



Chepstow Town Council

2021/2022

ANNUAL REPORT

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WELCOME TO THE CHEPSTOW TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021/2022

Welcome to the Chepstow Town Council Annual Report for 2021/22.

I once again hope that you will enjoy reading the Annual Statement for the last year where you can learn more about the work that Chepstow Town Council has carried out on behalf of the people of Chepstow.

Once more this work couldn't have been achieved without my fellow councillors and our hard working office staff. Their diligent work is what makes this council function. I once again also want to thank all the organisations, groups and individuals who have brought their expertise and support to the Council, for the improvement and well being of the communities of Chepstow.



I was surprised and humbled that my fellow councillors elected me as Mayor for a third consecutive time, for the year 2021/22, at its Annual Meeting in 2021.

I have continued to champion environmental projects in Chepstow and Bulwark. Sadly some are still in progress due to the delays that COVID has brought over the last couple of years. I hope to see them completed within the next council term. I also have endeavoured to make sure all members of the community have a voice in how Chepstow is run. We have done this by making sure the public can still attend meetings, even if they are online, and by moving forward with our Place Plan project.

Thankfully this last year has seen a number of changes in Covid restrictions and I have been able to attend many more events on behalf of the town council. Below are just a selection.



On the 3rd of July 2021 me and my deputy, Cllr Dale Rooke were able to attend the Severn Area Rescue Association fun day and duck race and got to speak to their CEO Mark Carwardine about the great work they are continuing to do. As a council we were able to award them an extra grant this last year, of £6000 towards replacing their dry suits that the team members wear when out rescuing people in the cold waters of the Wye and Severn. We are so lucky to have these wonderful volunteers looking after the safety of our community. Thank you SARA.

In 2021 festivals returned to Chepstow and we hosted the Chepstow Festival of Arts. This one day festival was busy with artists of all kinds and showed what a creative community we have. I hadn't seen Chepstow so busy with people in a long time.



I had the privilege of handing out some awards at St. Mary's priory while spending the day with two of my childhood heroes Morph and his creator Peter Lord from Aardman Animations.

There was a brief moment when Morph was technically Mayor of Chepstow while holding part of my chain of office. Thankfully nothing terrible happened. The Chepstow Festival of Arts returns on Saturday 16th July and I can't wait to see what they have got for us this time.

On August 27th I had the honour of meeting the Women of Greenham Common who back in 1981 walked from Cardiff to Greenham to protest the storage of nuclear weapons at an American army base. They were retracing their steps and stopping off thanking the communities who put a roof over their heads and fed them on the epic journey. It was fantastic to hear so many stories of strong and empowered women doing what they knew to be right. I was so happy to accept on behalf of Chepstow a slate plaque commemorating the help they received from the people of Chepstow back in 1981. It is on show at Chepstow museum for everyone to see.



In October I was so happy to once again be invited to attend the U3A open day at the Palmer Centre and spend time with the joint chairs Shelagh Davies and Nicky Lee. Once more I was amazed that they now have over 80 groups and a continually growing membership. Chepstow U3A has actually increased its membership during covid rather than losing members. This is down to an amazing group of organisers and facilitators who are so passionate about what they do. I look forward to coming along to their next open day and seeing what they are up to even when I am not Mayor.



After some terrible weather and a damaged tree Chepstow was able to have a Christmas light switch on for the first time in a few years. It was great to see so many faces I knew and people I have grown up with, attending with their children, all enjoying the evening. I even got to meet Elsa and Olaf from Frozen along with the Chepstow Brownies. For once I wasn't the oddest looking person there with Olaf stood next to me.

At the end of March I was lucky enough to be a part of a broadcast of Escape to the Country that was filmed last autumn. I got to talk to a couple who were looking to move to the Chepstow area and I got to talk about what a great place it is to live and grow up in. I believe it's on iPlayer if anyone wants to see it again. Series 22: Episode 38. Welsh Borders.



In April I had the pleasure of meeting Nikki Miller , a Chepstow resident who has recently won 2 bronze medals at the Tae kwon-do World Championships in Manchester. I stayed to watch their class and was amazed to see the discipline and stamina they all had acquired from learning this martial art. The classes that instructor Tom Baxter delivers are so good that many of the attendees parents have now joined and are having to catch up with their children's higher graded belts. Keep up the great work guys.

Finally I would like to dedicate my last year as Mayor of Chepstow to my mother Jean Kirton, a person many people in Chepstow know and without who I wouldn't be the person I am today. More people with her compassion and selflessness in this world wouldn't be a bad thing.

Please stay safe and and look after each other.

Cllr Tom Kirton

Chepstow Town Mayor 2021/22

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Welcome

Our annual report tells you what we have done over the last year. It provides a summary of our projects, activities and budgets as well as details of our Councillors and the areas they represent. The report is based on our financial year that runs from 1st April to 31st March and also covers the municipal year of Councillor Tom Kirton's year of office as Mayor of Chepstow, which commenced in May 2021.

As a Council, we are always striving to improve the services we offer by making use of the resources that are available to us. Nevertheless, there is always more we can do, and we hope that this annual report detailing our work will encourage more people to get involved, learn about the Council's role and maybe even consider becoming a Councillor in the future.

Part of the Annual Report is required by law – the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 – to show how the Council's work contributes to the objectives set out in the Monmouthshire Local Well-being Plan. The content of the rest of the report is far more flexible and at its core is setting out what the Council said it would do in 2020–21 and what it actually did.

The Council welcomes your feed-back on what could be added, improved, or subtracted to make future annual reports more readable, informative and appealing.

Place Plan and the Placemaking Plan

The Town Council recognised the need to balance short-term needs with the long term in 19/20 and agreed to start work on a Place Plan. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the start of the consultation was delayed, however during 21/22 the Town Council carried out extensive online and face to face consultation with stakeholders and the public. The final stage whereby all consultation information has been received and collated has resulted in a summary report and ideas for next steps to be taken.



ABOUT CHEPSTOW TOWN COUNCIL

The Place Plan has given the opportunity for local people working together with the Town Council to consider the needs and aspirations for the future and a number of projects which the Town Council may wish to work towards have been formed.

