

## Liskeard Town Council

**AT A MEETING** of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Public Hall on Tuesday 18 May 2021 at 7.30 p.m. there were included:

The Mayor – Councillor Rachel Brooks – in the chair

Councillors – David Ambler, Kerry Cassidy, Simon Cassidy, Nick Craker, Richard Dorling, Ian Goldsworthy, Annette Lee-Julian, Jane Pascoe, Tony Powell, Julian Smith, and Christina Whitty.

Mayor's Chaplain – Reverend Rebecca Bell.

Town Clerk – Steve Vinson

Responsible Financial Officer and Deputy Town Clerk - Yvette Hayward

Facilities Manager – Jacqui Orange

Members of the Public – (Richard Reardon – friend accompanying Annette), Kerenza Moore – (Journalist – Cornish Times) and Kate Rogers – (Director - The Early Energy Centre).

The Mayor Councillor Rachel Brooks – “Thank you Becca, not only for those words, but also for all you’ve given us over the last two years as Mayor’s Chaplain. Over those meetings, which have included mourning people we’ve lost and navigating the trials on online conferencing, you’ve been there to help us with opportunities for re-flection and words of wisdom. You’ve also been a huge support to me personally. There is a gift on the table for you as a small thank you for everything you’ve done.

Before we start the formal meeting I have more thanks and would like to spend a few minutes reflecting on the last two years.

It’s been a real honour to serve as Mayor and during the first nine months I thoroughly enjoyed attending and speaking at events, helping to promote our great local organisations and meeting lots of people.

The last year or so has been rather different but I’m proud of the way the Town Council has responded to the pandemic. We’ve providing information to every household on how to get and offer help. We’ve granted over £17,000 to local groups giving practical support. We’ve coordinated with business groups and Cornwall Council around reopening. We’ve act-ed as a model landlord to support our tenants. We’ve managed our buildings, toilets and parks safely to enable as much access as possible. And we’ve continued the council’s business effectively during the challenges of working from home and virtual meetings.

Through all of this we haven’t lost sight of our wider aims and we’ve made great progress on bringing investment into Liskeard. In the Cattle Market we’ve played an active part in the plans for phase I, including the Cornwall Council Workshed building for creative digital businesses and craft workshops and our own Cattle Market Makers project which is very close to final decision. £700,000 of European and Cornwall Council investment in that project will make a real impact on local creative businesses and people in deprivation.

We've also made the most of the opportunities from Cornwall Council's town vitality funding. Economic development is one of our key aims and we are still pursuing our bid around enabling the development of more employment land. As you know, we were successful in our active travel bid and are currently out to tender on that. Being able to use the results of this work to develop new cycling and walking paths and establish a cycling hub will make a huge difference to the town.

Overall on the Town Council I think we have healthy debates where we make better decisions because of our discussions and disagreements. As Chair of the Council for the last two years that's certainly what I've tried to enable.

But there are one or two councillors who have gone out of their way to be negative, to constantly try to undermine previously agreed decisions, to sneer and make thinly veiled accusations.

I have tried to react to this calmly, to not to let it get to me or, most importantly, stop the work on positive projects for Liskeard. I've tried not to let you see that your behaviour has had an effect, that there were meetings I dreaded going into and where I couldn't get to sleep afterwards. That's because I didn't want to let your negativity win. I also had really great support which helped me through it. But now that I am standing down I want to talk about it to ask you to stop this behaviour in the new council. Please think about the effect of it on council staff who work so hard on our behalf. Please consider how even one or two people who are constantly on the attack poison the discussion for everyone and make it less likely that other councillors will contribute to the debate or even want to attend meetings. With a new council, a new Mayor and in-person meetings there is an opportunity to behave differently. Please take it.

As I say, this is very much minority behaviour and overall Liskeard is lucky to have a set of Town Councillors who care deeply about the town and work hard on its behalf. At the last meeting I thanked and paid tribute to the five councillors who were standing down and I'd like especially to repeat my thanks to Sandra Mitchell for everything she did as Deputy Mayor over the last two years, especially around working with community groups and helping to coordinate food for local families.

I'd also like to thank the Chairs and Vice-chairs of our committees who do a lot of work behind the scenes to prepare for meetings and make things happen. Ian and Julian have overseen the major changes to the Public Hall and more recently all the new ways of working needed because of Covid. Simon and Anna have worked with other organisations to run successful events, even given the restrictions and keep communicating with local people. Tony and Naomi have ensured that the Town Council has a strong and credible voice on planning decisions.

Huge thanks, as ever, are also due to our staff. As you can see I have presents for all of them, which I won't be actually presenting for Covid reasons but which they can pick up afterwards.

One thing which has kept me going when things have been tough has been the pleasure of working with our senior team of Steve, Yvette and Jacqui and we're very lucky to have their complementary skills and experience in economic development, finance, HR, property management and health and safety.

