

Lanteglos-by-Fowey Parish Council

Chairman's Report March 2015

- **The Council: Council Meetings:** The Council meets each month both in Polruan and at Whitecross and we are always pleased to see members of the public at these meetings. We value your comments and questions so please keep attending, and make any point that concerns you during the time allowed for public participation prior to the commencement of the Council meeting. This is the time when you can raise points about items on the agenda and items of interest in the community. Most meetings take place on the last Monday of every month but when we meet at Whitecross this changes to a Tuesday. The next meeting of the Council will be on Monday, 30th March, at the WI Hall, Polruan. The April meeting takes place on Tuesday, 27th at Whitecross Village Hall. On Monday, 18th May the Council's Annual Meeting and the Parish Meeting will take place at the WI Hall, Polruan.
- **Website:** The Parish website continues to attract visitors to the site where you can find local information, parish council minutes and other documents. All businesses who operate in the parish are invited to advertise there for £25 pa which goes towards the upkeep of the website. All not for profit organisations can promote themselves free. The new and important upgrade to the site of the addition of an Events diary continues to be popular. Go to the website to add your event. It is a free facility for use by the Parish: www.lanteglosbyfowey.org.uk
- **Polruan Quay Toilets:** An agreement has been reached between the Town Trust and the Parish Council on a way forward to keeping these facilities open from 1st April 2016 after Cornwall Council relinquishes control. This is still under discussion. The facility will be run by Cornwall Council from April 2015 until October 1st 2015 and we are making arrangements for their opening between then and 31st March 2016. The Council wishes to extend its thanks to the Trust for their support and co-operation in this matter which is of considerable importance to residents and visitors alike.
- **Freedom of Information Requests:** The Council has been the subject of two complaints to the FOI Commissioner, both from the same member of the public. The first complaint related to a request to see copies of correspondence and invoices sent between the Parish Council and its Auditor and its Bankers from May 2013 to June 2014. The Commissioner upheld the Council's decision to refuse the request on the grounds that it was vexatious within the meaning of S 14(1) of the FOA. 'It was not in the public interest for the Council to spend more time and resources responding to this request to address the complainant's personal dissatisfaction after it had already been considered by legitimate procedures'. The second complaint concerned a request to see correspondence between the Council and its Solicitors relating to another matter. The Commissioner upheld the Council's decision to refuse the request on the grounds that such correspondence is covered by legal privilege. An identical request to the Council's Solicitors had been refused on exactly the same grounds. The Council had committed a technical breach of the rules by failing to respond to the initial request with the required time limit.

A further request was received from the same member of public for him and another person to 'sit down with the Clerk and look at the accounts'. The Council responded that the applicants had already exercised their right to review the Statement of Accounts and Auditor's Certificate, following which the applicants had not raised any objection pursuant to S17 Local Government Finance Act 1982. However on 12th January 2014 the applicants were invited to

identify what further books or documents they wanted to see, and they would be made available for inspection in the presence of the Clerk and a Councillor prior to a Council meeting. That invitation has been ignored.

This has been a time consuming and expensive business and it to be hoped that it is now concluded.

- **Western Power Distribution:** WPD has very kindly sent us a demonstration pack of what they recommend every household should consider keeping in case of a power cut. This includes: Analogue telephone as digital cordless phones will not work during a power cut; Torch with batteries; Powerbank for charging essential items like mobile phones during a power cut; Rechargeable Radio; Foil Blanket; Reusable Hand Warmer; Information Booklet. WDF do not sell these kits but all the items are readily available and if anyone would like to see the demonstration kit it will be available before the next Council Meetings. The trouble with power cuts is that they are not predictable but we all know they will happen. Their hope is that this enables our community to be better prepared. We have not had a repeat of February 2014. Their emergency contact telephone number is 0800 365 900 (landline) or 0330 123 5001 (mobile), available 24/7, 365 days a year.
- Meanwhile thank you for your support and please continue to come to our meetings as we value your input.

Dr Pat Moore, Chairman

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