



FELIXSTOWE
TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2019 - 2020



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Felixstowe Town Council
Town Hall
Felixstowe
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OUR VISION

"A well-connected, thriving and friendly seaside town where people of all ages and backgrounds aspire to live, work and visit."

 @FelixstoweTownCouncil  @FelixstoweTC

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



Welcome to the Annual Report of Felixstowe Town Council for the Civic Year 2019/20

It has been a privilege to serve as Mayor to our wonderful town once again and I am proud to have supported the Town Council in its work this year. At the time of writing this report, the public health crisis we are experiencing because of Covid-19 has dramatically changed a way of life we all took for granted. Whilst the world is markedly different now than when I put on the chain in May 2019, your Town Council's dedication in supporting the community has remained focused and steadfast throughout. Please be assured that the Council will continue to serve the community to the best of its abilities and will provide timely responses to email and telephone enquiries as well as up-to-date information via our website and social media pages. Felixstowe is a beautiful place, but it is made special because at its heart beats an incredible community of caring, tenacious, generous people. We will be tested in many ways, but our community spirit and resilience will see us meet the challenges ahead and emerge thriving, confident and wiser. Thank you to everyone for pulling together at this time and please continue to look out for your neighbours and our more vulnerable residents.

This report provides just a summary of the activities of the Council over the past 12 months. However, following the local elections in May 2019, your local councillors have worked collegially to maintain the good governance of the Town Council, improve our services, respect the environment, respond effectively to community issues and challenge our local authority partners and stakeholders to do the same.

I would like to take this opportunity thank my fellow Town Councillors and all the staff at Felixstowe Town Council for their hard work and commitment during my time in office as Mayor. It has been an absolute honour and privilege to serve the Town with you. As I sign off, I am sure you will all join me in wishing my successor the very best as they take on the role. It is a position of great responsibility and a significant time commitment, but it is also hugely rewarding and a fantastic opportunity to champion our community. That role is perhaps more important now than it has ever been.

A handwritten signature in white ink, which appears to be 'Nick Barber'. The signature is stylized and written over a faint background image of a building.

Cllr Nick Barber
Mayor of Felixstowe 2019/20

YOUR COUNCIL

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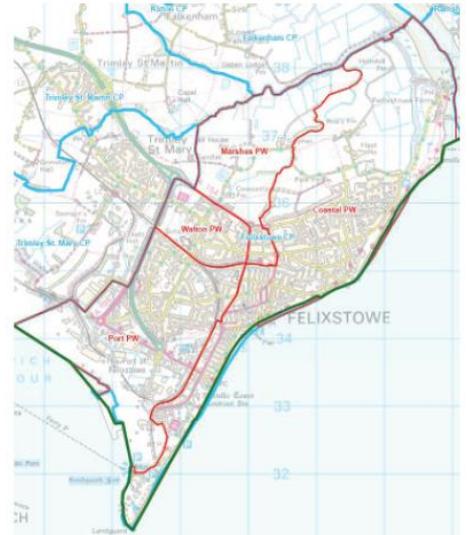
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Key

* Councillor is also a Member of East Suffolk Council

** Councillor is also a Member of Suffolk County Council



The Council comprises 16 Members representing four wards who are elected every four years. Council also delegates some of its functions to its Committees:

Finance & Governance Committee

Considers and monitors the finances and governance of the Council.

Assets & Services Committee

Oversees the provision of our assets and services such as our halls, allotments and cemetery.

Civic & Community Committee

Considers our civic functions, community engagement, partnership working and grants.

Planning & Environment Committee

Makes recommendations to East Suffolk Council, Suffolk County Council and other authorities on planning applications and policies affecting local development.

Members of the public are very welcome to attend all meetings of the Council and its Committees, which are usually held online, if not at the Town Hall. 15 minutes is set aside for public participation, during which time members of the public can speak or ask a question. Details on when meeting takes place, the matters for consideration and records of decisions made are all available on our website www.felixstowe.gov.uk

FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Chairman: Cllr Steve Gallant

Note: Council's Finance & Governance Committee is the former Finance & General Purposes Committee, which was renamed at the beginning of the Municipal year.

