



TOWN MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2013/2014

COUNCILLOR MRS IRIS JOHNSON

Introduction

Twelve months is a very short time for any Town Mayor to initiate projects of their own and see them through to completion. It is, however, equally satisfying to bring some of my predecessors' work to fruition. Schemes started over the last year will, in most cases, require the stewardship of the next Town Mayor. I have enjoyed the many events that I have attended during the year and the many people that I have met who give their time freely to run these events and help others in many ways.

Crime and Disorder

The Town Council has and continues to work with our local Police Force in keeping crime and particularly anti-social behaviour to a minimum in our area, and it has to be said that we are fortunate to have Sgt Pete Gerard stationed here. Sgt Gerard and his colleagues, not least of whom are the PCSOs, have together achieved towns and villages that many others in the County would be pleased to be able to report on. This Council and moreover its residents have put their money where their mouth is and supported the Police in our District. Unfortunately since the election of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the appointment of the new Chief Constable we cannot be sure that new contracts and possibly less officers, will support what we have been doing over the last 10 years. I remain deeply disappointed about the recent changes being made and possibly more still to be made. We continue to negotiate with the Police for new contracts to fully fund either 4 or 6 PCSOs in order to continue with the good work they have done in this area especially the work carried out with the youth.

Seafront Shelters

The Town Council has carried out maintenance to the Seafront Shelters and is currently looking at work to the Edwardian Shelter.

Columbine Centre

The Town Council are registering the Columbine for Civic Ceremonies such as Weddings, Civil Partnerships, Renewal of Vows, Naming Ceremonies etc. Registrars from Clacton will come out to register such ceremonies and we are hoping this will increase the use of the Columbine Centre for larger events. At the same time we are looking at how we can increase the actual use of the Centre as a Theatre which is what it was intended to be.

Financial Management

The Town Council received a clear audit as usual, this year. The value of our three-year rolling programme is also now apparent and, looking back, it is cheering to see that we have done most of what we said we would do and a bit more besides. The precept for this forth coming year is £349,996 which is the same as the previous year.

Bus Shelters, Notice Boards and Public Seats

It has been a good year for our street furniture. On-going maintenance and repair has continued.

All of our notice boards are now either new or in presentable, repaired condition. The seemingly never-ending task of keeping our public seats in good repair continues.

Allotments



Kirby le Soken Allotments

Unusually we now have a few spare allotment plots and shorter lists at all sites, so if you would like to be considered for a plot then just enquire at the Town Council Offices to see what is available. Fresh vegetables and keeping fit at the same time!

Website

Our website, hosted free of charge by the Essex County Council, is now up to date with minutes and agendas uploaded regularly. The frequently changing “Hot Topics” page illustrates, quite surprisingly sometimes, the range of Town Council work. The website address is: www.essexinfo.net/frinton-and-walton-town-council

There is a separate website address for the Columbine Centre and coming soon one for the Walton Market which allows for interested stallholders to apply on line for a regular or occasional stall.

Planning Applications

The Town Council (during the period 03.05.13. to 03.04.14.) has considered and made recommendations on 253 planning applications and Tree Preservation Orders. During the last 12 months 18% have been at variance with the decisions of the District Council. This percentage has remained fairly constant for a number of years.

Staffing

I would like to thank our staff during what has been some difficult months but with the advent of some changes of our own, I was pleased to welcome Myrna, the new Town Clerk, who is very much on the ball, and also June our new Customer Service/Administrative Assistant, she has been an additional asset, and never stops smiling and is very helpful to all she comes into contact with. Long may this be so.

Food Bank



Councillor Mrs I Johnson

I decided this year rather than send out Christmas Cards to ask everyone at the Town Council to donate goods for the food bank. This was very successful and as you can see from the picture we collected quite a lot of food which was very much appreciated by the food bank staff.

Conclusion



Through my Mayoral Year I have had the pleasure of attending many new ventures and here I am pictured with Mr Phil Luxford at the opening of their new solicitors, just after I had cut the ribbon to declare the business open.

I would like to thank Cllr Jack Robertson my Deputy Mayor this year and all other Members for their support.

Councillor Mrs. I. Johnson
Town Mayor