



Brackley Town Council Annual Report

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MAYORS MESSAGE

2014 -2015

It has been a great pleasure and privilege to be the Mayor of Brackley over the last year. Time has passed quickly as I travelled to events all over the county representing Brackley, whose whereabouts are now known on the other side of the M1!

I had the pleasure of being Mayor during the commemorations, last August, of the beginning of WW1 for which there was an Exhibition in the Town Hall. The Classic Car Show in August raised £1000 for my charities; thanks to Cllr Chris Cartmell, who arranged the event, and to those who worked hard to make it so successful. In this special year the Remembrance Sunday Service, attracted many more people and my thanks go to Brackley Band for marching with us and playing so beautifully, to our adopted bugler and to my Cadet, Jack Carton, who carried my wreath.

These are exciting times for Brackley and it is great to see so many people getting involved in community events. The Carnival, Soap Box Derby and Festival of Motorcycling were all successful and all bring visitors to the town.

During my year as Chairman we have seen success in the first stage of the Heritage Fund Lottery Grant application and now stage two funding has been applied for, the Planning Application for the Fire Station's use as a community facility is progressing to approval and the play parks have had new equipment.

Following Mercedes Petronas team's win in the F1 Constructors Championship and Lewis Hamilton's win in the Drivers' Championship, I had great pleasure in hosting a Civic Reception in the Town Hall for the Engineering Department of Mercedes and the Engineering College at Silverstone. This was followed by a visit to Mercedes in March where I presented a picture of the towns historical buildings. We wish them all the best this year, in the hope that they can repeat their success.

Thanks to everyone in Brackley, and beyond, for their support over the last year, helping me to raise over £4,000 for my three Charities. The money will pay for a new course for the Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service Youth Engagement Scheme, a defibrillator for Brackley Town Centre and some much needed funds for The Hub.

Thanks go to my Chaplain, Father Nicholas, and the clergy in Brackley for their support over the last year; to Russ Barry and Don Cox for being Mace Bearers during the year and to my fellow Councillors, including those who have stepped down following the election, for all their support and assistance.

I wish the new Mayor and Deputy Mayor every success in the coming year and am looking forward to working alongside them and my fellow Councillors.

Cllr Elaine Wiltshire
Mayor 2014-15



COMMITTEE REPORTS

These end-of-year summaries outline the remit of and the significant issues relating to each Committee during the past financial year.

FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE

Remit: income and expenditure; policies to ensure operational accountability and transparency; improving procedures and operational efficiencies. (Regular audits have confirmed the operational integrity of the Council)

Issues: Updating all policies and procedures of the Council, and determining the budget for 2015/16, progressing the Heritage Lottery Fund Bid and forward planning to relocation of town council functions. Improving communications including the website, facebook page and Town Talk through the Communications Working Party.

PLANNING & GENERAL WORKS COMMITTEE

Remit: to view and comment upon all planning applications relating to Brackley such as shop signage, extensions to residential homes and housing schemes and matters relating to licensing, change of use of premises, and road closures.

Issues: working closely with SNC (the planning authority) during the on-going planning process for the Radstone Fields and the former Bronnley & Sawmills sites to

ensure that the needs of Brackley residents are taken into account and progressing highways issues with the County Council, resulting in significant resurfacing works in the town.

DIRECT RESPONSIBILITIES & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Remit: matters for which the Council is directly responsible and over which it has control, including the upkeep of the Town Hall and open spaces, hedgerows, ponds and lakes; the purchase and maintenance of play equipment and matters relating to Brackley Cemetery and allotments.

Issues: renewing the lease with Anglian Water for St James' lake, refurbishing play areas at Brewin Close and Chaffinch Way, completing the tree survey so that maintenance works can be scheduled, progressing the refurbishment of the old Fire Station and planning the renewal of the Christmas lights.

Linda Carter
Town Clerk



Minutes of Council and Committee meetings are available to view on the Town Council's website. www.brackleynorthants-tc.gov.uk



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Where our money comes from:

Brackley Town Council's income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 March, 2015 shows that we had a total income of £515,423 as detailed below.

Income source	£000's
Precept	464.4
Cemetery income	12.5
Town Hall	17.5
Rent & Fees	13.2
Interest	7.8
TOTAL	515.4

Our single largest source of income is the Precept. This money, paid to us by South Northamptonshire Council (SNC), is collected through the Council Tax and is calculated on the number of dwellings within Brackley. It is paid in two halves in April and September and amounted to £464,394 for the 2014-15 financial year.

Further income is derived from:

- letting out of the Town Hall for various purposes including meetings, parties, wedding receptions, discos
- from the organisers of fairs & markets using the piazza in the Town Centre
- payments for burials in the town cemetery;
- fees from third parties such as the Brackley & District Angling Club, Brackley & District Allotment Association and
- contributions towards grass mowing from Northamptonshire County Council and towards the collections of dog waste from SNC
- our invested reserve funds, held with NS&I and 100% secure, which earned interest of just under £8k

How we spent the money

We have placed just over £92k in reserves towards of future projects which include:

- Contribution to the funding of the restoration and redevelopment of the Town Hall
- Capital projects such as the refurbishment of the old Fire Station
- Funds towards the provision of a skate park

Open Spaces

We're committed to maintaining the many open spaces for which we're responsible and last year spent a total of £92,649, over half of which was spent on refurbishing the play areas in Brewin Close and opposite Chaffinch Way. Other costs were grass cutting £28.5k and emptying dog bins £6k. We also spent money on repairing play equipment, general ground maintenance and surveying the trees in the Council's ownership.

Town Hall and Town Centre

Our historic Town Hall is an iconic focal point and maintaining this centuries-old building is vital. Despite that fact that we are currently awaiting the outcome of our Stage 2 bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund, we continue to maintain the building to prevent further deterioration. We spent £20k on its general upkeep including repairs to the roof to keep it watertight, and a further £15k on general expenses and £1100 on licenses. We spent £29k on the upkeep of the Town Centre which included Christmas lights, testing of lighting columns and planting for the town centre flowerbeds and planters, and £4k was contributed to SNC towards the upkeep of the public toilets.

Heritage Lottery Fund

The Council has currently spent £85,000 on architect and consultancy fees associated with the Stage 2 funding bid, but 90% of this expenditure will be refunded when the claim has been processed.

General Administration costs

£230k was spent in administering the affairs of the Town Council. Included are the salaries and on-costs of our staff and general administration costs (e.g. postage, stationery, telephone, insurance, audit fees, Health & Safety compliance). Also included is a small allowance towards the Mayor's official duties; the cost of producing newsletters and maintaining the Council's website.

Community Contributions

The Local Government Act 1972 gives us the authority to spend a small sum of money, calculated on the number of residents, on things that are of benefit to the whole community. Local organisations received contributions totalling £10,750.

