



FAVERSHAM TOWN COUNCIL



Annual Report 2020 - 2021



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Contents

Mayor's Report	3-4
Deputy Mayor's Report	5
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Report	6
Public Spaces Committee Report	7
Climate & Biodiversity Committee Report	8-10
A Year in Pictures 2020-21	11-12
20's Plenty Committee Report	13-15
Policy & Finance Committee Report	16
Faversham Town Councillors 2021-22	17
Faversham Town Council Staff	18



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Mayor's Report - 2020-21

A Most Privileged Role - A Year Like No Other

Normally busy with civic duties, events, festivals, exhibitions, fund raising and the Mayor's Ball, all of which were postponed for a year, possibly two. Covid-19, the biggest threat to our country in recent years, spread across the world and the 24/7 efforts of our country to produce a vaccine were crucial and completed in record time.

What a privilege to have been elected Mayor for a second year. Supported by fellow Councillors, Town Council staff and our inspirational community, with unbelievable individuals, groups, committees who all jumped into action. Care and kindness sustained us through this most difficult of years, and technology enabled communication to continue even though we were put into isolation. The sadness of no physical hugs with family and friends, especially difficult for those who lost loved ones encountering heart-breaking goodbyes.

When restrictions were lifted and our markets, shops and businesses were able to re-open, it was a delight to walk around and welcome them back! There was also the opportunity to visit and present 'Thank You' awards to our primary and secondary schools with enthusiasm from all the head teachers, praising staff and pupils for the way in which they had adapted and responded to the new normal. I was also able to visit all our nursing and care homes, and undertakers who had dealt with the most emotional of situations, as well as supermarkets, The Food Bank and Shepherd Neame who had been so innovative in the process of converting alcohol into hand sanitizer. Not forgetting GP surgeries, The Cottage Hospital, our pharmacies, Royal Mail, the Post Office, Biffa waste collection, British Rail, our public toilets and AGE UK who daily delivered meals along with the West Faversham Community Association to the most needy within our community. Also Ossie's Fish Bar provided the NHS with a meal and the Faversham Darts League raised funds and sent an ice cream van to both health centres with free ice creams last Summer. All were so deserving of The Mayor's



'Thank You' certificates and there are still others to be awarded now that restrictions have been lifted even further. My role this year has been to encourage, support and thank the community - what a privilege! The human kindness expressed throughout was heart warming.

Because of Covid, plans for the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day unfortunately had to be cancelled, but it is still hoped that the bunting produced in memory of those who died from within our community during WW2 can still be displayed at some future date. During 2020 I was able to attend a limited number of events in person rather than virtually. The Remembrance Sunday Service was pre-recorded in the event that it wouldn't be possible for it to happen at the War Memorial; as it happened a socially distanced service did take place on the Sunday, with a further short service on Wednesday 11th November (Remembrance Day). In April I was present for the launch of the Faversham Lottery Fund, which will help to support local good causes who have struggled financially during this last year; Andersons, of the Lakes Development, donated two Fitbits as prizes for this initial draw which I was able to present to two local winning residents.

I was proud, via Zoom, to represent The Port of Faversham and Market Town of Kings at the Cinque Port's AGM. Also via Zoom, I was invited to witness the Passing Out Parade of Daniel Davies, who was the Mayor's Cadet during my first year as Mayor. The HMS Kent virtual tour via Zoom was fascinating, learning all about life on board. She was commissioned on the 8th June 2020 and was the first ship to enter Royal Naval Service in the 21st century.

It was an honour and privilege to present, at the first robed occasion of the Civic Year, the Kent Association of Local Council's Award to Professor Harold Goodwin for his work with the Faversham Society and the Faversham Food Festival. The second and final robed occasion, which ended the Civic Year, was the presentation of the Honorary Freeman Award to Former Councillor and Mayor, Cindy Davis. Other occasions included Honorary Freeman and Past Mayor, Andrew Osbourne's 90th Birthday celebrations - Andrew was very proud of the way in which he was able to serve the town. It was a pleasure to deliver a letter of response to an eight-year-old called Theiry who had taken part in two litter picks and was very concerned about the danger of broken glass to animals and litter to the environment. I explained to him that I was hopeful for our future if young people like him were keen to get involved and show this kind of concern for the environment. I was also given a guided tour of the well-equipped youth bus and trailer sponsored by the Town Council to help engage with our young people.