This will also allow the development of services, projects and initiatives which meet current needs but will embed and improve foundations for future development within our community.

To further develop the Place Plan the Town Council are working with MCC on a Placemaking Plan which will seek to interpret and build upon feedback collated from the Place Plan consultation exercise, along with other transport studies, Impact Assessment Reports, Wye Valley Villages Strategy and Action Plan and numerous MCC countywide strategies that have specific relevance to Chepstow.

This is a strategic piece of work and will have an action focus with the inclusion of short, medium and long term actions, with an option (subject to funding) for up to 5 schemes to be developed up to concept design stage and consulted upon as part of the Masterplan consultation.

The Masterplan will also provide the framework to guide future placemaking enhancements in the town of Chepstow. The plan will unpick some of the existing issues as well as look ahead at the transformation required to ensure that the town is able to capitalise on potential opportunities resulting from a planned future increase in population.



ABOUT CHEPSTOW TOWN COUNCIL

Background

Chepstow Town Council was created in 1974 following local government reorganisation and the cessation of Chepstow Urban District Council. It is one of 735 Town and Community Council in Wales. The Council serves a population of around 12,350 (ONS 2011 Census) within the County of Monmouthshire and is one of the largest in the county, providing services to all parts of a diverse and growing community.

Your Council

The Town Council is the grass roots voice of Local Government and is therefore closest to the people. It comprises 15 elected members, with three councillors representing each of the five wards of St Kingsmark, St Marys, St Christophers, Thornwell and Larkfield, the present councillors were elected in May 2017 to serve a five year term of office which ends in May 2022. The local elections are being held on 5 May 2022 to elect members and the Town Council is increasing to 19 members as well as seeing a boundary change increasing to number of wards to seven: Bulwark, Chepstow Castle, Larkfield, Maple Avenue, Mount Pleasant, St Kingsmark and Thornwell.

The Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor are elected each year by the council at the annual meeting in May with Cllr Tom Kirton elected as Mayor for 2020/21 supported by Cllr Dale Rooke as Deputy Mayor.

In order to act and carry out duties as a member of a community or town council all persons are required to make a formal declaration of acceptance of office. Following this declaration, members of community or town councils are then holders of elected office and occupy a role that is part of the Welsh local government structure.

Our website provides notices of meetings, agendas, reports and minutes, along with many governance documents and other information about the Council.

A Town Council is a corporate body with a legal existence of its own, which is quite separate from that of its Members. Its lawful acts, assets and liabilities are its own and not those of its members. Any decisions taken by the Town Council are the responsibility of the whole body, it is irrelevant if any particular Member agreed or disagreed with any particular proposal.

The Town Council has a duty to ensure that the rules for the administration of the council are followed. The Council must:

- appoint a chair
- appoint a Clerk
- appoint a Responsible Finance Officer
- appoint an independent and competent internal auditor
- hold an annual meeting of the council and;
- keep records of all decisions related to council business.

THE COUNCILLORS

Elected Member Responsibilities as Individuals

A Councillor has an active interest in their local community and plays a vital role in representing the interest of the community in which they serve by improving the quality of life and local environment.

Councillors must act within the law and must sign a declaration to say they agree to work within the Code of Conduct. They are able to suggest ideas, engage in constructive debate, represent constituents and respond to the needs and views of the local community.

Councillors are the voice of their local community and can work to influence other tiers of Local Government and help make collective decisions which form the policy of the Council.

Councillors contribute to the work of the Council by:

- Suggesting ideas
- Engaging in constructive debate
- Interacting with their electors
- Behaving in an ethical way
- Voting – enabling the Council to make decisions

Councillors cannot make decisions/promises individually, this has to be done by the Council as a corporate body. Councillors actively and constructively contribute to good governance and encourage community participation and residents' involvement in the work of the council. Details on how to contact a Chepstow Town Councillor can be found on the Council's website:

http://www.chepstow.co.uk/Contact_Us_30245.aspx

Town Mayor

The Town Mayor:

- presides at meetings and is responsible for ensuring meetings are conducted properly with effective debate, producing clear, lawful decisions.
- encourages participation amongst members and ensures that views are expressed freely, whilst maintaining focus which is fair and balanced. The Mayor signs the minutes of meetings, which are a legal record of decisions made by Chepstow Town Council.
- undertakes civic duties and represents the Council at events and can appoint a charity for the year of service.

Remuneration

Individuals who have accepted office as a member of a community or town council are entitled to receive payments as determined by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales and whilst Councillors hold elected office and give their time voluntarily it is generally without remuneration, although certain expenses may be re-claimed. The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales determines allowances and mandates some allowances each year although Councillors may opt-out of the payment if they wish.

A payment of £150 is mandated as a contribution to costs and expenses for members of all community and town councils and, in accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Measure 2011, Community and Town Councils must publish within their authority area the remuneration received by their members by 30th September following the end of the year to which the payment relates. This information is available on our website at www.chepstow.co.uk.

THE OFFICERS

Administration Support

Services provided by the Town Council are managed and delivered by a team of six part-time employees, comprising three in administration and three mobile hygiene and asset maintenance operatives. This small team, based at The Gatehouse, is led by the Town Clerk who ensures that the correct procedures and policies are in place and followed in order to deliver services to a high standard.

The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

The Clerk is the Council's Chief Officer employed under section 112 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 to provide administrative support for the council's activities. Any other staff, although employed by the Council, are under the responsibility of the Clerk who is their manager.

As the Proper Officer of the council in law the Clerk is answerable to the Council as a whole. Individual members cannot give instructions to the Clerk

The Council must also appoint a Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) to manage its finances and at Chepstow Town Council the Clerk and RFO is the same person.

The role of the Clerk and RFO, although not exhaustive, includes:

- Advising the Council on legal matters, independently and objectively whilst recognising that the Council as a whole is responsible for its decisions
- Organising the Council's procedures
- Gathering information to help the Council make an informed decision
- Leading and supporting the officer team to carry out the decisions of the Council
- Implementing the Council's decisions
- Providing administrative support
- Personnel management
- Project management
- Health and safety management
- Management of Council's finances

The Clerk can have delegated powers of the Council to act on its behalf under the Local Government Act 1972 Section 101 (Discharge of Functions). Whilst it is good practice for the Clerk to consult on the content of an agenda with the Chair, the Clerk has the final say as Proper Officer and the legal signatory.

