

SKEGNESS TOWN COUNCIL



Report of the Town Council's

Activities 2014/15

Annual Town Meeting

7.00 pm Wednesday May 13th 2015

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Town Hall North Parade, Skegness, Lincolnshire, PE25 1DA

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I take great pleasure in presenting this report of Council activities for the past year.

The Mayoral Year

As my Mayoral year nears its end I would like to thank everyone for the overwhelming support Jules and I have received. It has been a very busy year and we have attended over 400 engagements, ranging from 100th Birthday celebrations at care homes to releasing rescued baby seals back to the sea (with pretty much anything else you can think of in between !!) It would be impossible to pick a favourite. They were all a pleasure to attend.

There are some great organisations in our town, some of which I was previously unaware of. They all deserve our thanks and a big pat on the back.

On a personal note, I am pleased to report that the Skegness Road Show trailer is in fact back on the road!!

We have already visited Scunthorpe and Coventry this year and have more venues arranged for the coming months.

The purpose of these events is to publicise Skegness and hopefully attract even more visitors to our town.

With new businesses and exciting new attractions putting much needed investment into the town, Skegness is definitely on the up.

I would like to finish by once again thanking you for your support. It has been an honour and a privilege for us to be Mayor and Mayoress

Both Jules and I have had a wonderful year. Thank you

Council and Committees

Up until 12th May 2015 Council comprised 20 elected members from this date it will increase by one to 21. The Council takes overall responsibility for all decisions and can choose to delegate authority to make decisions to Committees or to a Council Officer, but cannot delegate authority to a Councillor.

In order to be more effective the Council has created a number of Committees to spread workload, review issues in more detail and operate more effectively. The Standing Committees comprise Business and Resources, Direction and Strategy and Planning and Planning Policy. Additionally an HR and Appointments Committee meets occasionally to discuss staffing matters.

The Council has met on 17 occasions, the Business & Resources Committee on 5 occasions, Direction & Strategy Committee on 4 occasions, Planning & Planning Policy Committee on 16 occasions and the Appointment and

Appeals Committee on 4 occasions. Task and Finish Groups that serve committees and allow matters to be examined in depth met several times throughout the year. A total of 46 Council and Committee Meetings were held to carry out Council business.

In addition several Councillors and the Town Clerk serve as the Town Councils' representatives

On various Outside Bodies, Partnerships, Liaison Groups and regularly attend associated meetings.

Planning and Planning Policy Committee

The Planning and Planning Policy Committee comprises 14 elected members and usually meets at 21 day intervals in order to achieve consultation deadlines. The Committee has delegated authority from Council to respond to consultation requests in respect of Planning Applications and is also responsible for developing the policy in relation to planning matters for Council to approve.

The Town Council is a consultee and has no power to approve or refuse applications, simply give an opinion. The Planning Authority that determines Planning Applications is East Lindsey District Council.

The Committee has considered 98 planning applications and in each case the Committee decided to support, object or withhold comment. In most cases objections will be supported by the relevant Planning reasons why the Town

Council objects. In some cases, the Council's decision may have been conditional. Full details of decisions are contained in the minutes of the Planning and Planning Policy meetings and the comments available on the East Lindsey Planning Website.

The use of technology has considerably improved the efficiency of Planning meetings and reduced the previous mountain of paperwork that had to be stored in the offices. This means that residents can now examine plans on-line should they wish to.

Business & Resources Committee

The Business & Resources Committee comprises 11 Councillors including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. It is responsible for the operational matters of the Council, including the detailed monitoring of performance, risks and ensuring that the Council's finances are well managed. The Committee is concerned to see that Council functions are operating as expected. From time to time the Committee will identify issues and report findings to Council so that appropriate actions can be put in place.

The Committee sets up Task and Finish Groups from time to time, to examine issues in more detail or undertake work that could not be carried out by a whole Committee. These groups then report back to the Committee.

During 2014/15 the Committee has been involved in the following:

- Governance of Financial Management and Risks
- New Operational Policies and Procedures
- Modernisation and improvement of ways of working

Direction & Strategy Committee

The Direction and Strategy Committee comprises 12 Councillors including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. This Committee has responsibility for examining issues beyond the current year, reacting to new situations and legislation, developing new policies and examining longer-term financial and resource planning. The nature of the business considered means that issues may be examined over a much longer term than operational issues and so may take longer to complete.

