

Mayor's Report

January 2020

19th December	Chaired Full Council and hosted Christmas reception for councillors and their partners
2 nd January	Communications Working Party (Newsletter) Attended P,E & T Committee
9 th January	Attended P,E & T Committee
15 th January	Afternoon - Hosting Tea and Cakes with Bungay High School Students and parents who received BTC awards at school prize giving Evening – NDP meeting to finalise arrangements for final short survey before progressing to circulation of pre-submission plan

Obviously the holiday period, when the Council offices are closed, has meant that there has been far less formal activity than usual. However at the start of not just the New Year, but a new decade, I thought it appropriate to report on some of our 'work in progress' and reasons to be cheerful on these damp January days:

Working with Schools and Young Residents

We have established sound links with the governors and staff of Bungay Primary School. This will be mutually beneficial as we can support their curriculum delivery in relation to 'British Values' and help to boost their profile as a thriving school, whilst the children, staff and parents gain a fuller understanding of the work of the Council through ongoing pro-active relationships. Our invitation to attend the recent Fencing and Jousting event at the Castle, and parents and children joining in the parade on Remembrance Sunday is just an indicator of this growing closer relationship.

In addition, following mine and Bob's attendance at the High School prize giving evening, an agreement has been reached between ourselves and the head teacher Angelo Goduti to explore how the Council can work with students via the School Council. This will help us to gain a better understanding of the needs of young people within the community and for BTC to support relevant areas of the curriculum and contribute to the preparation for moving into the world of work e.g. mock interviews. We also hope to explore ways that school sports facilities might become more accessible to the community outside of school hours.

At present we are awaiting the outcome of the application for funding, submitted by Jackie Ball with BTC backing, to the Community Fund held by the Police and Crime Commissioner. This would help to provide qualified outreach youth workers to support our local adolescents/teenagers into positive recreational activities.

In a recent committee meeting attended by children and parents it was agreed to work with the community to re-open the Skate Park, initially to make good the current damage but with councillors and residents working together it is hoped to raise funds to replace, or fully upgrade the park in the future.

Working with the Police

As you will be aware we have had difficulty in sustaining a reliable working relationship with local police officers due to the scarcity of their numbers and those deployed here, no sooner have we established a working relationship than they are moved on to other duties or out of area. The meeting held with Inspector Liz Casey recently highlighted our concerns and we have now been allocated named police officers with direct contact details to cover all day and late shifts. These officers will all have independent access to Broad Street offices and hold regular meetings with BTC staff/Councillors, **and** we are assured that they will have a more permanent status in relation to Bungay.

Riverside Lettings

With considerable thanks to Emma Beese our assistant clerk, lettings for Riverside are on the increase and look to grow, meaning that this BTC asset will, for the first time in 20 years, be making a profit rather than a loss and therefore benefit the community we serve.

Councillor Training

This is an area that needs to be focussed upon more thoroughly this year so that councillors feel confident and well informed in relation to the work that they do. To enable the greatest number of councillors to attend whilst keeping costs down arrangements are in progress for trainers to delivery programme(s) in house. Further details will be announced shortly.

Council Website/Newsletter

Whilst Council has engaged a provider to design a new website it requires considerable initial input from BTC staff before it can be launched. Arrangements have just been made to speed up this process so that we have a new website before the New Year gets very much older.

Newsletter articles have been selected and the writers of each identified. A graphic designer has been approached and a reliable distribution method agreed. It is planned for the next newsletter to be delivered last week in January/first week February.

BTC Environment Policy

Whilst still in final draft form this extensive, and Bungay bespoke policy is about to be launched. From the number of enquiries and levels of interest coming from the community it will be very much welcomed, and provide us, the community and individuals alike with guidance that informs on how we can promote and take responsibility for mitigating some of the damage that gives rise to pollution and ultimately climate change. Our thanks goes to Councillor Guy Bradley who has been the main source of information/expertise and the author of the document.

Sue Collins

14th January 2020