Audit and Accounts

The 2019/20 Audit will be undertaken by PKF Littlejohn LLP in June 2020, and the audited accounts for 2019/20 will be available from September 2020. Finance and Governance Committee receives six-monthly Internal Audit reports, in 2019/20, the Internal Auditor found Council's procedures to be all in order and made some helpful recommendations.

Copies of the audit report and Annual Return for 2018/19 were published and are available to view online at: www.felixstowe.gov.uk/about-felixstowe-tc/financial-information

Business Plan

As Council's current Business Plan entered its final year, a Business Plan Steering Group was formed to support the development of a new Council Business Plan for the period 2020-2024. Following an initial public consultation and a series of workshops, a draft plan was formed and published for public consultation in February. The final Business Plan for 2020-2024 was approved by Council on 11th March and is available to view online at www.felixstowe.gov.uk/council-documents

Budget and Precept

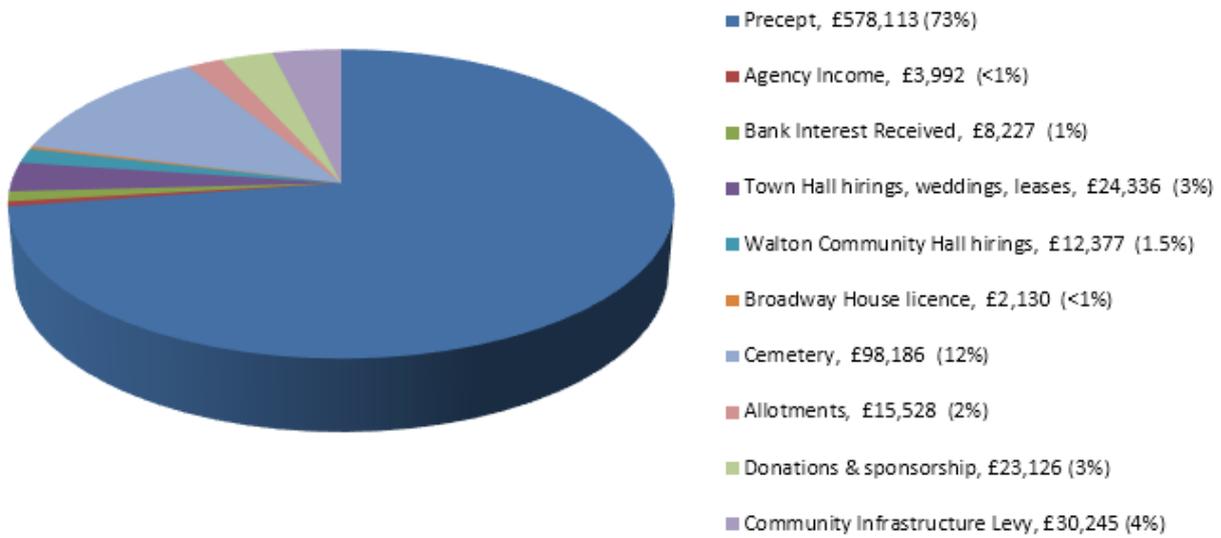
The Committee regularly reviewed detailed income and expenditure reports to monitor Council's budget. The outturn on income for 2019/20 was 110.9% and expenditure was within the set budget at 97%.

Council also holds ring-fenced funds for future projects and contingencies, known as 'Earmarked Reserves', and these are reviewed at least once annually to ensure adequate provisions are in place.