Like Business and Resources, this Committee also sets up Task and Finish Groups to examine things in more detail and undertake work.

During 2014/15 the Committee has been involved in the following:

- The approval of a five year Business Plan.

- Review of the Policies relating to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor
- Reviewed the Cemetery Memorial Policy
- War Memorial Improvement Plans
- New ICT Strategy

Councillor's Allowances

Under the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003, Councillors' Allowance for 2014/2015 remained at £500. This payment is subject to tax and is paid quarterly in arrears. During the year one new Councillor resigned and one was elected and therefore each only received the allowance pro-rata.

Councillors may also claim expenses (usually travel) when carrying out official Council business, but none have done so in the financial year.

NAME	ALLOWANCE
	£
M C Anderson	500.00
Mrs S Binch	500.00
Mr D Brookes	500.00

J A Carpenter	500.00
N D Cooper	500.00
S Dennis	500.00
Mrs C Draper	500.00
D R Edginton	500.00
G O Ellis	500.00
Mrs C M Gray	500.00
R Hunter-Clarke	500.00
P P Kemp	500.00
S R Kirk	500.00
C Macey	500.00
Mrs T Mellors	500.00
Mrs D Milner	500.00
K Milner	500.00
S O'Dare	500.00
G Saxon	500.00

M Smith	500.00

In addition to the table above, the Mayor has been able to draw on an allowance up to £5280 to meet civic and any other costs associated with being Mayor.

Attendance Records at Council and Committees

Not all councillors serve on all committees. The table below lists the number

of meetings to which councillors were summoned, the number of meetings attended and the percentage attendance.

Councillor	Possible Meetings	Meetings Attended	% Attendance	Meetings additionally attended as a Substitute
Anderson M C	37	12	32.43	0
Binch Mrs S	21	16	76.19	0
Brookes D	22	18	81.82	2

Carpenter J A	46	41	89.13	0
Cooper N	17	4	23.53	0
Dennis S	46	33	71.74	0
Draper Mrs C	38	31	81.58	0
Edginton D R	38	36	94.74	1
Ellis G O	37	28	75.68	0
Gray Mrs M	42	38	90.48	0
Hunter-Clarke R	22	20	90.91	2
Kemp P P	21	14	66.67	0
Kirk S R	21	13	61.90	0
Macey C	46	36	78.26	0
Mellors Mrs T	37	13	35.14	0
Milner Mrs D	38	21	55.26	0
Milner K	38	22	57.89	0
O'Dare S	37	25	67.57	0
Saxon G	42	27	64.29	0

Smith M	37	23	62.16	1

There is a system of substitutes for Committee meetings to reduce the incidents where meetings are inquorate (do not have enough Councillors present to legally meet). This means that if Councillors send apologies for a meeting, the Town Clerk is authorised to seek other Councillors to take their place.

Grants

All organisations who request a grant have to submit an application form giving the following details as a minimum:-

- Amount applied for
- Proposed use of grant
- Copy of accounts and bank statements

All applications were carefully considered and the following grants were awarded:-

St Clements Scouts	£1000
East Coast Juniors	£ 520
Church of the Nazarene	£1000

Additionally a specific grant of £4000 was made available to SECWHA in support of the summer switch-on.

Town Clerk Financial Report

The Council is in a sound financial position having delivered its objectives for the year within the overall approved budget and has set aside money for future projects and to offset future risks in specified ear marked reserves.

The Council maintains a General Reserve of approximately 2 months expenditure in accordance with good practice.

Fees and charges now form a significant part of the Council's income, reducing the level of the precept that the Council would otherwise have had to raise. Overall, the precept level is comparable to other neighbouring Towns.

The accounts will be reviewed and approved by Council on 27th May 2015 following Internal Audit and then open to public inspection for a period of 4 weeks. The accounts will then be subject to external audit from 30th June 2015 and

the Council will formally publish the audited accounts no later than 30th September 2015.

Accounts and other financial information will be posted on the website once approved.

Conclusion

The Town Council continues to work hard to ensure improvements are made throughout the town for the benefit of our residents. You may be sure that the Council will continue to serve you to the best of its ability.

Thank you.

George Saxon

Town Mayor of Skegness 2014/15

- See more at:

<http://www.skegness.gov.uk/reports.php#sthash.AdTUhaRu.dpuf>