I was able to visit Ethelbert Road School following hundreds of entries to the Mayor's Christmas Card Competition to present a prize to Hazel who was judged the winner. I also was invited to open HatHats coffee kiosk, a well-used addition to our recently refurbished Recreation Ground, and was pleased to welcome Hurlinghams, a new business partnership who took ownership of the existing butchers in East Street. It was a very proud moment when I visited the Abbey Physic Community Garden for the culmination of a three-year project 'Making A Buzz', which covered a coastal area from Dartford to Deal. The Kent Wildlife Trust in

conjunction with the Bumble Bee Conservation Trust recognised and awarded Faversham the winner. I was also able to visit the Faversham Pools (a place I recall money being raised for and being built) and witness the opening of the refurbished boiler system - a well-used swimming facility with visitors from both the town and further away.

Two sadder occasions which I felt honoured to attend were waving farewell to two much loved characters from our community, Miles Phillips (Mr Mystery) who entertained generations of children and adults with his magic and Punch and Judy Show, and Jacqueline Hitchcock a huge part of this community who help found the Faversham Society. I was also asked to attend both the Faversham Carnival and Faversham Cottage Hospital to draw the winning tickets for their Annual draws.

I attended several meetings regarding the Visitor Information Centre being relocated to the Faversham Town Hall along with the Doddington Library plans to create a long awaited display room for our Magna Carta and Civic Treasures - positively looking forward to an increase in visitors to The Port of Faversham and Market Town of Kings.

It was a honour to attend the Commemoration Service of HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh, at Faversham Parish Church and celebrate a long life well lived.

My three current cadets each representing a branch of the armed forces, unfortunately have been unable to attend any events; hopefully things will change during this coming year as they continue in their roles which will give the opportunity to raise the profile of the armed forces cadets and encourage recruits.

There can no Mayor in the country more proud of their community and nowhere I would rather have lived during this pandemic.

Cllr Alison Reynolds, BEM
The Mayor of Faversham

Deputy Mayor's Report - 2020-21

What a Strange Year!

Normally the Deputy Mayor would join the Mayor for many of the large Town Events and Cinque Ports Meetings throughout the year, but Covid-19 stopped all of those. When I saw the Deputy Mayor's medallion being engraved on the bench of Peter Salmon as a teenager, I did not think I would be wearing it in an official capacity. I would to thank my fellow Councillors for electing me in this role.

I was privileged to be with the Mayor to present the Kent Association of Local Council's award to Professor Harold Goodwin for his work with the Faversham Society and the Faversham Food Festival. My role has been to support the Mayor with the virtual meetings, and leading the Heritage Working Group to bring the Town Hall into full use.

Despite various restrictions due to the pandemic, the Doddington Parish Library has been moved into the reading room on the first floor of the Town Hall, which will allow the Library to be seen as it should be. A formal opening will take place once more restrictions on gatherings are lifted.

The ground floor of the Town Hall will be changing in the coming year. The Faversham Society approached the Town Council with the proposal to move the Visitor Information Centre and new bookshop to the ground floor of the Town Hall. As this will still leave a similar amount of wall space for exhibitions and events, the move has been agreed. The back room will be used to display the Town's Magna Carta and other civic treasures, and work has been ongoing to develop the project with a view to completing this during the current Civic Year.

I hope that these changes will also see more visitors drawn to the Town Centre and help all our retailers and hospitality businesses in the Town to recover from a year which has been more than difficult for all, but has also shown the Faversham spirit of fortitude and helpfulness of which we can all be proud.

