

Callington Town Council

Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes

Tuesday 27th April 2021

1. **Apologies:** None
Present: Cllr Coakley, Cllr Gold, Cllr Tolman (Portreeve and Mayor), Cllr Long, Cllr Morgan, Cllr Moore, Cllr Raphael, Cllr Tagg (Deputy Mayor and Portreeve), Cllr Watson
Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk, Operations Manager and Facilities and Maintenance Officer for IT
4 Members of the Public
2. **Minutes.** To approve the Minutes of the meeting 23rd April 2019.
Resolved. It was proposed by Cllr Tolman seconded by Cllr Long and unanimously agreed to receive the minutes of the meeting of 23rd April 2019 (no meetings held in 2020 due to the Pandemic).
as a true record of proceedings.
3. **Reports**
 - a) **Portreeve's Annual Report.**

The Portreeve started her report by saying what a difficult year it had been for everyone due to the Pandemic but how well Councillors and Staff had coped. Although she had not intended to remain in office for another year, she had done so due to COVID-19. The three vacancies on the Council had to remain vacant as it had not been possible to recruit new members. She reported that staff had not been furloughed but some had worked from home and some had been re-deployed to other areas of the Council. She congratulated her fellow Councillors for the professional way they conducted themselves during the meetings which had been held via Zoom. Staff had used the opportunity of having no bookings to decorate the Town Hall complex to a high standard in readiness for the time when it could re-open to the public. Office staff had helped the volunteers to do shopping, collect prescriptions those who were unable to get out due to shielding. Staff had also co-ordinated the volunteers from the Churches, Lions, Rotary, Battling on, the School's and all who took part in this community service. The Council also took part in funding fruit and vegetable boxes for

the families in need and added vouchers to the Christmas boxes. She reported that, although in a Pandemic, the Pasty factory mural had been refurbished and protected, with funds from a grant and, therefore, at no cost to the residents of Callington and Kelly Bray.

The Portreeve reported that public toilets had been refurbished and made fit for modern need's, the project brought forward as a result of COVID-19.

The monthly market which started as a success has been put on hold due to COVID but it was hoped to start them again as soon as it was safe to do.

She also reported on some of the other things the Council had been involved in:

- Campaigned for Cornwall Council to create twenty new on-street parking bays
- fought for, and achieved, continuation of one hour free parking in the town
- upgraded play park equipment
- taken steps on becoming a greener council
- fought against bad planning
- supported the volunteer litter picking team
- supported the Soup Run
- provided a base for the Volunteer Cornwall run support network, for at risk adults during COVID
- upgraded the CCTV system in the town
- engaged with the Neighbourhood Plan and brought it back on course

The Mayor and Portreeve ended her report by thanking Councillors, staff and the whole community for their support over the past year.

b) Planning Committee Chairman's Report. Cllr Coakley had circulated her report prior to the meeting.

She reported she had been Chair of the Planning Committee and that the Committee meets twice a month, over the past year these meeting had taken place via Zoom and members of the public where welcome to attend these meetings. During the past year the Town Council had received some interesting planning applications. Baker Estates had put in an application for 162 houses to be built over the next five years and the Town Council was working with them and the community to ensure that everything ran smoothly. She reported that work has been taking place on the

Neighbourhood Plan and that it was hoped that it could soon go to the consultation phase.

- c) Town Hall & Premises Chairman's Report.** Cllr Long had circulated his report prior to the meeting.

He reported that the last twelve months had been a reflection of the situation in the world as a whole with a very challenging situation. Income from bookings had been impacted severely throughout the year due to the Pandemic and as a result, the Council have had to deal with a significant shortfall in the budget. This was partly offset by grants from the UK Government through Cornwall Council.

He said that throughout every crisis, however, there are opportunities and during the various lockdowns work had continued to decorate and maintain the premises, especially the Town Hall, which is now ready for the opening up of the bookings in the coming months. He reported that the Committee had also undertaken a major project in the refurbishment of the Public Toilets in New Road, with a new cubicle style which has included a 'Changing Places' toilet to enable adults with disabilities to be accommodated if they need to utilise the facilities.

The Sunday Market had been suspended and at the moment we are looking at July for the reinstatement, this will continue to be outdoors and the Committee was working on the protocols that might be needed.