When I say I am proud of the way we have been getting through the pandemic, an awful lot of that is down to them. They have kept everything operating well through all the changes we've had to make in services and ways of working. So I'd like to thank them very much for all they've done and continue to do.

It's a mark of their management but also of all our staff that everyone has been so flexible in responding to the changes of the last year and is always prepared to go the extra mile to make sure their work is done well.

As well as her formidable organisational skills Mandy is wonderful with people which makes her such an asset in organising events. Trudy has been a great help as Mayor's secretary in addition to learning her way round the new Rialtas software. Vicky and Louisa at the TIC bring professionalism and warmth to promoting our town and its events and are always willing to help in other ways too. Karen has really kept the museum going and is always finding new ways to recruit and nurture volunteers. Tony, Jason, Erin, Sharon and Julie in our facilities team really make sure that people using our buildings, toilets and parks can do so safely and have the best possible experience.

So, many thanks to all of them and I hope these presents go a small way to expressing my appreciation.

I'd like to wish the new Mayor the very best for the coming year. I will obviously be around to do a thorough handover and answer any questions.

I have no doubt that this will be another challenging year but if we can work together we can keep making Liskeard a better place to live and work."

001 / 21      **ELECTION OF A MAYOR FOR THE 2021/2022 CIVIC YEAR** - Councillor Powell proposed, Councillor Craker seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to elect Councillor Simon Cassidy, Mayor for the 2021/2022 civic year.

002 / 21      **ELECTION OF A DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE 2021/2022 CIVIC YEAR** – The Mayor Councillor Cassidy proposed, Councillor Craker seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to elect Councillor Christina Whitty, Deputy Mayor for the 2021/2022 civic year.

003 / 21      **MAYOR'S REMARKS** – I'd like to thank you all very much for bestowing this huge honour upon me...I'd like to thank my proposer, Cllr Powell and my seconder Cllr Craker for the faith they've placed in me. I'd also like to thank Cllr Christina Whitty for agreeing to stand as Deputy Mayor. It means a great deal to me to have a former Mayor with such wide-ranging experience by my side (all be it slightly shorter). Her knowledge and support will be of great benefit to me on my journey. Also, to those of you who have offered words of advice encouragement and support during my time on the council. I'd like to propose a vote of thanks to our outgoing Mayor Rachel and to her Deputy-Mayor Sandra. Through these last two years they have led our council and represented our community through what can only be described as some of the most trying times in modern history. Rachel, we owe you a debt of gratitude for leading us through this difficult time.

3/21

I'd also like to offer special thanks to your consort Rod for being by your side (always answering the phone to me. Ive had many a conversation with Rod). All too often we forget the other side of the councillor. Their family who love and support them throughout. Thank you Rod for your support to our town.

Although Sandra isn't here with us tonight, I'd like to pay special tribute to her for supporting Rachel as Deputy-Mayor throughout the last 2 years. Sandra has always worked hard in our community, particularly devoting herself to others during the pandemic. She deserves special recognition for all she has done. It would be remiss of me not to mention Marcus who served as her consort. I'd like to thank him for supporting her. I'd also like to thank Sue, Sally, Ian and Anna for their service to the town.

I am grateful to our Council officers and their teams for all their hard work during these trying times. I welcome all our new councillors and encourage everyone to take a full and active part in doing the very best we can for the people we represent.

My aims and objectives for the coming year will be based around transparency, openness, investment in people and furthering the economic and environmental development of our town. I will continue to work in a transparent and open way:

There are no stupid questions, all voices will be heard, all opinions will matter. We will act as one Council together, supportive of each other. As our town begins to reopen, we need to restart all committees. This will reduce the burden upon Full Council meetings and ease decision making. I would like to see the Finance Committee be given a Chair as opposed to that responsibility falling to the Mayor as this aides transparency. I will propose this at the first meeting.

While the Mayor is an ex-officio member of all committees, I will not be present at all meetings. I will allow committees to make decisions without the burden of their Mayor always being present. I will hold an initial meeting with all Chairs once they are elected to set out my vision for the coming Mayoral year. This meeting will be minuted.

Concerns have previously been raised about the transparency of Mayor and Chairs meetings. Going forward there will be no more meetings of this type - all thoughts and ideas I have will be shared with each and every one of you.

We need to re-establish links with our neighbouring parish councils and build much stronger relationships which allow us to be stronger together, united in our common goals.  
Investment in people:

I will ensure that both our Councillors and officers receive the training and development they need to do their roles to the best of their ability. I will make sure that every new councillor is paired up with a Mentor, a more experienced Councillor who can offer advice and support and answer any questions they may have as they begin this journey. This will give them an experienced sounding board and reduce the impact on our office colleagues.

4/21

I will encourage and support community projects and volunteering, building on the good work we've seen during the pandemic. The community spirit is truly inspiring here and we need to build upon that.

