

Mayor's report

On 20th January I was elected as the new Mayor and once again wish to thank my fellow councillors for their support. The weeks seem to be flying by and there is a flurry of exciting plans for this year evolving, alongside the day to day running of the town hall and new hub the team are extremely busy and I would like to thank them for all the hard work they put in.

Jan 22nd- I visited the fire station to thank those running the vaccination pop up centre which seemed to be very well attended.

Jan 23rd – I attended the pavilion to show support for the charity head shave that Jane and her friends at community spirited had planned to support their friend and colleague with her cancer treatment, I was very humbled to see so many there to show support and raise funds for the chosen charities, the bravery of all who were involved was very emotional and extremely heart-warming.

February 1st- A meeting was held in the town hall with members of groups and organisations to plan some suggested platinum jubilee events for the town, we had some great ideas and enthusiasm and can now move forward with a program of events for this weekend of celebrations.

February 8th- I had a meeting at the classic boat museum to view the new refurbishment and hear their hopes and plans for the future of the museum and how it can interact with the local community.

February 3rd- Cllr Lake and myself took part in the code of conduct IWALC zoom event with guest speaker Jackie

Weaver, it was very informative with a tongue in cheek sense of humour in referencing her new found stardom!

Cllr Cameron Palin - February Report

January 24th - Classic Boat museum

On Monday the 24th January I met with the vice-chair of the Classic Boat museum. I was great to see the work they have put into the gallery to bring it up to date, it is certainly a walk through history. It was also good to hear they have aspirations to expand and grown the collection and I will endeavour to support them with their aspirations.

January 27th - IWALC Executive

On January the 27th I attended the IWALC Executive. At this meeting we discussed several reports from Reps, including myself for corporate Scrutiny Committee. We planned our next topic meeting which will be based on Housing, noting that Cllr Diana is to meet with Cllr Stephens about the housing crisis in February 3rd. We also discussed the budget for the year ahead, IWALC passed the budget which means a 35% increase in membership fees. However in the year 2021-2022 there was a reduction in membership so this brings the fees back in line with the 2020-2021 costs.

February 1st - Platinum Jubilee

On Tuesday the 1st February myself, Cllrs Love, Lake and Reardon organised a meeting with the community to help organise events for the Platinum jubilee. We endeavoured to invite all the community groups we have in East Cowes so we sent the invitation far and wide.

I'd like to thank the 20+ people who attended including people from the East Cowes Town Crafters, Churches together, East Cowes Fire service, the business association, East Cowes Community partnership and Girl guides as well as members of the community.

We managed to put together several ideas for events to happen over the jubilee weekends and look forward to bringing these forward.

3rd February - Cowes Town Council

On Thursday 3rd February I attended the Cowes town council meeting as the East Cowes Town Council Liaison Rep.

There were several issues were raised during the meetings and I spoke at several intervals. Their PCSO raised concerns that there had been an increase of graffiti across the town one saying "Tory c*nt", however, the police said that they all have different tags and are investigating it.

The PCSO said it's better to report any type of crime and great a crime number, this increases the number crime reports in the area and that equates to more officers in

the area. I mentioned that IWALC will be meeting with the Community safety partnership and we will continue to do what we can to support the police.

Medina yard was also brought up and Cowes Town Council would support this being retained as boat building. I mentioned the MPs support for Wight shipyards and pushing for government contracts for them and suggested they approach the MP so promote boat building up and down the medina to grow our maritime sector.

Cowes Town Council also discussed their platinum jubilee events and are supporting Northwood House financially with their big picnic in the park. They are also going to approach Cowes Business Association for ideas.

4th - Market

Myself, Cllr Lake and Cllr Reardon met with Claire Kennard and Eve from Market Days CIC to discuss the potential to organise a monthly market in the town hall. It was a very productive meeting where we showed her the space and discussed how it would work. I am pleased to say that this is a very important positive step forward and I hope to see the first market take place within the next 3 months!

