

Tarvin Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report – 2024/25

I am pleased to deliver the Chairman's Annual Report for Tarvin Parish Council ('the Council'), covering the year ended 31st March 2025.

The Council's finances are now in a reasonable shape following the precept increase for a Band D property of 7.9% for the year. Close budgetary control during 24/25 has allowed the Council to set a more modest increase of 3.7% for the forthcoming year. The aim of Council is to hold the recommended minimum of 25% of precept as a reserve against future years' unexpected costs. "Precept" is the term applied to the amount of funding provided by residents through their Council Tax to fund the Council's obligations.

The Council has a normal compliment of eleven councillors who take part in meetings and the various working parties set up to manage various Council responsibilities. One councillor resigned during the year, but we are about to welcome a new councillor to fill the vacancy.

The responsibilities of the Council continued to be many and varied during the year, ranging from the routine (for example, maintenance of the King George V playing field and of certain parish infrastructure) to the one-off. An increasing number of items of play equipment were repaired or replaced and the Council also took the view that additional contributions should be made in the current and subsequent years to build up the reserve which will be used to replace items as they reach the end of their serviceable life.

The Council was able to continue making grants to Tarvin-based charitable and volunteer-led organisations which contribute to the well-being of residents. Grants were made to Tarvin Community Woodland Trust, Tarvin Community Centre, TarvinOnline, Tarvin Village Fete, Tarvin Scouts and Guides, Tarvin Pre-School Nursery and Tarvin Athletic FC.

The council has a key role in helping to make the parish a pleasant place to live. Regular reminders regarding hedge maintenance and dog fouling are made via the Council Facebook page and the quarterly Tarvin Times newsletter. Litter picking is regularly performed on the playing field and two Parish Clean Ups were carried out during the year, with a good turnout of volunteers. The council also purchased and installed an additional defibrillator which is situated at the entrance of the Community Centre.

One initiative started during the year was to regularise ownership of the land surrounding the War Memorial on Church Street. The Council are seeking to take ownership of this space, not least to enable it to monitor the condition of the surrounding sandstone wall.

Another important aspect of the Council's work is commenting on planning applications. The majority of these are reviewed without further comment but objections or suggested changes are passed on to the local planning authority where necessary. A significant development in the wider planning environment is the government's plans to significantly increase the nation's housing stock over the next ten years. This will inevitably have an impact on Cheshire, including Tarvin, and the Council intend to scrutinise any large-scale development proposals received in line with the criteria set out in the Parish's Neighbourhood Plan.

Where issues arise that are the responsibility of the Borough Council, the Council's efforts to achieve results continue to be frustratingly limited. We have pursued the installation of a small number of Speed Indicator Signs at key points both in the village and in Oscroft. One sign has been installed but a second site continues to be subject of negotiation with residents. This whole process has taken several years to make very limited progress. Planning enforcement is also slow due to limited resources at CWaC and all residents will be painfully aware of how long it takes to get action on filling in pot holes. Where we have sought action on perceived road safety issues, progress is frustrated by national guidelines on speed restrictions and what constitutes obstructive parking.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow councillors and the Parish Clerk for their hard work and commitment to the Council during the past year. I look forward to working with them in 2025/26.

Robert Ford
15th May 2025