



## **TOWN COUNCIL** **OF FRINTON AND WALTON**

### **TOWN MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT** **2018/2019**

#### **COUNCILLOR IRIS JOHNSON**

##### **Introduction**



It has been a great pleasure and honour to serve the area again this year as the Town Mayor. I have thoroughly 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 so many ways. The Town Council thanks you very much indeed.

##### **Major Projects**

During the year the Town Council has completed or begun a number of significant projects that will greatly enhance the area as follows:

###### **1. The Spinney**



The Town Council has undertaken a project to carry out renovation works to The Spinney, in order to improve this valued natural amenity at one of the prime entrances to Frinton, adjacent to the train station. A plan and detailed specification were drawn up by the Town Council's architect. A tender process was run and the lowest priced bid was accepted.

The appointed contractor has carried out the works to a high standard resulting in the clearance of the site, the landscaping of it to include 9,000 new plants and a pleasant, gated garden area with seats that provides a beautiful visual asset at one of the primary entrances to Frinton-on-sea.

## **2. Great Holland Playground**



A new playground has been constructed at Great Holland. This includes new swings, slides, seesaws and other playground equipment some of which is suitable for disabled children. The new playground also included new fencing, rubber mulch areas and tarmac paths. The playground opened in February 2019 and is being well used by local children.

## **3. The Council House**



The Town Council took freehold ownership of the Council House building on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018. The building is in need of refurbishment and modernisation. A plan and specification have been drawn up by the Town Council's architect which will improve the building, create a lettable meeting room/office area and ensure that access is in line with the requirements of disabled citizens, including the installation of a lift. A contractor to carry out these works will be appointed by the end of the

financial year and the works will be carried out shortly thereafter.

## **4. Toilets for Frinton and Walton**



The Town Council did not support the closure of Tendring Council toilets in our town centres. We tried to negotiate retention of facilities with Tendring District Council, but with no sustainable offer agreeable, we have managed to rent the Old Way, Frinton toilet in order to improve and maintain that facility. This toilet has been refurbished as it had deteriorated considerably during the period that it had been shut. By the end of the year the Town Council had re-opened this vital amenity.

As Tendring Council shut the toilets at Mill Lane, Walton, the Town Council has been seeking alternatives for the provision of toilets at other Walton town centre locations. This resulted in a scheme being drawn up and planning permission obtained for a project to refurbish the Old Post Office building in the town centre. Unfortunately, at a late stage in this project, the owners of this building decided to withdraw their support for it.



## **Crime and Disorder**

The Town Council has continued to work with our local Police force in keeping crime and particularly anti-social behaviour to a minimum in our area, through the funding of six PCSO's and also through the regular Crime and Disorder meetings which are held at the Council House. The Town Council have investigated and achieved various initiatives to keep crime very low in our towns and villages, and many other areas of Essex. For example, the Town Council participated in a three-month trial of an ANPR camera in our area which demonstrated that these devices can provide vital intelligence to the police and so help fight crime. Another important initiative this year was the re-instatement of regular PCSO visits to local schools which has helped by reducing potential and current problems with young offenders.

We will continue to explore new initiatives such as these to combat crime and antisocial behaviour in our Town Council area. The Town Council are convinced that in these days of Police service cuts, our local PCSO's are invaluable, and we will continue to work with local Police to ensure that our area remains a low crime area to live in and visit.

## **Seafront Shelters**



The Town Council continues to maintain eight seafront shelters. During the year a competitive tender process was run for the refurbishment and repair of these seafront shelters. Six suppliers were asked to bid and four submitted quotes, resulting in the Town Council choosing the supplier who had bid the lowest amount. This contractor has been methodically painting and repairing the eight seafront shelters so that they will be ready for the 2019 summer season.

All eight seafront shelters and eighteen bus shelters are cleaned regularly. During the year a competitive tender process was run for the regular cleaning of these seafront and bus shelters. Six suppliers were asked to bid and four submitted quotes, resulting in the Town Council choosing the supplier who had bid the lowest amount. The successful cleaning contractor has been awarded a three-year contract to clean the seafront and bus shelters eight times each year.

## **Beach Huts**



The Town Council's two beach huts in Frinton remain popular for the school holiday weeks, less so outside of those times. Hirers are always very complimentary on the location, condition and size of the huts.