Cllr Trevor Martin
Deputy Mayor of Faversham



Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

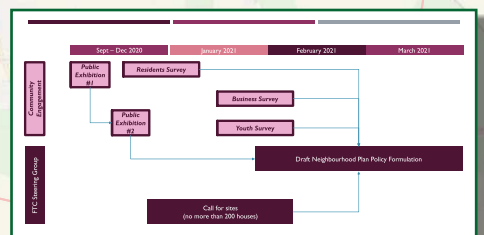
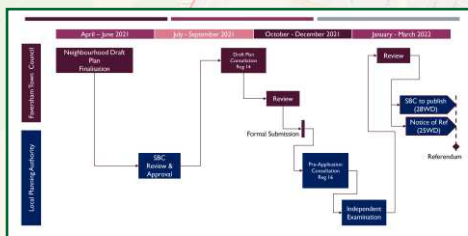
We have made tremendous strides in developing the Faversham Neighbourhood Plan over the past Civic Year. Supported by an able and enthusiastic volunteer group and input from the wider community via exhibitions and surveys we have:

- developed a set of draft Policies covering areas from the Town Centre to the Creek via renewable energy, the natural environment, footpaths, children and youth, historic buildings, and protected views to name a few;
- developed a Faversham Design Code which will apply to future development sites. The code is designed to ensure all new developments respond to the Town's local character and enhance local distinctiveness by creating good quality developments, thriving connected communities and prosperous places to live;
- worked with Landowners and the community to identify brownfield sites within the Town's boundaries, suitable for sympathetic small-scale development. It is hoped that the chosen sites when brought forward will contribute to meeting the Town's diverse housing needs (including truly affordable housing), provide new community facilities and support the regeneration of the Creek as a visitor destination;

- worked with the community to identify and designate new Local Green Spaces to afford them protection from future development. Local Green Spaces are areas which are valued and hold local significance as a consequence of their beauty, historic significance (including the protection of views of our heritage landmarks), recreational value, tranquillity or richness of wildlife;
- engaged with the volume housebuilders to ensure that their emerging plans take account of the community's need for the community infrastructure (including the provision of a new secondary school and several primary schools), footpath and cycleway connectivity and an improved, greener public realm;

There is of course still much work to do, not least we will be organising a number of public consultations running through the latter part of 2021. The Neighbourhood Plan will only come into force if approved at Referendum in 2022. We hope to enjoy the broad support of our community, so our Town's plan becomes a reality.

Cllr John Irwin
Chair Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group



Public Spaces Committee

As we spent all of the last twelve months, either in lockdown or strict social distancing measures, conducting our bi-monthly 'walkabouts' was not possible. The Committee therefore decided to encourage members to identify any items needing the Committee's attention whilst on their daily exercise walk.

The Committee also decided that the Town Council's Highways Improvement Plan (H.I.P.) would become the Committee's action plan. The work of the Town Council's Facilities Manager, has been invaluable to this Committee in updating the HIP, and achieving its goals.

This Committee has worked closely with the 20's Plenty Committee, the Climate & Biodiversity Committee, Kent County Council, Swale Borough Council, the Swale Joint Transport Board and local residents, seeking the best results for Faversham.

Over the past year the Committee has:

- arranged the installation of two benches along the Westbrook Stream with input from local residents;
- worked with SBC and KCC to tackle the causes of flooding on Whitstable Road. SBC cleaned more regularly, and KCC cleared a blockage problem;
- provided additional cycle racks, two at Standard Quay, two at the Court Street gates, five by the Post office, four at the Preston St – Stone St junction and three at the West St – South Rd junction;
- authorised expenditure to remove a self-seeded tree at Flood Lane before permanent damage was caused to the brick bridge;
- encouraged the use of the the Commonplace website to provide information on where cycling and walking needs to be improved;
- made a review of where additional dropped kerbs are required to ensure that those with mobility issues can access the town. KCC has already repaired and restored some of those identified, whilst the others are now on KCC's schedule to be installed;
- for the safety of young people, installed railings on the entrance of the footpath which leads from Ospringe Road to Lion Field;
- following a resident's letter the Committee referred issues of parking in Hilton Close to the JTB;
- collated a 'wish list' of nineteen ideas for Faversham, to be funded from SBC's Town Centre Improvement Fund. The chair has regular meetings with SBC to discuss progress;
- agreed in principle to facilitate the aim of the Friends of Westbrook Stream, for a Stonebridge Pond duck feed dispenser;
- ordered four new planters to be positioned around the edges of the town centre;
- agreed to discuss with the Environment Agency, their plans for the Front Brents and Town Green bunds, over which the Environment Agency has a legal responsibility;
- put in progress a plan to enhance the existing Town boundary signs in recognition of the 60th Anniversary of twinning with Hazebrouck;
- put in progress a plan to mark the 5th July NHS and Key-workers Day;

The Committee will continue to look for every opportunity to improve our town and source funding for these projects as necessary.