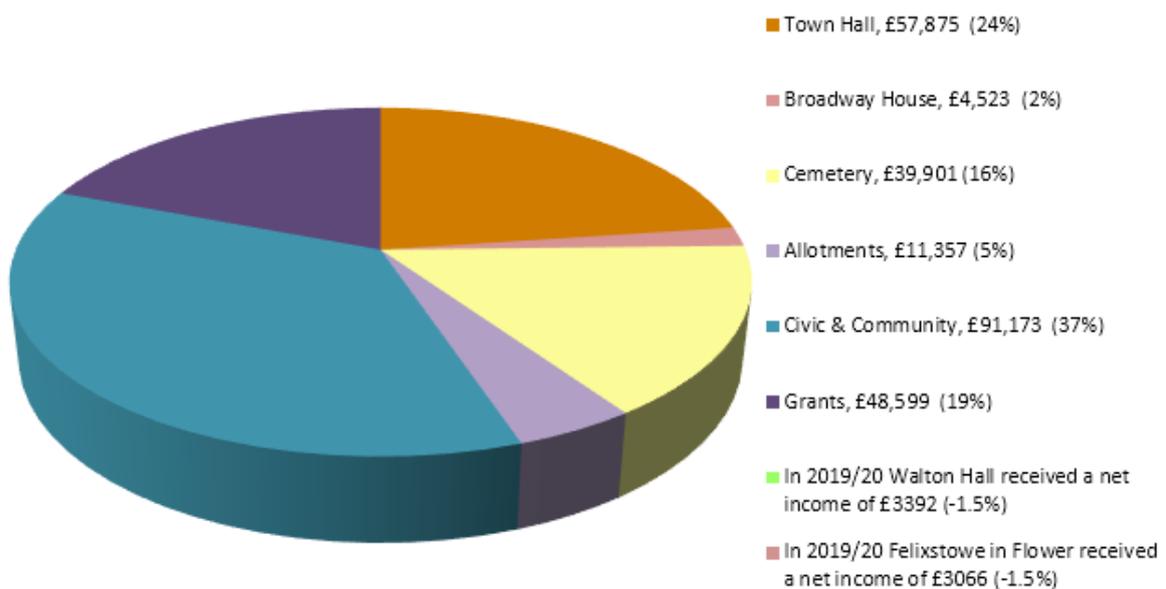
	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Budget (Est.)
Balance at 1 April	£1,042,759	£1,009,067	£1,065,336
(of which Earmarked Reserves)	(£685,936)	(£623,466)	(£618,333)
Total Income	£715,604	£796,261	£762,990
Total Expenditure	£749,297	£739,991	£711,963
Closing Balance at 31 March	£1,009,067	£1,065,336	£1,116,363
(of which Earmarked Reserves)	(£623,466)	(£618,333)	(£646,693)

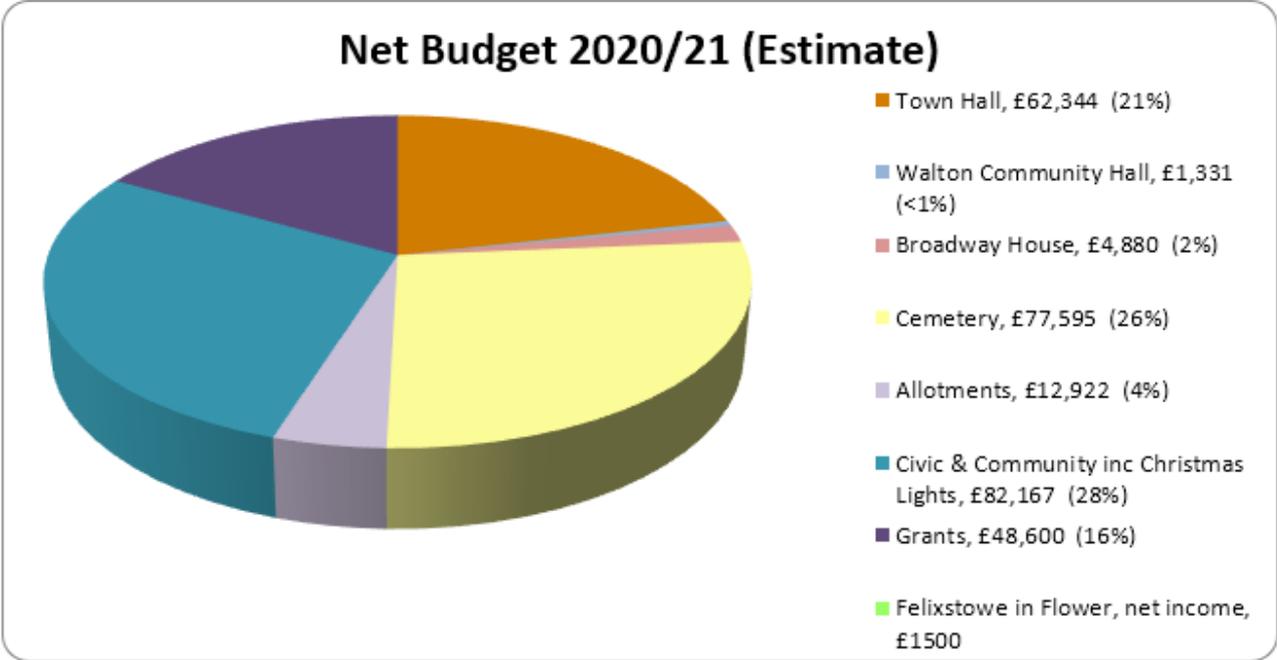
Effective management of budget and reserves enabled the Town Council to limit increases to its portion of local council tax. For the forthcoming financial year 2020/21 the increase was 2.04%, which represents less than 3p per week per band D property. The total paid by a Band D equivalent ratepayer in 2020/21 will be £70.87, or just under 4% of the total council tax bill. The other 96% is split between Suffolk County Council, East Suffolk Council and Suffolk Constabulary.