THE COUNCIL

Meetings

Councils conduct their business through meetings which are formal events with a clear purpose of making decisions following appropriate focused debate. As well as Full Council, where all members are required to attend, the Council, at their annual meeting, appoints Councillors to four main committees:

Planning and Administration Committees

Finance, Policy and Audit Committee

Personnel Committee

Environment and Amenities Committee



Full Council

Powers and responsibilities of the Council:

- To take all policy and strategic decisions affecting the community of Chepstow
- To ratify the decisions of Council's Committees where no specific delegation of powers have been agreed.
- Approving the Council's areas of focus/corporate plan, annual report, budget the level of precept levied on Monmouthshire County Council.
- Approval of the Council's annual accounts and the annual return.
- Authorising borrowings.
- Authorising the incurring of expenditure not provided for within the approved budget or otherwise permitted under the Council's Financial Regulations.
- Appointing Council representatives to serve on outside bodies.
- Nomination of representatives of the Council at any inquiry on matters affecting the Town, excluding those matters that may be delegated to a Committee.
- Responding to public consultations on matters affecting the town, excluding those matters specific to a Committee or the Consultation Committee.
- Confirming the appointment of the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and the RFO.
- Making, amending, revoking, re-enacting or adopting bye-laws.
- Determining the adoption of any new undertakings, devolved services and/or asset transfers.
- Adopting and changing the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and powers and duties of Committees.
- To deal with all aspects of the recruitment and selection of community governors including interviewing, selection and appointment if required.
- Prosecution or defence in a court of law.
- All other matters which must, by law, be reserved to the full Council.

THE COUNCIL

Planning and Administration Committee

This committee is responsible for making recommendations to Monmouthshire County Council in respect of planning applications; to comment on planning policy matters; to decide matters of urgent business requiring action prior to the next Full Council meeting; planning matters of strategic or substantial nature having a significant impact on the community to be referred to Full Council.

In 2021/22 this committee considered 60 planning applications and has been integral in progressing the work of the Place Plan along side other Councillors involved in the working party.

Environment and Amenities Committee

To be responsible for community and town amenities and have authority to authorise expenditure within the Council's approved budgets for Chepstow in Bloom, Christmas Lighting, Town Publications, Summer play schemes, War Memorials, litter bins and environmental projects. In addition it is responsible for environmental projects that aim to; contribute to the goal of the Town Council becoming carbon neutral by 2030, improve local air quality issues, enhance local biodiversity, encourage less reliance on cars, encourage ethical and sustainable practices, encourage local carbon reduction initiatives.

The Committee have been working towards a number of environments projects which include: trial recycling bin within the High Street; replacement drinking water fountain at the Riverbank; refurbishment of the water fountain in the Dell Park, bee and butterfly nature garden in Thomas Street; investigating the provision of bee hives on the Gatehouse; installation of a green wall along a section of the A48; commissioned a Chepstow wide Energy Survey and Energy Efficiency Report; local dog fouling campaign and investigate how a local car club could work in the town.

This is just a snap shot of what the committee discuss and approve with many of the projects ongoing. In addition it is hoped that the committee will enter into discussions shortly with Network Rail and Transport for Wales on accessibility issues to Chepstow Railway Station.

Finance, Policy and Audit Committee

This committee is responsible for finance including expenditure and investments; property; policy; assets; insurance; risk assessment; lettings policy and income and Community Grant applications up to a limit of £5,000 per application.

Some key highlights this year have been a review of Town Council policies, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations; quarterly budget monitoring, a review of committee terms of reference and scheme of delegation, consideration of a Medium Term Financial Plan, budget and precept for recommendation to Full Council for the financial year 2022/23; recommended to Full Council that additional financial support is offered to Bulwark Community Centre towards the Accessibility Improvement that are planned to be carried out.

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee has delegated responsibility for staffing matters, staff welfare, training and development. It also acts as an interview panel as required making recommendations to Council in respect of permanent Town Council positions. In addition it undertakes to review the staff appraisals and annual pay reviews.

FUNCTIONS CARRIED OUT BY THE COUNCIL

... some of the things we do for you

Town Maintenance & Amenities

We are responsible for maintaining a number of amenities around Chepstow however these do not include the highways, car parks or bus shelters.

Street Cleansing - In partnership with Monmouthshire County Council Monday – Fridays with direct ownership for weekend street cleansing in the main shopping areas of Bulwark and the town.

Benches - Presently, we own and maintain many of the seats and benches situated in the town, some of which have plaques which have been donated in memory of people for whom Chepstow was a special place.

Dog Bins - We are responsible for emptying some 40 dog bins throughout the town and are members of the County Council initiative “Give Dog Fouling the Red Card”.

Defibrillators - The Town Council where possible is adopting unused silver BT Phone boxes for installation of (AED) Automated External Defibrillator units all of which are registered on downloadable apps.

Litter Bins - In partnership with Monmouthshire County Council many of the litter bins have been replaced over the last two years.

Public Toilets - We undertake to open, close, clean and maintain the public toilets at Thomas Street, Welsh Street Car Park, Tourist Information Centre and the Riverbank. Opening times are 9am–4pm (winter) and 9am–6pm (summer).

CCTV - In partnership with Monmouthshire County Council we provide CCTV in the town centre.

Notice Boards - There are 14 notice boards around the Town many of which are updated weekly with details of community events.

War Memorials - We undertake to maintain the War Memorial and War Memorial Gun at Beaufort Square.

We also provide:

- Tubs and Baskets - We are responsible for a number of flower tubs and planters located around the town. These are all planted with permanent bee friendly plants to support the Council's commitment to biodiversity and sustainability
- Hanging Baskets - The Town Council provides and waters some 225 baskets across the town and Bulwark for 16 weeks of the summer.
- Christmas Lights - The Christmas Lights are switched on for a period of about six weeks from late November into the New Year. 2020 was the first year of a three-year contract for which the Council pays £15,000 annually for the provision of the displays, including installation, removal and storage.
- Pop-up shelters - We have 15 pop-up shelters which we hire out free of charge to local community groups to support them in their events. For hire details please email admin@chepstow.co.uk
- Bandstand - The Town Council manages the bookings diary for the bandstand. For details please email admin@chespstow.co.uk



RESPONSIBILITIES

It can sometimes be difficult to know which authority to contact for various queries relating to Chepstow. The Town and County Council have different areas of responsibility which are highlighted below. We hope this brief guide is helpful however please contact us if you have specific questions.



