemp.

Clare Tyson
Chairman
May 14th 2019