He said that he was most grateful to the Town Clerk and staff for the professional way they had dealt with the last twelve months, ensuring that the work of the Council continued and meaning that the Town Hall Complex is now ready for whenever the easing of lockdown takes place.

- d) Outside Services Chairman's Report.** Cllr Gold had circulated her report prior to the meeting.

She reported that it had been a very strange and challenging year for everyone and the Outside Services Committee had had to adapt to changes in rules and regulations on a regular basis. At times it had been extremely difficult for staff and residents.

The Outside Services Committee was responsible for the day-to-day running and maintenance of the Cemetery, the four parks, Haye Road allotments, all wayside benches throughout the parish and the Car Park in Saltash Road. Some of these services had to come second to the statutory requirements of COVID regulations to ensure, first and foremost, that staff

and residents were protected and this included closing our parks for a short time, but the Committee still had to make areas safe and secure. The environmental project at the Cemetery had really taken root and is still being developed. It is a very beautiful and quiet space to sit and reflect especially at these times. We are going to progress with our environmental areas and plant more wild flowers around the town and look at building some 'bug-hotels'.

The Committee has continued to work with local groups including the Lions and Rotary. The junction entering Callington from Liskeard has been cleared and is now very colourful and it is nice to see the benches again. The area opposite the garage on Tavistock Road has been cleared and flowers planted and the Town Council purchased a new bench for this area. Support for ensuring the town is well kept is welcomed from any individual or community group who would like to take responsibility of a planter. Thanks go to local businesses that already sponsor some of the flower beds. If you can help in any way please contact the Town Clerk.

She said that, hopefully, in the next few months, we will see a return to normality and the Outside Services staff will continue to maintain the parks, Cemetery and open spaces with grass cutting and planting being a priority.

The Committee's project last year was looking to improve the equipment in Launceston Road Park with the installation of a multi-use games area. This was put on hold because of COVID but hopefully we can start to progress this again fairly soon.

- e) Finance & General Purposes Chairman's Report.** Cllr Tagg had circulated his report prior to the meeting.

Cllr Tagg reported that the Finance and General-Purpose Committee meets every third Tuesday of the month.

As he said in his last report two years ago, nothing has changed, still the "Cinderella" committee. Not for us the refurbishment and painting of the Town Hall, which now looks fantastic and ready for business when allowed by that committee, not for us looking after the amazing flower tubs along Fore Street and keeping the parks in pristine condition by Outside Services. Both far more glamorous and exciting.

The main tasks of this Committee remains looking after the pennies and keeping the precept as low as is possible.

During the last year the Committee has; paid the water bills, the gas bills, the electricity bills, insurance, staff salaries, bought photocopying paper, PPE equipment, finished upgrading our CCTV system Pretty boring and mundane stuff hey? However, the Committee has, from the start of the pandemic, liaised with schools, churches, foodbank, Rotary, Lions, Tesco's and Lloyds and many other agencies. It has given money and supplied manpower, getting COVID cards and COVID receipt books printed, and using the Council Tax Support grant to subsidise and pay for the various activities involved. For example, vegetable boxes for the vulnerable. Paying for signage on roads and providing money for pastoral support etc.

He reported on the 'pretty good job' of restoring the "Secret Pasty Factory" mural which was made possible with money from Ginsters, combined with a successful professional grant bid, so costing the ratepayers minimal. Another 'pretty good job' was delivering the new, coloured, newsletter to every household in the Parish, which at present is done do bi-monthly.

The Committee continues to maintain services and, where possible, improve and update those services. In conclusion, he thanked the Committee and in particular the council staff for all their work, going above and beyond in what has been a testing year.

f) Environmental (Sub-Committee) Report

Cllr Raphael reported that the wildlife zone project in the Cemetery was progressing well, the initiative being undertaken by the Outside Services Committee and council staff to allocate spaces within the Parish which can be left to go wild providing much needed habitats for flora a fauna. The first of these wildlife zones had been set up at the Cemetery, with other areas within Callington and Kelly Bray being sourced for future purposes. Planting schemes have been introduced that work in conjunction with the current Town Council initiative which is to plant three trees for every one having to be felled. This has been expanded to include native trees, planting for pollinators and also looking at specific carbon catching plants to absorb pollution. Throughout all of this, the Committee has worked closely with neighbouring parishes and other councils to share information so it can be widely used with the intention of getting South East Cornwall looking great.