The Town Council owns/leases and manages:

- **War Memorial and War Memorial Gun in Beaufort Square**
- **Town Arch and Gatehouse**
- **Public Toilets at Thomas Street, Welsh Street, Tourist Information Centre and Riverbank**
- **The Drill Hall**
- **The Old Library**
- **Custodial trustee for Bulwark Community Centre**

As well as management of the above the Council is responsible for and/or provides:

- **Litter bins**
- **Dog waste bins and waste removal**
- **Benches**
- **Noticeboards**
- **Community grant funding**
- **Funding for Monmouthshire Citizens Advice Bureau**
- **Making observations on all planning applications in the community**
- **Annual Remembrance Day parade and Service in Beaufort Square**
- **Christmas trees and lighting**
- **Weekly Food and Craft markets**
- **Bands of the Bandstand**
- **Summer floral displays and all year round bee-friendly planting and watering**
- **Weekend street cleaning**

And works in partnership with Monmouthshire County Council:

- **To provide funding for a summer playscheme for local primary school children**
- **A weekday street cleansing service**
- **CCTV in various locations across the town**

RESPONSIBILITIES

What else do we do?

The Town Council is working on a number of projects which are detailed in Well-being of Future Generations area of this report. It also undertakes to comment on important consultations both from Welsh Government and Monmouthshire County Council.

County Council Responsibility

Monmouthshire County Council has responsibility for:

- Education
- Highways
- Footpaths
- Libraries
- Social Services
- Bus Passes
- Street Lighting
- Recycling and rubbish collection
- Trading Standards
- Planning and Enforcement
- Street cleaning (other than town centre)
- Housing
- Environmental Health
- Licensing
- Car Parks
- Council tax and benefits
- Playgrounds
- Furniture and large household collections
- Fly tipping

WORKING PARTIES 2021-2022

In 2021-2022 Town Council set up working parties to consider specific topics and work with local stakeholders.

Primary Health Care



Town Council wrote to the Minister for Health and Social Services requesting that an independent review be carried out into the need for reinstatement of the Minor Injuries Unit at Chepstow Community Hospital. To support this need a number of Freedom of Information requests were submitted to Gloucester, Bristol and Aneurin

Bevan Health Boards relating to patients from NP15/16/25/26 using the services of Minor Injuries Units. The evidence provided by these, together with the growth in population since 2019, indicates that the request for a review should be taken seriously.

A number of discussions were held with Dr Annabelle Holtam, South Monmouthshire Neighbourhood Care Network Cluster Lead, from which a new group was formed. This included representatives from Primary Care in South Monmouthshire, Chepstow GPs, Aneurin Bevan Community Health Board, Age and Disability Community Groups, young parents and Town and County Councillors. The group continues to discuss potential cost effective practical ideas to build on existing community health services with the objective of increasing the local services in Chepstow Community Hospital.

Photo: ABUHB

Community Asset Transfer



The Drill Hall in Chepstow is owned by Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) and has been let to Chepstow Town Council (CTC) on a 21-year full repairing lease since 2008. At a Full Council Meeting held on 21st January 2021, CTC resolved to make the transfer of the Drill Hall a priority piece of work.

In September 2021 the Council procured the services of an appropriately qualified consultant (Gareth Kiddie of GKA), whose role was to lead the project and secure a successful transfer of the asset in line with the principles and practice of community asset transfer, thus meeting the requirements of MCC's Community Asset Transfer Strategy.

A full consultation with the community stakeholders, facility users and young people was completed, and the consultation report is available via our website.

WORKING PARTIES 2021-2022

Shopmobility/Disability



The Council is keen to work with community stakeholders to engage in discussions and obtain information on the feasibility of implementing a Shopmobility scheme in Chepstow to support less able bodied residents and visitors to the town. A budget of £3,000 was set aside for this ongoing project.

Communications and Public Participation

The Council recognised the need to better promote itself and engage with residents to provide more effective two way communications between residents and Councillors. A full review of the Communications & IT Policy and Social Media & Electronic Communication Policy were undertaken and updated where necessary.

The Council also implemented a number of changes to the way that agendas were produced, making it easier to access related documents. It increased activity on social media and its website and agreed to provide individual 01291 phone numbers and tablets to the new Members in 2022.

Jubilee

The Council approved £20,000 from its general reserves for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations in June 2022. It is hoping to fly Union and Jubilee flags using the Christmas tree holders on buildings. It is encouraging community street parties in all wards and making community grants available of up to £100 for each party, arranging Bands on the Bandstand over the 4-day bank holiday, and have agreed to support the Chepstow Events Team by providing funding to cover the cost of hiring the Castle for a larger community party.



WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Support for local Community Groups

We remain committed to providing grants to local community based organisations; the payment of any grant is subject to certain terms and conditions and all applications are measured against the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. In 2021/22 the Council received 14 applications under the Community Grant Scheme, 6 applications under the Covid Emergency scheme, gave out 5 community contributions and 3 donations.



Chepstow Library Garden improvements part funded by a Chepstow Town Council grant in 2021-2022.