Sources of Income 2019/20



Net Expenditure 2019/20 (Actual)





Coronavirus and Budget Estimates 2020-21

It is anticipated that the coronavirus will affect Council’s income and expenditure in a significant way during 2020-21, which could not have been foreseen when the budget estimates were prepared at the start of 2020. The Finance & Governance Committee will closely monitor and review the Council’s financial position and forecast as soon as practicable during the year.

General Power of Competence

The “General Power of Competence” was included in the Localism Act 2011 (Part 1, Chapter 1, ss 1-8). This power was brought into force by SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 in April 2012. The power enables eligible councils to have “the power to do anything that individuals generally may do” as long as they are not prevented from doing so by other laws. The Town Council meets the criteria for eligibility and adopted the use of the General Power of Competence at its Annual Council Meeting on 15th May 2019.

ASSETS & SERVICES COMMITTEE

Chairman: Cllr Nick Barber

Improving Energy Efficiency

Following the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration made in July 2019, EPCs (Energy Performance Certificates) were obtained for all Council building and a DEC (Display Energy Certificate) produced for the Town Hall. Guided by these documents, Committee began work on to reducing the carbon footprint of our buildings. Since this time, Council's energy suppliers were reviewed based on the provision of 100% renewable electricity and insulation improvements are being sought for Walton Community Hall and the cemetery buildings.

Hall Hire and Weddings

Fees and charges for general hire of rooms at the Town Hall and Walton Community Hall were reviewed, with no increase on the previous year. Hiring the Town Hall for weddings remains competitive and highly popular. Council's caretakers have carried out an ongoing programme of redecoration across our public buildings. Walton Community Hall continues to be a popular venue for children's parties, regular classes and corporate hire.

Cemetery

Committee approved a project to refurbish the toilet facilities and improve disability access. To support our environmental aims, a refillable soap dispenser is replenished from sustainable products from a local supplier, cutting down on our plastic waste. Skips are now being used to segregate green waste from non-recyclables more effectively. Two new noticeboards have been erected at both entrances with an improved map. The old cemetery allotments site has been turned over to a wildflower meadow, with nesting boxes, bird bath and bird tables installed across the cemetery.

Langley Avenue Playing Fields

In March, Council formally approached Suffolk County Council on the possibility of taking over responsibility of this land opposite the cemetery in order to provide increased community use of this site and ensure it remains in public ownership.

Allotments

The Town Council manages five allotment sites and, in conjunction with the Felixstowe Society of Allotment Leisure Gardeners (FSALG), has taken steps to improve access, security and the internal roadways of the sites. The sites are maintained to a high standard and the availability of allotments has been regularly promoted in the Council's magazine. As a result, the interest and demand for plots has increased over the past 12 months and it is expected that full occupancy may be achieved in 2020/21.

Leases and Licences

The Council provides offices for Suffolk County Council's Registrar team, Felixstowe Forward and East Suffolk Council's Beach Huts and Chalet Administrator at the Town Hall under licence at a nominal rate to support the provision of these services locally.

Broadway House

Council leases Broadway House, Orwell Road, to the Felixstowe Old People's Welfare Association (FOPWA) which continues to provide a highly popular drop-in service. Committee has overseen a programme of refurbishment to the centre to keep the facilities up to date.

War Memorial

Felixstowe War Memorial has received Grade II listing and added to the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest in January. The List entry for the War Memorial, is published on the National Heritage List for England.

