

Grade-Ruan Parish Council

Chairman's Report for year ending April 2020.

At the time of writing (Easter Monday 2020) the Covid-19 pandemic is reaching its height in the UK. The country has been in 'Lock down' for over 3 weeks and the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, is still recovering from the virus. Many of us have family members, or friends, working in the 'frontline' or directly affected. The weather has been dry and sunny, but the roads and car parks have been quiet. People are staying at home; visitors are staying away. The normal activities of the Council and local organisations are suspended. The on-going situation and all the future implications are uncertain. Help and guidance has been plentiful from Cornwall Council, but also from the local community in Grade-Ruan and across the Lizard Peninsula, using communication channels old and new. The Parish Council is a point of contact and coordination for all, as and when needed.

As we look forward to how Government and Councils might best operate under Lock-down, a look back over the last 12 months recalls once again the many issues in normal times where the Parish Council has worked on behalf of its parishioners.

Planning as always featured highly, and 2019-'20 was no exception with 37 applications to consider (**34** in 2014-15; **22** in 2015-16; **27** in 2016-17; **38** in 2017-18; **21** in 2018-19 - so towards the top end of what we'd expect). 9 of those were for various types of new dwellings from Bungalows to a 'hut', with Cornwall Council approving one, refusing two, and the rest still awaiting a decision.

Extra meetings specifically for Planning were held in August and November when there were large numbers of Applications, and this allowed sufficient time for debate and decision-making without taking time from other Council business. The Council has continued to refer cases for planning enforcement where appropriately in the public interest; this follows a number of debates in 2018 and the setting up of a Working Party and meetings with planning Officers to consider best practice and how we can all work best to protect our environment from uncontrolled development.

In other areas, Council finances are managed closely and transparently, with the Committee holding two extra meetings annually to help guide the Council. Donations were made again to such organisations as the local Under-5s, Helford Sailing Trust, Churchyard maintenance, the Air Ambulance, and the 'Sowenna' Appeal - supporting the mental health of Cornish youngsters. There have been the usual ongoing trails of communication with Cormac about highways and footpath issues like drainage, verge cutting, and signage, with extra monies being spent from the budget.

Finally, a quick run through the last 12 months.

I have highlighted the following selection of items from the Minutes (all of which can be found on the Council website www.grpc.org.uk) :

April 2019 :

- Maintenance procedure for the Parish defibrillators clarified and undertaken.
- Agreed a 'Working Group' to investigate and inform the Council about the level of involvement desirable relating to buildings in Cadgwith associated with the fishing industry.

May 2019 :

- Dogs on beaches : Consultation received from Cornwall Council.

June 2019 :

- Progress on Climate Change declarations at Cornwall and local Council levels.
- Space Hub developments at Newquay airport and links to Goonhilly Earth Station.
- Evening and late-night helicopter flying routes and times discussed (with a written enquiry to Culdrose agreed in July).
- Grant funding, and legal, and administration implications discussed in relation to fishing buildings in Cadgwith.

July 2019:

- Update and thanks relating to the important access route through 'Ella and Cara's field' (courtesy of Mr Hawkins).
- Cornwall Councillor Rule updated on positive pursuit of a number of planning enforcement cases; feedback on a 'Farm strategy'; and ongoing facilitation for verge cutting discussions.
- Angela Agutter elected to the Parish Council.
- Support for Cornwall AONB Ancient monument project.
- Survey and valuation Quotes received for 'Fort York'.
- Chairman attended reception at RNAS Culdrose as guest of Captain Rimington.

September 2019:

- Feedback from parishioners and further enquiries about dogs on beaches (Cadgwith).
- Letter to CC requesting 'Dark Sky' designation be considered for the Lizard Peninsula.
- Removal of public payphones (but not the kiosks!) accepted.
- Martha's Acre (Prazegooth Lane) – Working party formed to investigate future options.
- Road congestion around Culdrose once again highlighted.
- Enclosure of Common Land on the Todden 'Village Green' raised.

October 2019:

- New Police Alert system announced.
- Updates on 7 planning enforcement cases.
- Christmas shopping coach-trip booked for parishioners.
- Resolution on dog ban at Cadgwith beaches made.
- Statement emphasizing that local Councils need to be consulted on 5G mobile coverage, particularly in AONBs.
- Contents of the 'Glover Report' noted (review of Britain's AONBs and National parks).

November 2019:

- Community Network Panel report about Dark Skies.
- Discussion of initial report from the liaison meeting with Culdrose in October and a number of suggestions by councillors noted for taking forward at future meetings.
- Surveys on 'Steamers' and 'Fort York' shared with fishermen at Cadgwith.

December 2019:

- Grant request for Youth worker – St Keverne.
- Unwelcome removal of red phone kiosk in Ruan Minor !
- Prospect of Cadgwith 'Winch-house' being up for sale discussed.

January 2020:

- 'VE Day' plans discussed.
- Martha's Acre : future option for a path linking to National Trust land outlined.
- Approved Minutes from the Culdrose liaison meeting circulated; Council agreed on further enquiries about aspects of overflying and development at Predannack airfield which can have a 'knock-on' affect locally, like traffic congestion.
- Update on removal of gate enclosing Common land on the Todden.
- Further updates on fishing cellars and quotations for Winch-house received.
- Clerk's Annual review; Council raised the Clerk's hours and salary, with a vote of thanks for excellent service.

February 2020:

- New police liaison group formed.
- Report from Lizard Peninsula Dark sky meeting, but needs individuals to take forward.
- Public consultation process discussed about buildings in Cadgwith.

March 2020:

- An 'Extraordinary' meeting was held by way of public engagement about the principle of the Parish Council's involvement with safeguarding fishing cellars in Cadgwith.
- At the main monthly meeting a new Working Group was set up to coordinate public consultation, investigate financial costs to parishioners, and investigate the practicalities of setting up a management Trust.
- Further detail was discussed about plans to create a public path connecting Martha's Acre (Prazegooth Lane) with National Trust woodland and paths to the 'Frying pan', with some funding to be approved at a later date. Work is due to commence in September 2020.

Jeb Preston

April 2020.