SUPPORT FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES 2021-2022

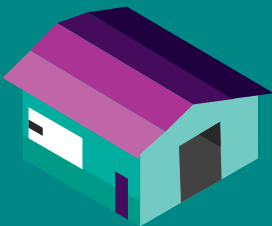
Community Contributions

Drill Hall Management Committee
£8,000

Monmouthshire County Citizens
Advice Bureau £20,950

Chepstow Fireworks £3,700

Music in the Community £4,000



Covid Emergency

Basecamp £1,538



St Mary's RC Primary PTA
£939.98

Schools Cluster £5,000

Monmouthshire County Council
Equality Marketing
£5,000

Donations

Retired Police Dogs of Gwent
£500

Gwent WI £100

Severn Area Rescue Association
£6,700



SUPPORT FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES 2021-2022

Community Grants

Wye Tackle Climate Change £900

Chepstow Reading Library £1,300

Chepstow Festival of Arts £5,000

Chepstow Festival £5,000

Woolpitch Wood Community Orchard £500



7Q Gallery £1,500

Chaos Music & Drama £1,370

St Mary's RC Primary School PTA £2,000

Monmouthshire Youth Service £8,000



Chepstow Events Team £4,000

Garden City Community Group £2,010

Chepstow Bowling Club £1,000

Chepstow Town AFC £5,728

The Zone Youth Centre £7,994




COUNCILLORS

The councillors in 2021-22 were:


The Councillors for 2021/22 were


St Kingsmark



Cllr Alan Horne (Conservative)


Cllr Alan Braund (Conservative)






Cllr Martin Brady (Conservative)


St Christopher's



Cllr Hilary Beach (Labour)


Cllr Jenni Brews (Liberal Democrats)






Cllr Yvonne Havard (Labour)


St Mary's



Cllr Ned Heywood (Independent)


Cllr Caroline Duchet (Liberal Democrats)






Cllr Jez Becker (Liberal Democrats)


Thornwell



Cllr Tom Kirton (Labour)


Cllr Armand Watts (Labour)






Cllr Dale Rooke (Labour)

Larkfield




Cllr Phyl Hobson (Liberal Democrats)



Cllr Paul Pavia (Conservative)
Resigned 23rd February 2022

Cllr Tony Redhead (Liberal Democrats)



COUNCILLORS

Attendance Details 2021-2022

Councillor	Council	Planning	Finance, Policy & Audit	Environment & Amenities	Personnel
(Total sessions)	13	16	3	5	3
CLlr Hilary Beach	10		3	3	
CLlr Jez Becker	11			5	1
CLlr Martin Brady	13	16			
CLlr Alan Braund	12	16		4	
CLlr Jenni Brews	12			3	
CLlr Caroline Duchet	13		3	5	3
CLlr Yvonne Havard	8		3	3	3
CLlr Ned Heywood MBE	9	11	3		
CLlr Alan Horne	11		3		
CLlr Phyl Hobson	1		3		
CLlr Tom Kirton*	13				
CLlr Paul Pavia***	7				2
CLlr Tony Redhead	11	12	2	4	3
CLlr Dale Rooke**	13	16	2	5	3
CLlr Armand Watts	10				

* Town Mayor and ex-officio at all meetings

** Deputy Town Mayor and ex-officio at all meetings—Member of Planning, Finance, Policy and Audit and Environment & Amenities

*** Resigned 23rd February 2022

Shaded cells = N/A (i.e. councillor is not a member of that committee and is therefore not expected to attend)

FINANCE

Chepstow Town Council is ever mindful of how it protects and spends the income that it receives from tax payers to deliver services and facilities to the local community. It conducts a budget setting process that is thorough, comprehensive and open to public scrutiny.

The budget setting process starts in November when the Finance, Policy and Audit Committee calculates the money the Council needs to raise in order to provide for its services and fund any projects planned. It then deducts any income that it expects to receive, leaving a net amount known as the precept.

The budget that was set for the year 2020/21 was £671,436 with funding from income and a precept from local residents of £657,551 costing the average Band D council tax payer £119.35.

The precept is an additional amount added to the Council Tax for Monmouthshire County Council based on the requirements of the Town Council.

Audit

The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 require town and community councils to have adequate and effective arrangements in place for an internal audit of their accounting records and their systems of internal control. This is carried out on a half yearly basis by an internal auditor.

The internal auditor is an independent and competent person appointed by the Council to carry out checks on its systems of control. The auditor carries out tests focusing on area of risk to public money, reports to the Council and signs a report on the annual return to confirm that the Council's systems of controls are in place and operating.

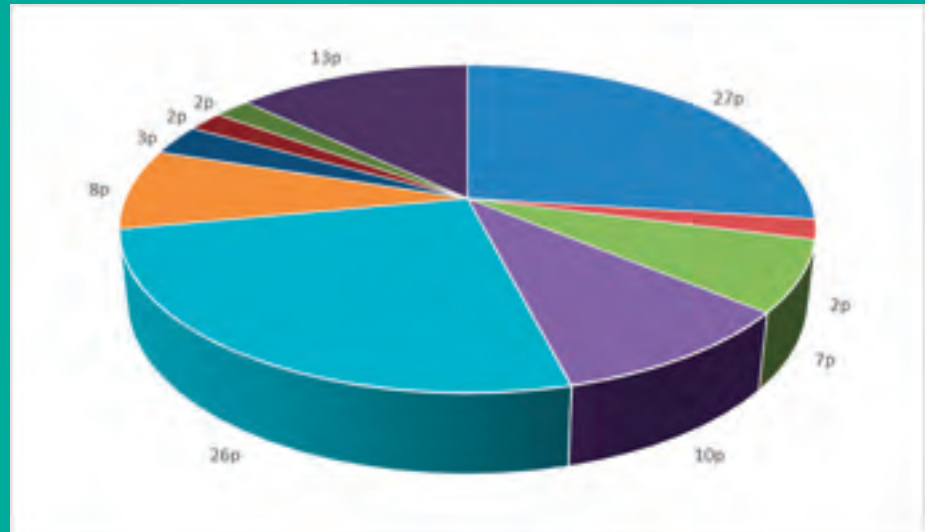
Members and officers are responsible for the spending of public money and are subject to the Council's Financial Regulations and are conscious of its responsibility towards maintaining services and ensuring best value for its precept payers. Accountability and transparency are key to members and officers for the spending of public money.

Being financially responsible as a public body is essential and the Town Council is governed by rules set out by Government to ensure that it takes no unacceptable risks. The Council has established a robust risk management scheme which highlights every significant risk in terms of its activities and makes clear how such risks will be managed.

Any further information detailing this, including the annual accounts can be found at www.chepstow.co.uk.

