

# **Chepstow Town Council**

*A successful vibrant, attractive Town where people want to live, work and visit.*



## **Annual Report for 2016/2017**

**The Gatehouse  
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**[www.chepstow.co.uk/chepstowtowncouncil/annualreport](http://www.chepstow.co.uk/chepstowtowncouncil/annualreport)**

**Prepared by: Chepstow Town Council**

**Approved by: Council**

**Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017**

## **Introduction**

Welcome to this Annual report, I hope you will enjoy reading this report. I would like to thank all the Members and the many individuals and organisations who have worked with us to improve the Well-Being of the Communities of Chepstow.

## **Background to Your Town Council**

Chepstow Town Council was formed in 1974 following the reorganisation of Local Government. The Town Council has 15 councillors elected for a term of 5 years. The civic year runs from May to April. The election of our Town Mayor and the Deputy Town Mayor takes place at the annual Town Council meeting in May.

These two roles are filled by councillors who have been nominated and voted for by their fellow councillors. Councillors have to act within the ethical framework laid down by Government and must act within the councillor's Code of Conduct. They receive a nominal sum for office expenses of £100 per year. The Town Mayor receives a civic allowance of £2,700 to cover the expenses of this public office and assist in fulfilling the Mayoral duties but must account for all expenditure and provide receipts.

Chepstow Town Council aims to be a professional, competent and listening Town Council. The staff aims to deal with enquiries from members of the public speedily and efficiently. In addition the Town Clerk ensures that councillors and staff attend relevant conferences. Details of the elected Members and how to contact them are available on the website.

## **Councillor's attendance and participation at Town Council Meetings, along with Membership on outside bodies**

During the Civic year 2016-17 the following number of meetings including extraordinary meetings was held:

**Council x 8**

**Financial Policy and Audit Committee x 4**

**Personnel Committee x 4**

**Town Amenities x 3**

**Planning Committee x 14**

All details correct to end of March 9<sup>th</sup> 2017 \*Mayor and Deputy Mayor ex officio member optional attendance on all committees.

**Council Attendance Details 2016/2017**

Councillor Names	Council		Planning & Admin.		Financial Policy & Audit		Personnel		Town Amenities		Consultative		Total	
	Actual	Possible	Actual	Possible	Actual	Possible	Actual	Possible	Actual	Possible	Actual	Possible	Actual	Possible
Cllr Ms H Beach	7	8	-	-	3	4	3	4	3	3	-	-	16	19
Cllr D Dovey	8	8	-	-	-	-	4	4	-	-	-	-	12	12
Cllr Mrs S Dovey	8	8	14	14	-	-	4	4	-	-	-	-	26	26
Cllr P Farley	7	8	-	-	3	4	4	4	-	-	0	1	14	17
Cllr Mrs Y Havard	7	8	13	14	4	4	3	4	3	3	0	1	30	34
Cllr N Heywood	7	8	-	-	3	4	2	4	1	3	-	-	13	19
Cllr P Hobson	6	8	-	-	4	4	-	-	-	-	0	1	10	12
Cllr T Kirton	6	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	8
Cllr P Pavia	8	8	3	14	4	4	2	4	3	3	1	1	21	34
Cllr Mrs J Robbins	8	8	12	14		-		-	3	3	-	-	20	22
Cllr D Rooke	8	8	14	14	4	4	3	3	3	3	0	1	32	33
Cllr J Rennie	7	8	12	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	22
Cllr B Smith	5	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	8
Cllr A Watts	7	8	-	-	1	4	-	-	3	3	-	-	11	15
Cllr M Le Peltier	8	8	10	14	1	4	1	4	0	3	0	1	20	34

## COLLABORATION AND BUILDING A RESPONSIBLE CHEPSTOW

**Supported and participated in working groups working in partnership with other groups and Monmouthshire County Council on sustainable behaviours healthier lifestyles and Well-Being issues.**

This involves working with the Police and local agencies to make a difference on issues that look to address the Town problems- such as dog fouling, air quality, Fair-Trade, regeneration and highway issues. In particular the Town Clerk and individual Councillors attended and participated and made a contribution to following working groups:

<i>Air Quality Steering group</i>	<i>Chepstow Marketing group</i>
<i>CCTV user group</i>	<i>Chepstow Fair Trade Forum</i>
<i>Old bury on Severn Power Station Site Stakeholder Group</i>	<i>Larger Local Councils Committee</i>
<i>Bulwark Community Centre Management Trust</i>	<i>Drill Hall Management Committee</i>
<i>Senior Citizens Welfare</i>	<i>Chamber of Trade</i>
<i>Chepstow Marketing</i>	<i>Chepstow Twinning Association</i>
<i>One Voice Wales</i>	<i>Lower Wye Area Committee</i>
<i>Monmouthshire County Council Cluster Group</i>	<i>Monmouthshire Citizens Advice Bureau-Observer</i>

The Town Council's Mission is to democratically represent the Community of Chepstow as the primary tier of local government; to articulate the needs, wants and aspirations of the Community through a process of community engagement. Our work falls into three main categories:

- 1. Representing the local community**
- 2. Providing services to meet local needs**
- 3. Striving to improve the quality of life in Chepstow**

The Council has a five year draft plan which sets out our priorities. You will be able to view this on our website: [www.chepstow.co.uk/towncouncil](http://www.chepstow.co.uk/towncouncil)

This report describes how Chepstow Town Council has contributes to the prosperity, health, social and environmental well-being of Chepstow in line with the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The Towns Council's Vision for Chepstow is as follows:

***A successful vibrant, attractive Town where people want to live, work and visit.***



### **Areas of Focus**

Currently the Council has five areas of focus which they adopted following an away day in January 2016. These are key aspirational outcomes for Chepstow:

- 1. To contribute, support and develop the Well Being of Chepstow.***
- 2. To build and develop the Well-Being of Chepstow with sustainable development demonstrated by sustainable behaviors.***
- 3. To build a participative, vibrant Community that demonstrates participative capable and motivated leadership.***
- 4. 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.***
- 5. To create and sustain the Well-Being of Chepstow by the delivery of devolved services.***

Our current plan can be found on the website. We welcome any views on this annual report and on the services provided by Chepstow Town Council. Members of the public are also welcome to attend every Council meeting to raise questions and address council on matters of local interest.

## **The Town Council's Team**

Services are managed and delivered by the Town Council's team and led by the Town Clerk. This small team oversee the work of the Council, ensures the correct procedures and policies are in place across its work and ensure a high quality delivery of devolved services. The Town Council employs a total of 7 mostly part time staff, four of whom work in administration /management and three who work in mobile hygiene and asset maintenance.

The administration of the Town Council is carried out by a Town Clerk who is appointed by the Council and who is the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO). The Town Clerk must carry out all the functions required by law, and act as the Town Council's Proper Officer and deal with all statutory notifications. She is supported by a qualified Deputy Town Clerk who is responsible for general and financial administration.

**Please send comments to the Town Clerk at The Gatehouse, High Street Chepstow NP16 5LH or e mail [clerk@chepstow.co.uk](mailto:clerk@chepstow.co.uk)**

**Caroline Tremeer  
Town Clerk  
Chepstow Town Council**

## **Annual Report 2016/17 What is the role of the Town Mayor?**

The Town Mayor is elected by Members of the Council at the annual Meeting each year in May and serves for twelve months. He/she acts as Chair person and presides at meetings unless absent and is responsible for ensuring all meetings are conducted properly, with the aim of producing clear and lawful decisions. The Town Mayor must sign a Declaration of Acceptance of office for the position as Chair person. The Town Mayor is responsible for allowing all councillors to partake in discussions and to ensure that opinions are relevant to the matter being discussed. The Town Mayor is responsible for attending civic and ceremonial functions within the Town and wider the community.

### **Message from your Town Mayor Paul Pavia - My year under review 2016-17 (period May 2016 until April 2017)**

This has been a very busy year for me and for the Town Council with my election as Town Mayor in May 2016. I have been ably assisted in my role by the Deputy Town Mayor, Councillor Marc Le Peltier. My chosen charity is the very worthy Shelter Cymru and through various events and the generosity of many, I hope to have raised a considerable sum in my year in office; I hope to announce the final total shortly. My civic diary has been very full and I have attended many interesting and informative civic occasions. Here, I hope to give you a flavour of the past year.