8th - Corporate Scrutiny

As IWALCs rep on corporate scrutiny I thanked Cllr Jarman for the efforts made to consult with local town and parish councils on the budget proposals and welcomed efforts made to address housing problem, including allocation of capital funding and reactivation of council-owned housing company. On the budget I raised 3 questions:

1. *Para. 36 refers to £40,000 to 'facilitate support for and work with town and parish councillors'. What is envisaged here?*

Cllr Bacon said this was to aid town and parish councils that are fairly small with the cost of an environment officer and supporting small councils.

2. *Para. 42: IWALC welcomes plans to improve enforcement but would like to know more about proposed pilot project and whether it can be extended to councils other than NCCC.*

Cllr Fuller thanked us for the support and said they will be reaching out to other town and parish councils if the Newport pilot is a success in increasing Planning enforcement.

3. *There has recently been several serious accidents cross the island including the Fairway in Lake and Whippingham Road in East Cowes, and of course endless reports of speeding cars and motorbikes. In the previous budget there was money allocated to purchase speed camera's but the Alliance administration has chosen not to go down this route. Can Cllr Jordan please reassure all T&PC's that in fact the alliance administration do take road safety seriously, and make us aware of what his plans to address these issues?*

Cllr Jordan reassured us that the administration do take road safety seriously. They are in the process for of the island wide review and that the leader is meeting with the Isle of Wight Police chief and has done already. He noted that the council aren't in charge of speeding ect but have urged the PCC for a dedicated Road Policing Unit

I then raised serious concerns over the closure of Chillerton and Rookley Primary school and said the following:

As someone who works in education my focus will always be the pupils and their educational and social life chances. And this debate over Chillerton and Rookley primary school has simply gone on far too long, leaving families, pupils, staff and the wider community in limbo but Closing this school will only lead to further upset and harm to our young children.

I have serious concerns over the way Hampshire County council officers have dealt with this process, as well as them showing no interest in approaching Island Free school or other Academies about forming a MAT as a way to save this school. The Chairman of Chillerton and Gatcombe parish council has emailed all Councillors with a whole list of reasons why this school must be saved. Including the fact that the Stenbury Federation has purposefully reduced pupil numbers by removing the reception class, thus decreasing the chance new intake and giving them a reason to close the school.

If the alliance is serious about caring about the island and the communities of Chillerton, Gatcombe and Rookley then I urge them to freeze the decision and defer the public notice for closure, to allow yourself and officers to meet with the island free school to discuss with them forming a MAT and then bring the decision back to the table after that conversation has been had. Would the cabinet member agree to doing this? And whilst I acknowledge the local authority and the cabinet member has no power over the Regional Schools Commission, your intervention would show this administration are listening and working for the benefit of local communities. There is still a chance to save this school but the administration must fight for it and not just take the easy route out.

Cllr Andre responded by saying they would not defer this decision and the island Free school have had plenty of time to put in a submission to form a MAT. However, 2 days later Cllr Andre at cabinet decided to defer the item, thus suspending the notice for closure, despite earlier saying she wouldn't. She sighted what was said by myself and others in scrutiny as well as 'new evidence' coming forward. I welcomed the news in the media and thanked Cllr Andre for the change of heart.

Other activities

Throughout the month I have also been in communication with the clerk and assistant clerk about several issues. The first was the Bus stop previously outside the town hall, myself and fellow councillors would like to pursue getting this reinstated especially for when we have the community hub in place and to support our town businesses rather than everyone going to the larger shop, instead support small local ones. I also requested we look at the town crier as I know many residents have not been receiving it and also look at other potential options for this newsletter. The clerk has confirmed that this will be on the next FPE agenda. Another issue I have been tackling is dog fouling, I have been liaising closely with the environment officer about this and also with a resident who has several recordings of the owners of fouling dogs, this is something I'm still chasing and the environment officer has assured me those caught will be fined. I am delighted to say that myself and fellow councillors have had discussions about a formal name for the community hub and I hope to see us make a decision on this, in full council within the next couple of

months. Finally as mentioned by Cllr Love I am determined to get an east coves tree plan underway, once we make a decision as a full council to pursue this, we can get into the detail and begin getting plans in place. On that note I have also been in communication with Grayling (Red Funnel) who have confirmed to me that we have trees available to us for a project, I hope to say more in the next month or two on this.