FINANCE

For every £1 spent:

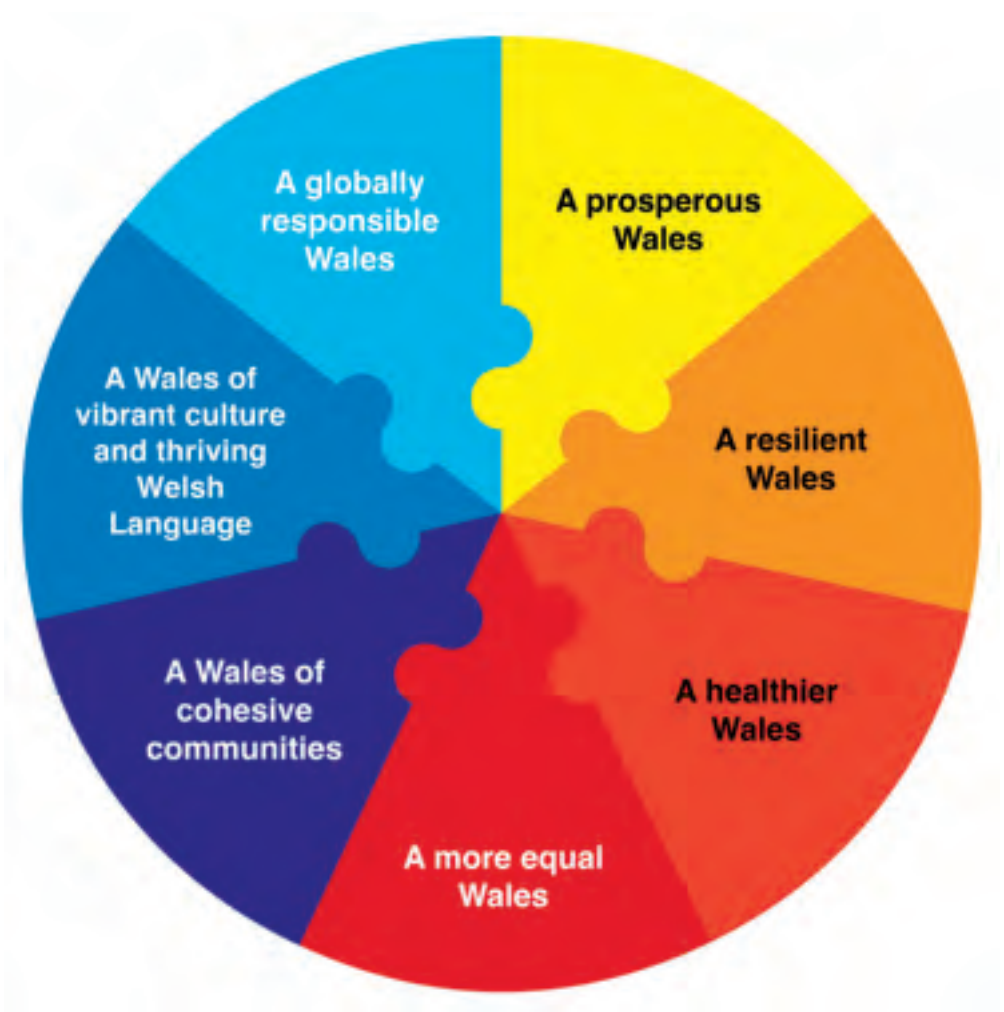


- 27p on staffing costs, national insurance, pension contributions, answering public enquiries, managing and facilitating the Council projects and resources, responding to the consultation, servicing and administering of Council Meetings, training, insurance, member remuneration, office costs, HR and H&S services.
- 2p will contribute to Civic Events, Mayoralty and Member remuneration.
- 7p will meet net premise running and maintenance costs for The Gatehouse inc heating, water and business rates and will meet the loan repayments for the purchase and ongoing maintenance.
- 10p will pay for Community Grants incl. Citizens Advice, TIC, Chepstow Museum, SARA, Festivals, Chepstow Town Band, Chepstow Walkers are Welcome, Chepstow Fairtrade, Community Events.
- 26p will pay for War Memorial Maintenance, litter picking, dog waste disposal, roadside benches, community notice boards, servicing and maintaining the Riverbank, Bank Street and Thomas St Public Conveniences, 7 days a week Town Crew street cleansing team.
- 8p will be spent on Summer Floral Displays, Community Orchards, Apple Day and Christmas Lighting.
- 3p will be spent on Playschemes for local children.
- 2p will pay for recruitment advertising, community publications, Chepstow What's On Guide, website, promoting Chepstow and Town Markets.
- 2p on the Town's CCTV
- 13p on Bulwark Community Centre, Drill Hall, Old Library Building and Place Plan.

The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act

Wales is facing a number of challenges in the future and as a means to tackle these head on the Welsh Government created the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. The aim of the Act is to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. The Act established statutory Public Service Boards and placed a duty on these bodies to define and deliver wellbeing objectives.

The Town Council, as one of the larger Town and Community Councils in Wales, is required by law to prepare an annual report showing how the Council is taking “reasonable steps” to meet the objectives set out in the Monmouthshire Public Services Board Well-being Plan. The full report is available via our website at www.chepstow.co.uk however the following section provides a brief summary of what the Town Council has achieved in the financial year against the objectives.





Well-being Objective: Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life

Objective

1. To increase funding to provide for additional provision within the current summer playscheme, working to ensure that schools and services for children focus on well-being and a more rounded approach than purely academic results.
2. To tackle the issues surrounding Holiday Hunger.

Action	Progress
To provide summer activities for 5 to 11 year olds	Funding support of £20,000 was made available towards the delivery of an open access play scheme which is delivered by MCC.
To tackle the concerns regarding holiday hunger	This is an ongoing conversation with MCC to find ways in which to offer support in this area.
To support those children whose families are impacted by the Covid 19 Pandemic	The Town Council continued to support the schools in this area with an additional £5k to the Schools Cluster PTA to start a used uniform bank, £1,538 to Basecamp who have created a Safe Space Garden to be used as a therapeutic space throughout the year, St Mary's Primary School for the purchase of gazebos to extend their outdoor space ensuring that community groups can keep offering their support and to MCC for a local marketing campaign to support residents experiencing financial hardship.
Councillors as School Governors	Councillors take on this role giving their time, skills and expertise in a voluntary capacity to help their schools provide children with the best possible education.
Community Events	Supports community events and encourages engagement with young people.
Youth Centre	Funding to cover the costs of venue hire and equipment.



