

Chairman's Annual Report 2021-22

As with the previous year, this year has provided some challenges due to the pandemic, but as before, all sections of the Town Council have responded in positive and sometimes inventive ways, to continue to offer residents the highest possible level of service, whilst acting within the limitations imposed.

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors, the admin team and our Service Delivery General Assistants for what has been achieved, sometimes under testing and difficult circumstances.

The beginning of the Council year in May, saw a return to face-to-face meetings, together with some new Members, following the elections held in May. As with any Council, there will be the occasional vacancy when a Member leaves, something that can occur for a variety of reasons, but it has been encouraging to see so many members of the public come forward to fill those vacancies as they occur.

Whilst some costs have risen over the past year, especially those associated with energy and fuel, with prudent planning and decisive actions, we have still managed to keep the Town Council precept to a minimum and although there has been a small increase for the year 2022-23, the amount that residents will pay is still below the amount of two years ago, due to a reduction in the precept last year.

We started this Council year still in lockdown, but as the year has progressed, we have commenced along the path to a new normality, enabling the return of the Remembrance Day Service and Parade in November and the forthcoming Civic Service, during which the Citizen Awards will be presented, something that could only be done 'virtually' the previous year.

Some projects that have been in the pipeline for some time, have yet to come to fruition, but projects that faltered during the lockdown periods, including the refurbishment of the Library Hub and opening of the Station passenger waiting room, are now back on track, pun intended.

Back in September 2021 it was a delight and an honour to hold my Mayor Making Ceremony at the beautiful and welcoming St. Nicholas and St. Faith Church. This ceremony is usually held within very few weeks of a Mayor taking office, but I shall go down in history as the only Mayor to have waited thirteen months, this again due to the pandemic.

During the current year, the Council has continued to refresh and update policy documents, to ensure that we are fully compliant and that there is an established procedure for all eventualities. Whilst this is something that I moved forward when first elected as Mayor in August 2020, it has been encouraging to see our Policy and Finance Committee continue with that task.

It will shortly be time to hand over the Mayoral Chain to a new Council Chairman, shortly to be elected, I wish the Mayor for 2022-23 every success in the role, it has to me been an honour and a privilege to represent Saltash residents in this role, for a period of 21 months.

Cllr Pete Samuels

Mayor of Saltash 2020-21 (from August 2020) and 2021-22