There are circumstances when tradition and history are important in establishing how the Town sees itself and expresses this historic tradition. As Town Mayor, I sought to recognise those events and respect the role as the honour it is. At a large number of events I wore the Mayoral

Chain as a sign of respect, formality and to demonstrate the historical status that the role presides over.

In the month following my election as your Town Mayor, I celebrated along with colleagues at Monmouthshire County Council at the Civic Services for Councillor Jim Higginson at Caldicot on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June.

The Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration took place at the Community Picnic at the Riverside on the Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June where visitors enjoyed a spectacular programme of music and song along with a community picnic.

On Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June at Garden City, there was a Big Lunch Community Picnic. On Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June I attended Fly the Flag for Armed Forces Ceremony in Usk. Organisations across the country have started this year's celebrations to recognise Armed Forces Day by saluting the work and dedication of our Armed Forces by flying the Armed Forces Day flag.

On Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June at Chepstow Leisure Centre, I took part in Drowning Prevention Week a partnership event between Monmouthshire County Council and the Fire service on Basic life saving skills. Part of the national campaign which aims to reduce the number of drowning and near-drowning incidents that occur in the UK every year, by showing people how to be safe near water.

On Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June, I attended the Requiem Mass of local priest, Father Bill Boxhall who was born and brought up in Chepstow and who served the local Catholic community for over 25 years. On Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July, Councillor Marc Le Peltier, my Deputy, attended the Commemoration for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the start of the Battle of the Somme.

On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July, I went to the One Voice Wales Larger Councils Conference in Builth Wells. This was followed on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> July, by the Chepstow Community Music Awards at Chepstow Castle.

On Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> July, I participated in the Chepstow Walking Carnival along with Cllr Marc Le Peltier. On Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July, I was present at the Chepstow Cycling Grand Prix. The JAMES family were celebrating victory when Megan, the younger sister of Team GB cycling star Becky, won her race at the Grand Prix Festival.

On Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July, I was present at Monmouth Civic Service for Cllr Chris Munslow.

On Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July, I participated in the birthday celebrations for the Bicentenary of the Old Wye Bridge.



On Sunday 31st July, I attended the Civic Ceremony of Cllr David Evans, Mayor of Caldicot.

Saturday 13th August, I went to the Chepstow Show, the annual celebration of the best of our local community - rural trades, talents and tastes. The Chepstow Show, organised by the Chepstow Agricultural Society, usually has an attendance of around 5,000 people.

As August arrived, so did the many gardening shows and events. Gardening shows are a great opportunity to see some amazing flowers and vegetables, all having been carefully nurtured for months by dedicated growers. On Sunday 21st August, I went to the Chepstow and District Gardening Club (CADGAS) Annual Show at the Drill Hall.

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> August, involved a journey with local historian Tim Ryan, escorting a Japanese film crew from NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) around the Town ahead of filming a documentary on the area. Thursday 25 August, I joined a Royal British Legion fundraising event at the Coach and Horses Public House Chepstow.

Chepstow/Cormeilles Twinning Association annual event took place on the 26<sup>th</sup> August. Chepstow's link with Cormeilles dates right back to the Norman Conquest, when Chepstow Castle was established in 1067 by William Fitz-Osbern, Knight of Cormeilles. The Priory and Church of St Mary were founded at the same time as a dependent house of the Abbey of Cormeilles.

I was pleased to join with Sir John Armit and other members of the Institute of Civil Engineers at the Old Ferry Inn to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Severn Bridge on 8<sup>th</sup> September. On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September, I was joined by council colleagues and various representatives of local organisations for Chepstow Town Council's Civic Reception at St. Mary's Catholic Church.

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September, I welcomed Rachel and Hayley Williams to Chepstow, two former Welsh citizens who moved to the US with their parents when they were infants. These two girls, now in their early 20s, completed the entire 870 mile Wales Coastal Path, raising money for Age Cymru.

On Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, I attended the Bulwark Community Centre Event, which was a Caribbean themed afternoon. Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October, was the third birthday of the Gateway Credit Union at its Bulwark office. Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2016, saw the hoisting of the Fair Trade Flag flying at the Gatehouse.





Bonfire Night, on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> November, saw a great firework display at Chepstow Leisure Centre, which was supported by the Town Council and organised by the Chepstow and District Round Table.

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> November – Armistice Day Act of Remembrance was followed by the Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November Remembrance Day Parade and Civic reception at the Drill Hall.



Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November, I celebrated 6 years of the Chepstow Street Pastors at Chepstow Baptist Church. Wednesday November 30<sup>th</sup>, I visited the Communication Suite at Gwent Police Headquarters in Cwmbran. Thursday December 8<sup>th</sup>, I attend St David's Hospice Light up a Life Service. Friday December 9<sup>th</sup>, I presented prizes to the winner of the Mayor's Annual Christmas Card Competition at St. Mary's R.C. Primary School. On Tuesday December 13<sup>th</sup>, I attended a very enjoyable evening at Chepstow Community Hub for their Christmas event.

Friday December 16<sup>th</sup> was St John's on the Hill Carols and Nine Lessons Service at the Priory Church. On Saturday December 17<sup>th</sup>, I went to Chepstow Male Voice Choir's Christmas Carol Concert at the Chepstow Leisure Centre.

Thursday January 5<sup>th</sup>, I launched the new First Severn Express bus service. Friday January 20<sup>th</sup> – I attended the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Rifles Homecoming Parade at Beachley Barracks.



Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2017, I took part in the National Development Planning Framework meeting in Cardiff. Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017, I attended a Tesco Community Event at its Chepstow store.

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> February, I celebrated the Chepstow and Caldicot Lions 45<sup>th</sup> Chartered Dinner. Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017, I enjoyed a St. David's Day Concert at the Drill Hall organised by Chepstow Singing Club. Thursday March 30<sup>th</sup>, I attended the Annual General meeting of the Trefoil Guild. On Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March I took part in the raising of the Commonwealth flag and read the commonwealth affirmation.

Suffice it to say although my diary has been full and varied, I have thoroughly relished my term of office and enjoyed meeting the very many remarkable people who work so hard in their respective arenas to ensure Chepstow remains such a wonderful place to live work and enjoy.

**Paul Pavia**  
**Town Mayor 2016/17**

### About Chepstow and the Statistics

**Chepstow is one of Monmouthshire's historic market towns and the area is bordered by Gloucestershire and the forest of Dean in England.**

**Total electorate      8760**  
**Total population      12350**  
**Area 3.668 km<sup>2</sup>**

The 2011 census highlighted a number of issues of major significance to the Town:

- The total population is increasing it is now 12350 up from 10821 in 2001.
- The population growth in Chepstow grew at a rate of 14.1% between the census period one of the fastest rates of growth in Monmouthshire.

- Families wish to relocate to Chepstow as a place to live shop and enjoy and commute to the urban centres nearby.

### **A Competent Council**

The Council has a track record of financial prudence and of working closely with the local Community. This is demonstrated in its local Regeneration schemes, like the replanting of the borders on the A48, inputs into Town events like such as Chepstow in Bloom and the bi centenary celebrations for Chepstow Bridge along with support for our community demonstrated by community Grants and community Contributions.

Each year the Town Council calculates the money it needs to raise in order to provide for its services and fund any projects planned for the year ahead. It then deducts the income that it expects to receive from fund raising and other income leaving a net amount. This sum is called the precept. This is the amount the Town Council levies on Monmouthshire County Council and which is collected as a proportion of the Council Tax paid by Chepstow households. These are changing times for Community and Town Councils, we face many new challenges and it is important that Chepstow is ready to undertake these and is a competent Council. A number of new competency tests are emerging for Chepstow Council. These tests bring higher standards of governance, financial management and accountability. These tests may include:

Democracy test - Councillors must be elected at either an ordinary election or by a by election.

Capability test – the council must employ a clerk and deputy who hold professional qualifications.

Capacity test- the Council has a gross annual budget of £200,000.

Governance test- the council has sound financial management and internal controls, it should also have a website on which it publishes agenda minutes and is contactable by e mail.

Must take reasonable steps towards meeting the objectives in the Well-Being assessment and must act in line with ‘sustainable development’ principles.

#### **How did we do?**

All Councillors have been declared as elected.

Our Deputy Clerk is Cilca qualified.

Our budget is over £200,000

Our external audit says we have sound management and financial systems.

Agenda and minutes are regularly updated on our website.

The clerk and staff are contactable in person and by e mail.

Our areas of focus are linked to our Well-being assessment.