Well-being Objective: Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change

Objective

1. Exploring the potential to develop good relationships between people of different ages
2. Focusing on well-being and looking after each other rather than just formal care provision
3. Developing networks for all ages that support people's well-being in their local communities
4. Ensuring suitable and affordable housing is available to people of all ages
5. Promoting active citizenship like volunteering and time-banking

Action	Progress
To ensure easy access community defibrillators across the five wards of Chepstow	Defibrillator to be installed at Beaufort Square. All units logged on apps and batteries and pads regularly checked.
Financially supporting the Drill Hall and Bulwark Community Centre which are seen as local hubs of community activity where people can be active and supported	Both Centres received £8,000 in funding in 21/22 with members representing the Council at meetings.
Financial support was provided to a number of organisations supporting older people	Grant funding was provided to The Palmer Centre to purchase kitchen equipment enabling them to continue to provide the much-needed service to those who may otherwise be isolated, lonely and unable to meet friends due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
Community Centre reopening post Covid	Continued to supply all community centres with the required PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) enabling them to open safely.
Continued support to the Chepstow Citizens Advice Bureau	Enabling residents of all ages to obtain free advice and support on a wide range of matters.
Representatives on committees	Provided Council representation on a number of outside committees including the Palmer Centre Trust, Senior Citizens Welfare Trust, Chepstow Chamber of Commerce and Tourism, CCTV, Air Quality.



Well-being Objective: Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change

Action	Progress
Partnership working MIND Monmouthshire	Partnership commenced May 2020 with the agreement that they would provide wellbeing and resilience sessions to adult individuals which will support families to cope with life's challenges
Whole Place Plan	The Place Plan has given the opportunity for local people working together with the Town Council to consider the needs and aspirations for the future and a number of projects which the Town Council may wish to work towards have been formed. This will also allow the development of services, projects and initiatives which meet current needs but will embed and improve foundations for future development within our community.
Partnership working MCC	The Town Council has continued its discussions with MCC and supported the initiative to set up a local marketing campaign to assist residents experiencing financial hardship by signposting them to the appropriate support.



Well-being Objective: Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change

Objective

1. To declare a climate emergency and “act now” on ideas and recommendations
2. Street Cleansing Partnership Agreement
3. Support local organisations with an interest in protecting and enhancing the environment
4. Dog Fouling reduction

Action	Progress
Climate emergency	A Chepstow Energy report was commissioned which will have a number of projects contained within it that the Town Council can look to work with community stakeholders to take forward.
Biodiversity	The Town Council secured grant funding to access a ‘butterfly garden’ package in partnership with Keep Wales Tidy for planting at Chepstow Bus Station. This has been expanded with the support of the partnership arrangement with MCC and the Town Crew and has now provided a much needed visual improvement to the bus station area whilst encouraging biodiversity.
Street Cleansing	The Town Council works in partnership with Monmouthshire County Council to provide a full street cleansing service to Chepstow. This includes cleaning the town, emptying waste bins, grounds maintenance, bench maintenance and replacement and any other ad-hoc duties which are required.
Transition Chepstow / Plastic Free Chepstow	Continue to financially support both of these groups.
Litter Picks	The Town Council supports and promotes the litter picks which take place across the town.
Monmouthshire County Council’s “Give Dog Fouling the Red Card” initiative	The Town Council is currently responsible for the emptying of 35 dog waste bins across Chepstow and work with the County Council under their Give Dog Fouling the Red Card scheme to educate residents about the risk of dog waste.
Chewing Gum Littering	The Town Council has installed six Gum Ball Bins at locations found to have gum littering hot spots to encourage the public to reduce gum littering in a way that encourages a circular economy. The location of the bins is regularly under review and bins moved dependent on demand.
Reducing energy bills across all Council owned / managed buildings	The Gatehouse utilities have been renewed with part green energy. A survey has been undertaken on all Council owned/leased properties and work will commence in 22/23 on the recommendations.



Well-being Objective: Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change

Action	Progress
Planning Applications	All planning applications are considered for their environmental impact as well as business requirements and the historic character of the town.
New drinking water fountains	The water fountain at the Dell Park will be refurbished in the coming year along with a new fountain to be installed at the Riverbank.
Recycling Bins at Riverbank	Recycling bins are now stored at the Riverbank for use initially during events however this has been extended out to being used throughout the year. A more permanent arrangement is currently being worked on due to the success of the recycling.
Green roof eurobin store	Green roof eurobin store has been installed in Bank Square which combines a tidy bin storage for local residents with the potential for a flourishing, wildlife friendly, growing space, that attracts butterflies, bees and other wildlife.
To increase the use of pollinator friendly planting in the town	Additional planters have been placed throughout the town planted with pollinator friendly plants. The town's floral contractor sources plants from a peat free nursery, reuses hanging basket liners and all soil at the end of the summer is recycled.



Well-being Objective: Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected community

Objective

- 1. To carry out a Whole Place Plan
- 2. Support the Tourist Industry in Chepstow
- 3. Promotion of Chepstow through events

Action	Progress
Whole Place Plan	The final stage whereby all consultation information has been received and collated has resulted in a summary report and ideas for next steps to be taken.
Work with other organisations / local business who bring trade into the area	The Town Council offer support where needed and have provided free car parking spaces over the Christmas and New Year period to encourage people into the town.
Supportive of events in and around the Town	The Town Council undertake to arrange Bands on the Bandstand every Summer. It supports the events produced by the Chepstow Events Team. Works in partnership with Green Top Events to provide a weekly market between March and December on Sundays encouraging local people to have stalls.

Other activities that the Town Council is undertaking that contributes to the National Well-being goals.