Community Public Access Defibrillators

There are now 12 public access defibrillators across the town, 5 of which are maintained by Felixstowe Town Council.

Swift Boxes

6 swift boxes, which were made locally by Felixstowe Men's Shed were erected at Walton Community Hall and Broadway House.

Bees and Wildflowers

To support local wildlife and the environment, Committee has given permission to Happy Globe CIC to use some local Council-owned land for a wildflower meadow, orchard and the keeping of bees.



CIVIC & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Chairman: Cllr Doreen Savage

Council Communications and Meetings

The Council engages directly with its residents, tweeting from its [@FelixstoweTC](#) Twitter account and updating its Facebook page facebook.com/FelixstoweTownCouncil to publish information about its activities, events, meetings and agendas. Up to date information is provided on the Felixstowe Town Council website www.felixstowe.gov.uk. In June 2019, the Council launched its new-style quarterly magazine, giving a broader platform for community and council news as well as seasonal highlights, which was delivered to all households in Felixstowe throughout the year.

Details of all Town Council Meetings and forthcoming events are also displayed on the noticeboard outside the Town Hall. Members of the public and press are welcome and regularly attend our Council and Committee meetings and a public session is held at the start of each.

Legislation was introduced in April 2020 to enable formal meetings to take place online, since measures to limit the transmission of Covid-19 meant public meetings were not able to take place in person. By the end of April, the first ever agenda for an online public meeting of the Town Council on Zoom had been published and the public were able to participate via a link on the agenda.

Civic Awards 2020

The Mayor traditionally presents the Civic Awards in May at the Annual Town Meeting, which also provides an opportunity for local electors to raise topics, ask questions and browse stalls hosted by local community groups. However, following the cancellation of this year's Annual Town Meeting due to Covid-19, the Mayor presented the Awards directly to the winners individually, taking appropriate measures to do so safely and adhering to social-distancing guidelines! Visit our website www.felixstowe.gov.uk/civic-awards/ to find out more about our winners:

Maurice Barber (Mayor's Award)

Lyn Osborne (Mayor's Award)

Valerie Norman (Mayor's Award)

David Tennant (Mayor's Award)

Joy Reeve (Mayor's Award)

Guy Comber

(HMS Ganges Youth Award)

Felixstowe Community Radio

(Community Organisation Award)

Grants 2019/20

Felixstowe Town Council is committed to supporting and strengthening the many networks and community groups that help to make a positive difference to Felixstowe. Through its Annual and Occasional Grants scheme, the Town Council was able to support 38 local organisations and projects during 2019/20 with a total of £48,599 via its Occasional and Annual Grants scheme and through its community partnerships.

These are just a few of the organisations we were able to help this year:



Save the Children – replacing petrol generator with battery power!



Music in Felixstowe – Proms on the Prom held inside because of the rain!



Felixstowe Coastwatch – new high-powered binoculars.



Felixstowe Volunteer Coast Patrol & Rescue Service and Felixstowe Carnival



Felixstowe Musical Theatre



Memory Lane Dementia Support Group – Craft activities

Coronavirus Grants

In March 2020, Council took swift action to open its £25,000 Occasional Grant 2020/21 fund and support the fast-tracking of funding requests from community organisations helping Felixstowe residents during the coronavirus pandemic.

Details on how this funding has been able to respond to the crisis and any ongoing funding opportunities can be found on our website www.felixstowe.gov.uk/council-services/grants.

The Council also donated £10,000 to the Felixstowe Relief Charity in support of its aims to help individuals and those in need during the coronavirus crisis.

Felixstowe in Flower

Council's Felixstowe in Flower initiative has contributed towards civic pride in the town since 1985 and has been cost neutral for the past two years thanks to the support of many local businesses and sponsors. The East of England Co-op were our main sponsor once again in 2019, providing sunflower seeds for children to participate in our Tallest Sunflower competition and growbags for the schools' competitions. During the year, the Mayor paid a visit to each of the local schools to talk about the event and give away seeds for children to grow. Unfortunately, the public competitions and awards planned for 2020 had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic. However, it is hoped that the floral baskets may still be able to be installed in the town in late June. Notwithstanding this, it was agreed that all sponsorship will be rolled over until next year. If the baskets are able to be installed this year, all our sponsors plaques will accompany them and we will also be trialling the use of non-drinking water stored and provided by the Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club to feed the flowers.