### **Annual Report on our Town Council Outcomes from the Mayoral year 2016/17**

#### **Area of Focus no 1: A PROPEROUS CHEPSTOW**

##### **To contribute, support and develop the Well- Being of Chepstow**

Chepstow Town Council wishes to encourage improve and promote the economic and commercial viability of the town to ensure its future prosperity resilience and sustainability. It demonstrates this by the following cohesive business activities.

#### **Promoting and Marketing Chepstow**

Over the past year the Town Council has continued work on a number of initiatives designed to promote Chepstow as an interesting vibrant and attractive place to live, visit and shop.

### **Developing the Town's Web Site**

The Town Council has developed and hosted the towns' website, which holds information for residents, visitors, businesses and shoppers as well as key Town Council details, in an easily accessible format. The web site design seeks to reinforce the town's identity by using the work of local artist, Susie Grindley, and replicating the images of the lamp column banners displayed on the key roads to the town centre. The web site also signposts people to other service providers. The Town Council posts regular agendas and minutes along with news of Town Council events.

### **Holding Colourful Local Markets**

The Town Council has continued to support local farmers and producers by holding markets. Following changes in Monmouthshire County Council's Street Licensing Policy which threatened the viability of the markets, the Town Council applied for an annual Block Street Trading License and as consequence took on responsibility for all streets trading within the Chepstow town centre area. With the backing and full support of the Chamber of Commerce, Chepstow now has a thriving and growing monthly craft "Independents Local Producers Market" as well as a Farmers markets.

### **Publishing the monthly What's On Guide**

The Town Council edits and produces and distributes the monthly "What's On Guide". This has been very well received by residents and community groups.

### **Highways Access and Traffic Management**

The Town Council is not directly responsible for the delivery of highways, transport and parking in the town, but strives to ensure that the relevant delivery bodies provide a good quality affordable service which takes into account the needs and expectations of its residents and its businesses. In an effort to improve the management and maintenance of highways in and around the town the Town council will lobby the relevant agencies.

The Town Council will work closely with the County Council and the Welsh Government on long terms plans for road improvements in particular will liaise with the relevant agencies to seek Highway improvements on the A48 Bridge and the A466 link road.

The Town Council has led a campaign over several years to reduce the speed limit and improve road safety on the old A48 Bridge and was instrumental in securing the barrier improvements on the bridge. In addition the Town council will lobby Welsh Government to ensure adequate improvements are looked at of these two main arterial link roads.

Parking is also the responsibility of Monmouthshire County Council but the Town Council will lobby to secure and operate affordable car parking sites and will support the cycling events like the Chepstow Grand Prix in and around the Town in order to encourage alternative modes of transport.

## **Area of Focus 2: A RESILIENT CHESPTOW**

### **To build and develop the Well-being of Chepstow with sustainable development demonstrated by sustainable behaviors.**

The Town Council strives to ensure the town retains a pleasant clean and safe environment .While the Town council itself is not directly responsible for all aspects of delivery or policing these services, it works in partnership with the relevant bodies to encourage a high standard of services that meets the needs and expectations of its residents and visitors to the Town and its communities. We supported the Centenary Fields programme at Garden city which will protect this valuable green space in perpetuity and in honour of the memory of the millions of people who lost their lives in the First World War.

#### **Litter refuse and recycling**

Street cleaning, litter collection and refuse and recycling are the responsibility of Monmouthshire County Council. In order to improve satisfaction levels with this street scene service ,the Town Council will in the wider interests of the town continue to monitor the effectiveness of street cleaning and litter collection services and raise any concerns with Monmouthshire County Council; and look to promote Town tidy up days and signpost local groups and individuals to litter pick days. The Town Council will look to investigate and support the potential for litter collection on days where a festival, market or community event is held.

#### **Dog Waste Disposal Service**

The Town Council has supported and facilitated the provision of dog waste bins in and around the town and pays for these bins to be emptied on a regular basis. In addition it is considering working with Monmouthshire County Council on the local campaign to “Give Dog Fouling the Red Card” with a view to working more closely with Monmouthshire County Council to provide a combined litter and dog waste disposal collection service.