National Wellbeing Goal	Local Activity
<p>A Prosperous Wales</p> <p><i>To continue to support and develop the well-being of Chepstow</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Council makes budgetary provision for community improvement schemes • Maintains a website which is open to the community allowing them access to Council information, grant funding application forms and annual newsletters and financial reports; • Maintains and builds on links to the business community; • When responding to Planning Applications the Town Council gives consideration to business requirements and the distinctive and historic character of the town; • Continues to publish and distribute the monthly “What’s On” guide
<p>A Resilient Wales</p> <p><i>To build and develop the well-being of Chepstow with sustainable development demonstrated by sustainable behavior</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Council is working with the County Council in the extension of wild flower planting schemes and supports biodiversity; • The Town Council encourages the use of pollinator friendly plants in its planting schemes and is working with its floral contractor to extend this into the annual hanging basket scheme; • To look at supporting sustainable projects in and around Chepstow; • To consider further permanent tree planting which is more sustainable, provides for cleaner air and reduces carbon footprint; • To be proactive in taking over services from the County Council and to investigate the provision of a town centre manager to oversee issues in the town such as illegal parking, dog and litter fouling (subject to the Town Council having the legislative power to carry out such duties). • All contractors are asked for a copy of their sustainability policy before carrying out any work.
<p>A Healthier Wales</p> <p><i>To build a participative, vibrant community that demonstrates participative capable and motivated leadership’.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Council financially supports a number of community groups whose sole aim is to maximise people’s physical and mental well-being; • Partnership with MIND Monmouthshire to help adults build resilience to support families to cope with life’s challenges; • To continue to provide a Summer Playscheme (through play children learn life skills and well-being); • To actively promote the walking and cycling routes around Chepstow; • To actively promote the Community Grant scheme which is available to financially support the many voluntary groups seeking funding for their projects.

Other activities that the Town Council is undertaking that contributes to the National Well-being goals.

National Wellbeing Goal	Local Activity
<p>A More Equal Wales: <i>To deliver locally relevant, efficient and effective public services which include enhancing our Twinning links, developing links outside of Chepstow along with partnerships including deploying appropriate resources</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Council has lobbied a number of community stakeholders to provide better cross border social care; • Provide practical support i.e. free meeting accommodation and use of equipment eg pop ups, photocopying, event promotion, advice on funding sources and networking to help link groups together; • To explore the opportunities to the young people of Chepstow and to find ways of working with stakeholders to enhance the offering.
<p>A Wales of Cohesive Communities: <i>To provide attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities'</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to support local activities; • To provide notice boards in all wards; • To continue to provide clean, well maintained and accessible public toilets; • To continue to work with Gwent Police in providing a safe town.
<p>A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language: <i>A Society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation'</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage all members of the community to participate in the arts, sports and recreation; • To continue to fund celebrations and festivals particularly those which are relevant to the history of Chepstow; • To empower all members of the community to research historical events and hold celebrations in their wards.
<p>A Globally Responsible Wales: <i>To seek to improve the economic, social, environmental well-being of Chepstow'</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue the close links with Chepstow Fairtrade, Transition Chepstow and Plastic Free Chepstow; • To continue to think of alternative ways in which to go about our business

Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 – Section 6

The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Report 2019

Chepstow Town Council provide a range of services to its local community which have an impact on biodiversity. These include:

- Responsibility for the Riverbank Area
- Organising planters and hanging baskets in the town
- Provision of Community grants. This impacts on biodiversity through funding criteria
- The Town Council aims to promote sustainability and biodiversity goals as part of its operational activity whenever possible.

Action carried out to:	Action:	Monitored by:
Embed biodiversity into decision making & procurement	<p>The Planning and Administration Committee to consider biodiversity considerations as part of their decision making process</p> <p>The Town Amenities Committee has been restructured into the Environment and Amenities Committee and will be taking on the responsibility for environmental and biodiversity projects</p> <p>Draw up a sustainable procurement policy</p>	Community Project Officer
Raise awareness of biodiversity & its importance	Investigate training for Members in areas of sustainability and carbon reduction	Community Project Officer
Safeguard principal species and habitats	Awaiting information on section 7 species and habitats to discover how the Town Council can best support their protection	Community Project Officer
Restore & create habitats and resilient ecological networks	<p>The grass cutting regime in the Riverbank area has been reviewed to improve habitats for pollinators and investigate further planting of native perennial plants.</p> <p>Consider, as a Council, how to support the Long Forest Project to improve wildlife corridors.</p> <p>Investigate green roofs for public conveniences, green bike rack shelters and bin stores to provide wildlife habitats for beneficial insects</p>	Community Project Officer

Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 – Section 6

The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Report 2019

Action carried out to:	Action:	Monitored by:
Tackle negative factors: for e.g. reduce pollution, use nature based solutions, address invasive species	<p>The Town Council is investigating the installation of a living green barrier to be installed along the A48 to tackle high levels of pollution.</p> <p>Investigate the reinstatement of the Dell Water fountain and install a new fountain at the Riverbank to reduce plastic waste</p> <p>Investigate green walls in the town centre</p> <p>10 of the planting barrels in the 2020 Chepstow town planting scheme to be planted up with pollinator friendly plants with a review 2020/21.</p> <p>To discuss installing pollinator friendly/perennial planting in all the barrels/hanging baskets.</p> <p>All Town Council planters and hanging baskets use peat free compost.</p> <p>The Town Council is investigating the purchase of a machine which mechanically removes weeds in order to replace the use of weed killers.</p>	<p>Community Projects Officer</p> <p>Environment and Amenities Committee</p>
Use, improve and share evidence	Community Officer and interested Town Council Members to attend the county led Climate Champions meetings (first meeting to be held end of Jan 2020)	Council-wide
Support capacity, and/or other organisations	<p>Supported Transition Chepstow in their Plastic Free Chepstow initiative and 1000 tree planting scheme</p> <p>Offer community grants for projects that enhance local biodiversity</p>	Council-wide
How and when will the s6 duty be monitored and the s6 plan reviewed?	To be reviewed by the Environment Committee at their first 2020 meeting and in this meeting propose an ongoing review methodology	Community Project Officer

COMMUNICATION

If you would like this document in any other format, please contact the Town Council office.

We are committed to promoting good communication and continue to build and maintain open communication lines with the public and the residents of the town.

To ensure that the Council's news, updates and information are accessible to as many individuals as possible, we have adopted various methods of information sharing:

Website: www.chepstow.co.uk

Facebook: Chepstow Town Council – CTC

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