Economic development: Post-pandemic we need to ensure economic recovery of our town. Many of our businesses have struggled during this difficult time and we need to support them to get them back on their feet. At the same time, our town is growing fast and we need to encourage new opportunities for employment and economic development, but also ensuring we have the facilities and services our people deserve. To this end we must prioritise the review of our Neighbourhood Plan to ensure it continues to be fit for purpose as we grow.

Environmental development: We have already declared a climate emergency and we must continue to build upon the successes the previous council has achieved. We all have an environmental responsibility and we need to act now. All too often, we put things off. We need to lead by example and get our own house in order whilst encouraging others to do the same. Our planning decisions must focus on the environmental impact of a project. We should encourage and support the whole town to be green.

So, as we begin this new journey together, let's learn from what has gone before, embrace necessary and progressive change and make brave strides forward for the good of all to see Liskeard Shine.

004 / 21 **APOLOGIES** – Councillor Naomi Taylor (son has broken his ankle) Councillor Jane Pascoe (clash with Parish Council meeting possible late arrival).

005 / 21 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST REGISTERABLE AND NON-REGISTERABLE** – The Mayor, Councillor Ambler and Councillor Smith declared an interest in Agenda Item 7. Grant Application from the Early Energy Centre.

006 / 20 **TO RECEIVE AND ADOPT THE MINUTES OF THE 27<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2021 COUNCIL MEETING AND THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 5<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021** – Councillor Powell proposed, Councillor Smith seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Councillor Powell proposed, the Deputy Mayor seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021 Special Council meeting.

007 / 20 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** – Kate Rogers (Grant Applicant – The Early Energy Centre) Baby Basics Centre project). Spoke in support to the application and answered questions.

- 600 local children participating would be drawn from the primary schools. There would be additional work with the Real Ideas Organisation (RIO).
- Community Interest Company (CiC) status – the registration process had been commenced that day. It was believed it would only take several days to confirm registration of the project.
- Whilst a worthy project, the requested grant equated to 30% of the Council's annual grants budget. Several observations were made and considered regarding costs and priority elements within the proposal.

The Mayor and Councillor Ambler left the meeting. The Deputy Mayor chaired the meeting for the Agenda Item 7.

5/21

008 / 21 **GRANT APPLICATION – The Early Learning Centre** (to hold an increased number of performances) – Councillor Powell proposed, Councillor Smith seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** a grant of £2,500 subject to the Community Interest Company (CIC) being established, with a bank account in its own name for receipt of the funds.

009 / 21 **COUNCIL, COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIPS 2021/2022 (as attached)** – Councillor Goldsworthy proposed, Councillor Craker seconded, and the Council **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the memberships of the committees and working groups.

010 / 21 **COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2021/2022 (as attached)** – Councillor Craker proposed, the Deputy Mayor seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Councillor representation on outside bodies.

011 / 21 **LOCALISM ACT 2011 – GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE** – Councillor Powell proposed, Councillor Smith seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** that Liskeard Town Council retains its General Power of Competence as defined by the Localism Act 2011 s1(1) and s8 and defined further in statutory instrument Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012.

012 / 21 **STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS** – Subject to the adoption of gender-neutral terms, the Mayor proposed, Councillor Ambler seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Standing Orders for the 2021/2022 year. Subject to the adoption of gender-neutral terms, the Mayor proposed, Councillor Powell seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Financial Regulations for the 2021/2022 year.

013 / 21 **CORNWALL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCIL'S (C.A.L.C.) SCHEME OF DELEGATION** – Councillor Craker proposed, Councillor Goldsworthy seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the advice regarding the temporary extension of the Scheme of Delegation.

014 / 21 **SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS** – Councillor Dorling proposed, Councillor Goldsworthy seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Schedule of Payments.

015 / 21 **CO-OPTION ARRANGEMENTS** With the addition of a deadline for the receipt of bids for co-option, Councillor Craker proposed, Councillor Dorling seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the timetable for the co-option arrangement.

Councillor Pascoe arrived and apologized for the clash of meetings

016 / 21 **OPCC – GRANT APPLICATION** – It was noted that the deadline for the OPCC Evening and Night-Time Economy fund had been extended to 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021 to allow a bid to be made. It was further noted that the final details regarding eligibility under the Welcome Back Fund were not like to known until late May. Following consideration and discussion, Councillor Ambler proposed, Councillor Craker seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to submit a bid to the OPCC as outlined. Councillor Goldsworthy proposed, Councillor Pascoe seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to approve for submission the alternative option £13,749.55 (£6,874.78 match funding contribution). Councillor Goldsworthy proposed, Councillor Craker second and the Council **RESOLVED** submit a bid to the Welcome Back Fund to cover as much of the match-funding for the project as proved eligible.

6/21

017 / 21 **CORRESPONDENCE** – 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021 – Liskeard Ploughman’s Festival – Viv Twornicki (circulated by e-mail) – Change of venue to the Senior School and Community College fields. An indication of a need for volunteers and financial support.

018 / 21 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING** – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021 - at 7.30 pm