Suffolk Day

Felixstowe was proud to play host to BBC Radio Suffolk for the official launch of Suffolk Day in June 2019. With the Suffolk flag flying high from the Town Hall, Councillors celebrated by serving tea and home-made cake to passersby in the afternoon.



Remembrance



The Council and the Felixstowe Branch of the Royal British Legion supported several commemorative events in the town leading up to Amistice Day on Monday 11 November 2019. A new project was launched in partnership with Felixstowe Remembers and local businesses which saw poppies installed throughout the town and signs erected in 66 roads to recognise the 212 residents that were killed because of war.



Christmas Events

Committee oversaw the provision of the synthetic ice rink and other attractions at Great Eastern Square in the lead up to Christmas 2019 for the fifth year running, thanks to sponsorship from the East of England Cooperative. The event was a great success and skaters enjoyed a festive atmosphere with music provided by Fresh Gold Radio, broadcasting live from the event. A grant given to the Felixstowe Lions Club helped fund their latest Christmas lights display and hugely popular switch on event.



Armed Forces Weekend Legacy Grant Fund

The fund, which was created in partnership with East Suffolk Council as a legacy to the Armed Forces Weekend 2017, was able to support a number of military related charities; such as the Royal British Legion, the Royal Marines Association and SSAFA, as well helping to fund the remembrance signs above. The remaining funds were set aside to support community celebrations for the 75th anniversary of VE Day in May 2020. Since the cancellation of many public events due to Covid-19, VE75 celebrations were limited to take place at home. Committee hopes to be able to support an alternative public event at some point in the future when circumstances allow.

Women's Tour/FelixFest

Following the announcement that Felixstowe would be hosting the finishing line of the final stage of the 2020 Women's Cycling Tour (the first year that the Tour would be finishing in East Suffolk) the Town Council and East Suffolk Council began planning a bumper weekend of activities. FelixFest, which, alongside the finale of the Women's Tour, would have included an outdoor cinema, the UKWA Slalom windsurfing competition and an open water Triathlon, was to take place over the weekend of 12-14 June before being cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic. Council was pleased to note recent confirmation that the event has been rescheduled to the same weekend in June 2021 and is looking forward to resuming plans for FelixFest in 2021. More details about the Women's Tour can be found at www.womenstour.co.uk

Locally Funded PCSO

Prompted by a delay to legislation being approved which would see the responsibility for parking enforcement transferred from the police to East Suffolk Council, the Town Council decided to prioritise this issue and took up the opportunity to fund a dedicated Police Community Support Officer for two years. PCSO Ben Sagi was appointed to this post by Suffolk Constabulary in November 2018, carrying out the role until leaving to pursue his police career in another area in March 2020. Following confirmation that Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) would take effect from 6 April 2020 the Town Council has dissolved the arrangement the Constabulary and no longer funds an additional PCSO.

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Chairman: Cllr Andy Smith

Planning Applications

During 2019/20 the Planning & Environment Committee considered a total of 212 local planning applications. Committee noted that 90.3% of the time (149 of 165 reported decisions) East Suffolk Council has concurred with the Town Council's recommendation. In many of the cases where there was contrasting view, Committee requested that those applications be referred to the District Council Planning Committee for further consideration.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Council received CIL payments from East Suffolk Council totalling £30,245.03 in 2019/20. The funds are held in a separate Earmarked Reserve and will be used to support suitable projects within the five-year timescale allowed by legislation.

Felixstowe Play Project

CIL receipts from previous years were put towards upgrading three of Felixstowe's play areas; at Allenby Park, Gosford Way and Cavendish Park, which were opened by the Mayor in August 2019.