Cllr Raphael thanked all Councillors and staff for their unwavering support in enabling the Council to learn and adapt and to the Community for their support and efforts.

The Mayor and Portreeve thanked Councillor Raphael for the time he has spent with the Council and hoped that he would continue to be play a big part in the Environment Committee.

g) Town Forum Report

None.

h) Brendon & Huggins Charity.

Cllr Coakley, as a Trustee of the Charity, read the Chairman's report in his absence.

'For those who are not aware, the Brendon and Huggins Trust is a charity which owns and manages the four Almshouses in Callington, two in Launceston Road and two in Tavistock Road.

Clearly the past year has been unusual in that, due to COVID restrictions, it has not been possible to carry out our normal annual inspections both last year and not yet this year. The Chairman did however visit all the residents between lockdowns to ensure that there were no urgent matters and deal with those that did arise. It is hoped as restrictions ease to carry out the inspections in late May followed by the AGM.

Of course, statutory gas service and safety certification has continued throughout, as have mandatory electrical inspections. As most will be aware, the demolition of houses in Urban Terrace is ongoing and there has been minimal adverse effect on our properties, parking for carers etc has been maintained throughout.

The Charity is in a sound financial position and can meet anticipated expenditure in the coming years. There is an opening for a Trustee if anyone is interested, please contact the Chairman. Michael Green, Chairman of Brendon and Huggins Trust.'

i) Trust for Labouring Poor.

The Town Clerk reported on behalf of the Labouring Poor Trust. She said that the Trust owns the allotment field on Launceston Road behind the Fire Station although the Town Council administers the allotments. The level of interest in allotments increased during the Pandemic with residents becoming more aware of growing their own food, having a safe place to relax and the importance of having an allotment to aid their mental health. The Town Council administers payments and income for the Trust, payments can be made to worthy causes and local families in need and expenditure

relating to the field, such as the water supply. There continues to be modest, but healthy level of reserves held by the Trust to meet future expenditure and the Trust welcomes new Trustees in the new municipal year.

j) Constabulary Report.

Cllr Tagg reported that the Town Council and the local Constabulary have collaborated closely, particularly regarding the CCTV data requests and GDPR. He said that Callington was fortunate to have a Police presence in the town although the local patch extends far beyond the Parish boundary. He reported that the Town Council was fortunate to receive a grant from the Police and Crime Commissioners Office which enabled an upgrade of the CCTV system. Due to the Pandemic, there have been no Police workshops in the Town Hall, supermarkets or schools but there is a Callington Police Facebook page offering advice. During the Pandemic, it has been difficult for local policing as well as local committees but the local Neighbourhood Policing Team remain committed to keeping the community safe. The Town Council is grateful for the services of the local police and will continue to liaise closely with them for the benefit of the taxpayer.

The Town Council is also aware that, although the Police portion of the Council Tax has increased, the visible Police presence has diminished. This is not the fault of the local Neighbourhood Team.

k) Fire Service Report.

Cllr Long reported that the local Fire Service has been stretched during the Pandemic. At one stage during the last year, almost 20% of officers were affected by COVID-19, either isolating or suffering from the virus themselves and Callington was not immune from this. Cllr Long was pleased to report that, by working together, different stations from across South East Cornwall and colleagues from across the border, managed to keep the service going throughout this difficult time. He reported that everyone was saddened to lose a former local Fire Officer, John Trevithick, and he thanked the people of Callington for turning out in such force for his funeral. Cllr Long was pleased to report that the fire service was now back up to full strength and they are working together with their colleagues in other fire services to continue to provide the cover that is needed. During 2021, the G7 Summit in St Ives will stretch the service so Cllr Long called for patience during this period.

4. Open Session

The Clerk reported that she had received some observations from a local resident, who could not be present at the meeting, regarding park matters

and confirmed that these would be passed on to the next Outside Services Committee meeting, after the new council had been formed, for due consideration.

There being no other items the meeting was closed at 7.26pm