

## **Chairman's Report**

This last year has provided some quite unique challenges that Saltash Town Council has responded to, in an exemplary and professional manner, continuing to provide residents with the services they would rightfully expect, even during a time of national and international crisis.

It has been regrettable that many of the Civic or social events that would normally have taken place during the year have been cancelled or scaled back, but wherever possible we have proven quite inventive in providing an alternative.

Members have adapted well to the digital technology that has allowed the Council to continue to meet on a regular basis and to perform the functions that would otherwise have proven impossible to achieve, given the curb on face to face meetings.

Our Service Delivery General Assistants led by the Service Delivery Manager and Assistant Service Delivery Manager have worked hard to ensure that the Town is Covid compliant with a strict cleaning regime in place for all STC premises including the public toilets. We have striven to provide a safe working environment for our office based staff, whilst technology has been provided to allow some members of staff to work from home.

Efficiencies and savings in the way that the Council has operated during the year has resulted in a lowered Town Council portion of the Council Tax bill, with an average Band D property showing a saving of 8.95% which equates to £21.58 per year, a welcome relief for many hard pressed families in these difficult times. An achievement of which we can be justifiably proud.

The Council has taken delivery of two additional motor vehicles which will allow maintenance tasks to be taken 'in house' with a resultant cost saving against outside contracts that have been allowed to expire.

The pandemic has caused an inevitable slowing down in some major projects, with the Station building now largely complete, but not yet open to the public. Work to bring the now Grade 2 listed Library building up to standard has proven to be slow in progressing, but it is hoped that the new Council will oversee the necessary work and achieve the goal of a modern Library Hub in comfortable surroundings, which will also provide much needed office accommodation for Council Staff.

The Council has acknowledged there is a climate and ecological emergency which is having damaging effects both locally and globally and that they will consider it wherever relevant and try to the best of their abilities to lead by example. Alongside this, the Council has submitted an application to Surfers Against Sewage for the Council to receive their single plastic free award and pledges to remove single use plastic items and support plastic free initiatives in our area wherever this is possible and not detrimental to the services offered by the Council.

This Council has striven to improve upon its' relationship with outside bodies and the work with other members of the Town Team is beginning to pay dividends in terms of the projects that will soon be delivered.

I must pay credit to the hard working Chairs, Vice Chairs and Members of our various Committees and Sub Committees who have continued to develop both plans and policies with an eye to the future.

During my term of office, I have identified areas where policies have required reviewing and updating, including the Communications Policy that will shortly go to the Policy & Finance Committee, bringing these policies up to necessary requirements as a legacy for the new Council.

I am thankful for the support I have been given by my fellow Councillors during what has proven to be a most unusual Mayoral term, which has allowed this Council to continue to go about its' business in a way that some others might be slightly envious of.

With the use of technology, it has been possible for me to network with other Mayors of Cornwall and to attend the meetings of the CNP, bringing back views and ideas from across Cornwall.

With a new Council soon to be elected and some Members not standing for re-election, I will miss working with those people who welcomed me as a new Member back in August 2017, thank you one and all.

Councillor Pete Samuels  
Mayor of Saltash 2020-21