Blue Flag Award

In keeping with its aspirations to promote Felixstowe as a top visitor destination, Felixstowe Town Council funded an application for the Blue Flag and Seaside Award from Keep Britain Tidy. The application, which was submitted in January 2020, was made possible with help from Felixstowe Forward and East Suffolk Council working together with officers and Members of the Town Council. Due to the range of facilities and cleanliness of Felixstowe's beaches and its excellent bathing water quality – unrivalled on the East Suffolk coast – we expect to be successful in achieving the Awards.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP

In July 2019, the Town Council declared a Climate Emergency and instigated a Working Group to consider how we can reduce, to a minimum, our carbon footprint by 2030. An Action Plan was drawn up and published on our website. Several actions are now underway:

- Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) and Display Energy Certificates (DECs) have been obtained to give Council a benchmark for all buildings and guide us on way to improve our energy efficiency.
- Electricity is provided from a 100% renewable energy supplier.
- A new 'cycle to work' scheme has been introduced.
- A project in partnership with the Youth Forum and the Safer Neighbourhood Team has been introduced to promote awareness and reduce vehicle idling.
- Councillors began car-sharing to meetings and events wherever practical and will return to this once social distancing allows.
- Supporting local Community Interest Company, Happy Globe, on a project to use Council-owned land for beekeeping, wildflowers, planting a small orchard, other pollinators, and wildlife.

Council will be working alongside many other local groups and organisations to support environmental projects. Grant funding is available and anyone who may be considering a local environmental project should contact the Town Hall for more information.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Chairman: Cllr Nick Barber

Real Living Wage

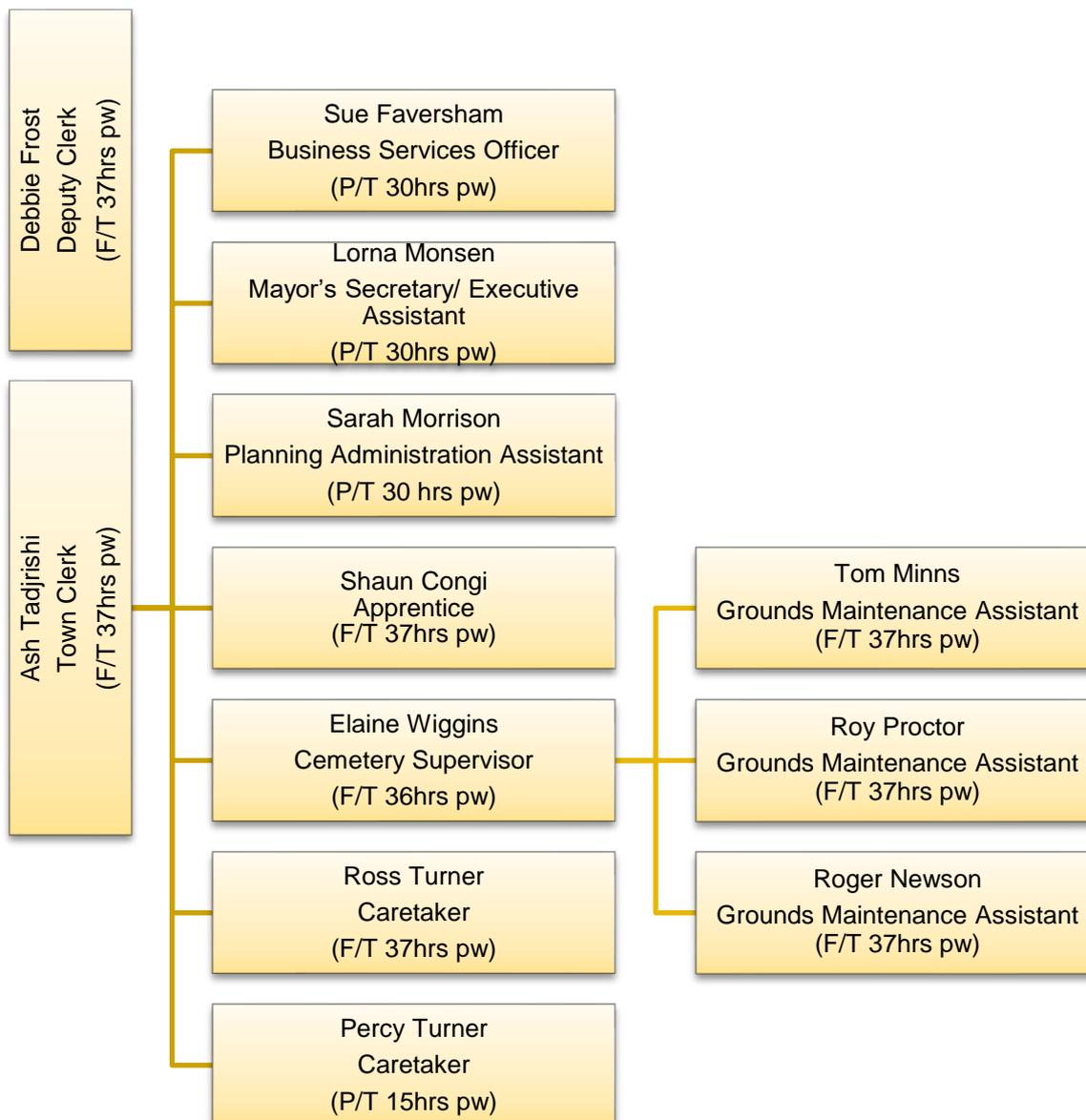
Following a recommendation from the Personnel Committee, Council adopted a Real Living Wage Policy at its Annual Council meeting on 15th May 2019. The Council is committed to pay all its staff in accordance with the independently calculated Real Living Wage as a minimum.