## **The Columbine Centre**



A new, simplified price list for Columbine Centre customers was approved by the Council in August 2018. In addition, following the appointment of a part-time Promotions Officer based at Walton Information Centre, work has been carried out to promote the Columbine Centre. This has included running an Open Day and arranging new events such as 'Tendring's Got Talent', which will dovetail with the Walton Carnival day.

The Town Council has also continued to promote the Columbine Centre as a venue for local clubs to meet, with a well-equipped theatre and the ever-popular Walton Indoor Bowls Club. Some very good and well attended events have taken place during the year, including those that draw in customers from a wider area. For example, the Columbine Centre hosts the Essex heats of the national dance competition, 'So you Want to Dance'.

Further work to generate interest in the Columbine Centre has included employing a marketing company to develop a Columbine Centre brand, better utilise social media to promote the Columbine Centre and refurbish the website. The website address is: [www.columbinecentre.co.uk](http://www.columbinecentre.co.uk). Columbine Centre bookings are beginning to increase as this work bears fruit. For example, regular bookings have just been received for Sunday evening bingo and for a martial arts club on a Friday evening.

A number of improvements to the Columbine Centre have been carried out during the year including changing the bowls Club lighting over to LED which is a more cost-efficient system. Brand new carpets and radio microphones/sound equipment for the theatre have also been purchased during this year.

Finally, and most importantly a new staff structure has been put in place at the Columbine Centre with a newly appointed Senior Facilities Operative responsible for the Columbine Centre site and additional duties including managing toilets, the market, and the regular inspection of defibrillators and playgrounds. As the Town Council has taken on the provision of more local services the roles of our staff have expanded to meet these new challenges as well.

## **Defibrillators**



During the year the Town Council installed five defibrillators located at Connaught Avenue; The Naze, Walton; Great Holland Village Hall; 'The Ship' at Kirby-le-Soken and at the pharmacy, Kirby Cross. Various community groups helped fund these useful community assets.



## **Notice Boards and Public Seats**

Notice boards are currently receiving more attention and repairs are ongoing with a replacement implemented at Great Holland. It is hoped that seats will also be included in a rolling programme of refurbishment during the next financial year.

## **Allotments**



A long-standing legal matter in relation to handing back some land that was prone to flooding to the land owner at Kirby-le-Soken allotments was resolved during this year. Also at Kirby-le-Soken allotments a parcel of land was levelled and the area around this site was tidied up. A new gate was installed at Pole Barn Lane allotments to prevent fly-tipping.

We have short waiting lists at all sites, so if you would like to be considered for a plot then just enquire at the Town Council offices to get your name on the list for one of the sites.

## **Walton Market**

Walton Market allows for interested stallholders to apply on line for a regular or occasional stall. However, Walton Market is currently subject to revised lease negotiations with Tendring District Council. During the year the Town Council decided to close Walton Market for three months January to March as it was not viable to run it during those months.

## **Planning Applications**

During the course of the year the Town Council has considered and made recommendations on 310 planning applications and Tree Preservation Orders. Out of the 259 decisions made during that time by Tendring District Council 41 have been at variance.

## **Financial Management**

The Town Council received a clear audit again this year. The value of our rolling programme of key projects as described above is 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 forthcoming year is £541,822.

## **Staffing**

I would like to thank our staff for their work on your behalf during the past year. The Council House deals with many questions and queries from our residents on many matters not just Town Council issues. The Council House office at the Triangle Shopping Centre is open from 9 am to 1 pm Monday to Friday.

## **Website**

The Town Council website, hosted free of charge by Essex County Council, is up to date with minutes and agendas uploaded regularly. The website address is: [www.essexinfo.net/frinton-and-walton-town-council](http://www.essexinfo.net/frinton-and-walton-town-council)

## **Conclusion**



It has been a busy and constructive year. The Town Council has achieved a great deal this year. At the end of April, we said 'Farewell' to our Town Clerk, Mrs. Myrna Liles. A new Town Clerk, Mr Jerry Wedge was appointed and started in May 2018. He has been heavily involved in all of the new initiatives undertaken this year.

I would also like to thank Cllr. Mr. Jack Robertson, my Deputy Mayor this year, for his steadfast support and commitment to all that is good in our area. I thank all Members too for their excellent community work in our respective wards in Frinton, Walton, Great Holland and Kirby.

Councillor Mrs Iris Johnson  
Town Mayor