#### **Representing Local Views**

The Town Council continues to actively promote the views and interests of Chepstow to national, regional and county level Government on a host of consultative matters. This year we have considered over 100 planning applications and acted as a consultee on Monmouthshire County Council car parking charges review and were instrumental in providing comments on the new Conservation Areas. Chepstow Town Council works in conjunction with Monmouthshire County Council on any planning matters relevant to the Town. When Town Planning and Development meetings are held recommendations are made that are robust and clear as to the reasons for that recommendation and are in line with the sustainable economic objectives of the Town. This in turn supports the delivery of a more equal Chepstow. In addition we attended and training the members on the impact of the community infrastructure levy (CIL) on the prosperity of Chepstow. We also participated in workshops on developing the new National Planning Framework.

#### **The provision of Christmas lighting.**

Christmas lighting is one of the largest expenses for the Council and in this year we purchased new colour change lights for the lower end of our town. The Council will continue its focus on lighting the town and to provide funding for the well supported Christmas light switch on event.

### **Area of focus 3: A HEALTHIER CHEPSTOW**

**To build a participative, vibrant Community that demonstrates participative capable and motivated leadership.**

#### **Community Support**

In terms of delivery a more equal Chepstow we supported many organisations with particular needs and we supported families with the delivery of a collaborative summer play scheme in 2016. This scheme supported over 125 families in an open access play provision and was funded by the Town Council. Through its community contributions/initiatives the Town Council supports many community groups to provide services that supports the Chepstow community and encourage community involvement including:-

Chepstow COMBAT walking carnival: Chepstow Town Band; Severn Area Rescue Association; Chepstow/Cormeilles Twinning Association, Walkers Are Welcome, Chepstow Agricultural Show, Walkers are Welcome, Garden City Community Group and Chepstow Fair-Trade Forum, Drill Hall Management Committee: Bulwark Community Centre Management Committee, Chepstow Arts and Community Festival: Chepstow Street Pastors :Monmouthshire County Citizens Advice: Garden City Football Club

#### **Community Grants**

One of the more important roles of the Council is financial support for many of the voluntary groups in and around the Town. The work of these groups is highly valued and an effective grant application scheme is administered carefully by the Deputy Town Clerk to ensure the careful use of monies allocated for grants.

The Town Council also received Community Grant applications from a diverse range of local community groups seeking funding for “one off” projects and was able to contribute grant funding towards the following:

- Combat– contribution towards walking carnival
- Cycle Club – Chepstow Grand Prix
- Severn view residential home – funding for a sensory garden
- Chepstow boxing club- help towards building improvements
- Monmouthshire library - summer reading challenge
- Chepstow Cycling - Grand prix
- 1st Chepstow Boys and Girls Brigade -minibus driver training

#### **Cohesive Community Venues**

The Town Council continued to provide essential funding for Bulwark Community Centre and the Drill Hall. Town Councillors have worked on the management committees of these

organisations to provide leadership and direction and to help ensure that their facilities were made widely available for all to enjoy.

Meeting accommodation at the Town Council's offices, in the Gatehouse and the Community room at Thomas Street continued to be made available for local community groups.

### **Community Events**

The Town Council has continued to support: Apple day, Chepstow Walking Carnival, Chepstow Festival, the bicentenary celebrations of the Old Wye Bridge and Bands on the Bandstand; and, once again organised and fully funded the highly successful Christmas Lights Switch on event.

### **Area of focus 4: A MORE EQUAL CHEPSTOW**

***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.***

### **Improving Local Facilities for the Community.**

Having secured a lease on ground floor premises at 11 Thomas Street, the Town Council opened its flag ship service in September 2015. The premises have now been transformed into a Food Bank collection centre and distribution point, a small informal community meeting room which can be hired out, and a public convenience to service the bus station area.

### **Issuing Castle Passes**

The Town Council continued to administer the CADW free entry pass scheme to Chepstow Castle which is available to residents within the Chepstow wards of St Mary's, St Kings mark, St Christopher's, Larkfield and Thornwell on production of a passport size photograph and proof of residence.

### **Providing Commemorative Bequests**

The Town Council deals with application to install commemorative plaques for residents of Chepstow on road side seats and park benches.