www.livingwage.org.uk.

YOUTH FORUM

Felixstowe Town Council’s Youth Forum is a multi-representative group of young people nominated by school councils and youth projects in Felixstowe. The Forum meets regularly with local Councillors and other local stakeholders at the Town Hall and meetings are chaired by the young people themselves on rotation basis. Debate is encouraged to enable a young person’s perspective to be placed on issues which they themselves bring up and which are fed back to the local schools. The environment has been a hot topic this year and Youth Forum members agreed to put its 2019/20 budget towards some ‘Stop Idling’ banners for all schools in Felixstowe and Trimley and to purchase environmental themed books for Felixstowe Library.

FELIXSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL STAFF STRUCTURE



COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2020/21

	9.15am	7.30pm
Wed, May 20, 2020		Annual Council (Mayor Making) (7pm)
Wed, May 27, 2020	Planning & Environment	Finance & Governance
Wed, June 10, 2020	Planning & Environment	Full Council
Wed, June 17, 2020		Civic & Community
Wed, June 24, 2020	Planning & Environment	Assets & Services
Wed, July 08, 2020	Planning & Environment	Full Council
Wed, July 15, 2020		Finance & Governance
Wed, July 22, 2020	Planning & Environment	
Wed, August 05, 2020	Planning & Environment	
Wed, August 19, 2020	Planning & Environment	
Wed, September 09, 2020	Planning & Environment	Full Council
Wed, September 16, 2020		Civic & Community
Wed, September 23, 2020	Planning & Environment	Assets & Services
Wed, October 07, 2020	Planning & Environment	Personnel (6pm)
Wed, October 21, 2020	Planning & Environment	Civic & Community
Wed, October 28, 2020		Finance & Governance
Wed, November 04, 2020	Planning & Environment	
Wed, November 11, 2020		Full Council
Wed, November 18, 2020	Planning & Environment	
Wed, November 25, 2020		Assets & Services
Wed, December 02, 2020	Planning & Environment	
Wed, December 09, 2020		Finance & Governance
Wed, December 16, 2020	Planning & Environment	Civic & Community
Wed, January 13, 2021	Planning & Environment	Full Council
Wed, January 20, 2021		Finance & Governance
Wed, January 27, 2021	Planning & Environment	
Wed, February 10, 2021	Planning & Environment	
Wed, February 17, 2021		Civic & Community
Wed, February 24, 2021	Planning & Environment	Assets & Services
Wed, March 10, 2021	Planning & Environment	Full Council
Wed, March 24, 2021	Planning & Environment	Finance & Governance
Wed, April 07, 2021	Planning & Environment	Personnel (6pm)
Wed, April 14, 2021		Civic & Community
Wed, April 21, 2021	Planning & Environment	
Wed, April 28, 2021		Assets & Services
Wed, May 05, 2021	Planning & Environment	
Wed, May 12, 2021		Annual Town Meeting/Civic Awards (7pm)

For more information and resources, please visit our website at www.felixstowe.gov.uk which provides details of all of our services and facilities, information about Town Councillors, Council committees, meetings, agendas, minutes, policies, contact information and Council news.

Alternatively, please contact us:

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