### **Provision of the Town's floral displays with Chepstow in Bloom**

The Town's achievement in the Chepstow in Bloom Competition was continued. Transition Chepstow once again tendered the 8 herb/vegetable planters throughout the town and, with funding from the Town Council, undertook the pruning and maintenance of the community orchards. Local school children took part in the Chepstow in Bloom Painting Competition with Pembroke Primary School taking the top awards, and, local gardeners entered the Chepstow Town Council gardening competition. The Town Council also supported a number of community groups in their community gardening projects including Friends of the Riverbank and Transition Chepstow the Town Council is keen to encourage other community gardeners and welcomes any enquiries for support.

### **Upkeep and maintenance of the War Memorial and the Memorial Gun**

The Town Council has responsibility for the maintenance and care of the War Memorial located on High street. The Memorial gun, known locally as the “the gun”, is a well-known landmark for people visiting the town. It stands proudly adjacent to the War Memorial. This year we have been successful in gaining War Memorials Trust (WMT) grant funding to undertake condition surveys on both monuments.

### **Open Access Summer Play schemes.**

The Town Council provides major funding for the operation of a summer play scheme for the children of Chepstow which works in partnership with Monmouthshire County Council and encourages opportunities to enhance the cultural, educational, sporting and social life for local children.

### **Maintaining Community Buildings and Assets.**

The Town Council wants to see the important buildings and other assets under its ownership protected and preserved for the Town. The Council offices (The Gatehouse) and the Old Library building are both owned by the Town Council. The Gatehouse is used as a community facility and remains very much a community building; it also hosts the Citizens Advice Bureau as well as acting as a community venue.

### **Cultural Town Events**

The majority of the events and festivals held in Chepstow are organised by other organisations. The Town Council retains a small budget to fund celebrations/festivals with some amounts being made available under the grants budget especially for events of which are felt particularly to benefit Chepstow residents. This year this hosted the 200<sup>th</sup> bicentenary celebrations for Chepstow’s bridge.

## **Area of Focus 5: COHESIVE AND VIBRANT CHEPSTOW**





**To create and sustain the Well Being of Chepstow by the delivery of devolved services.**

**Maintaining Local Services and Facilities.**

The Town Council is responsible for the delivery of a number of community services and amenities. The Town Council had delivered a wide range of non statutory services and facilities. These are identified as services which are more economically be provided directly by the Town Council whilst others could best be provided by the County Council, but would require a funding contribution from the Town Council. Therefore, the Town Council has run successfully the following services during this year:-

**Public toilets**

Responsibility for opening, closing and cleaning of all public toilets within Chepstow. Ownership of the public toilet facilities in Welsh Street car park will also be transferred to the Town Council, making the Town Council responsible for the lease including all outgoings including future repair and maintenance.

**Chepstow Riverbank**

This site is adjacent to the riverbank and also hosts our bandstand. Responsibility for the riverbank area in relation to grass cutting and shrub bed and border maintenance. Grass cutting is currently being undertaken by Monmouthshire County Council under contract to the Town Council. It is intended that the shrub beds will be maintained with the help of community volunteers and a “Friends of the Riverbank Gardening Group.” has been established and funded by the Town Council. The group are dedicated to improving the quality of the area for both the community and visitors to enjoy.

**Roadside Seats**

Responsibility for all roadside seats rests with the Town Council. A comprehensive refurbishment programme is underway and a burgundy colour scheme for the seats in the high street is underway. In addition the Town Council funds the following services:

**Chepstow Tourist Information Service and Chepstow Museum Service**

To ensure that a face to face tourism information service was maintained within the town. Funding was provided by the Town Council .Although, Monmouthshire County Council is currently reviewing their support for the continuation of this service. To ensure that a face to face Museum presence on all days including the lunch time period Chepstow Town Council made a financial contribution for this service.

**Twinning**

We maintained our long standing cultural links with our Twin in Cormeilles and we supported the vibrant cultural links with both the Tourism Information Centre and the Chepstow Museum.

**A Globally Responsible Chepstow**

Chepstow Town council has participated in a number of environmental and sustainable areas. Transition Chepstow is very active with projects on energy, transport, food and more. We supported the petition to have the toll changed on the Chepstow Severn Crossing by allowing electric cars to go toll free. In addition the Council undertook an energy survey on all its premises in 2016 and have recommendations which will support the reduction of energy consumption at its property portfolio. These include investigating LED lights and increasing loft insulation whilst exploring a small solar array for the roof area.