CLlr Eddie Thomas
Chair Public Spaces Committee

Climate & Biodiversity Committee

In June 2019 Faversham Town Council declared an Environmental, Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency. This declaration reflected the need to bring biodiversity into the same urgency to the climate emergency, giving strong and bold targets and actions to work towards.

A 3-year Pesticide Free Towns action plan was adopted, to aim for the town to become Pesticide free by 2023.

It is recognized within the council and the community groups in Faversham, that to develop a better net gain in Biodiversity and protect and enhance the projects we are creating, that bold action needs to be taken against pesticide use. Working with Pesticide Action Network (PAN), we developed a 3-year plan to eradicate pesticides in Faversham. This works on seeing a phasing out of the use of pesticides within local authority contracts, to a point of eradication altogether. This also focuses on working with businesses, schools, housing associations and residents to educate, encourage and formulate maintenance plans that avoid the use of damaging pesticides.

A tree giveaway was organised in winter 2020/2021, where we gave 1000 trees to residents of Faversham to plant in their gardens.

Encouraging residents to plant trees has a whole host of benefits. There are certain areas of the town that are devoid of tree canopy, and we felt an effective project was to fund trees for residents to plant in their gardens or community spaces, to add tree cover to the urban areas of

Faversham and help with the creation of more habitat for wildlife. We created a booking system for residents to claim their free tree and then asked them to photograph or film their planting. We then mapped where all the trees have gone, which can help see areas where there has been less take up.

Faversham was awarded 'Neighbourhood with the Best Buzz' in 2020 by the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and Kent Wildlife Trust.

This award was given to the town, recognizing the importance of habitat and pollinating opportunities for bumblebees. Many community projects throughout the town, businesses and councils contributed to an overall award which created a boost to the grass root organisations and projects of which there are many, including inspiring a change in demonstrating what can be achieved locally, but also opens up opportunities for new projects to increase the potential for biodiversity gain. This really helped in the public perception of how our amenity areas should be maintained and what individuals can do in their gardens.

A community garden initiative was created called 'Keep Faversham Buzzing' to create net gain in Biodiversity in public spaces and private gardens.

To continue from the success of Neighbourhood with the Best Buzz, we decided to launch into a community gardening initiative called, 'Keep Faversham Buzzing'. This provides an overarching framework for carrying out projects purposely to help preserve and create space for biodiversity whilst linking in with existing

KEEP FAVERSHAM Buz^zing



projects and the wider environment. These projects will range from additional planters, tree planting, new planting schemes and changes to verges and greenspace. At the heart of this is working with community and young people, giving the opportunity to learn and educate.

April 2021, a seed giveaway was organised to coincide with Earth Day, giving away 300 packs of wildlife seed balls for people to grow at home.

As part of the 'Keep Faversham Buzzing' project, Faversham Town Council organized a seed giveaway to encourage people to grow pollinating friendly plants in their gardens. We purchased 500 'Seedballs' and then distributed them on Earth Day with information about how to plant and advice on other ways to increase biodiversity in their gardens.

A Youth Climate Panel has been set up to engage and work with young people in the town, help to shape the council's decisions and involve young people in volunteering roles.

Working with young people is important in all aspects of tackling the climate emergency. We have seen large turnouts for the climate strikes and several actions being taken in the town's schools. A Youth Climate Panel is to give power to young people to challenge, discuss and influence decisions made by the local authorities. This will also offer opportunities for projects being created and volunteer roles within existing groups around the town. This will especially be good for community gardening. One initial idea is to create Seed Libraries around the town, to encourage people to grow plants from seed and donate unwanted seed for others to use.

Community projects and Faversham in Bloom.

As part of Swale in Bloom, Faversham in Bloom group acts as a place for lots of community gardening coordinators to come together to share their work, get support and work to enter the town and specific projects into 'South East in Bloom'. Many of the projects are well established and are providing a patchwork of important habitat and pollinator feeding areas, from small verge side beds to large open greenspaces. All are being gardened to showcase interest and colour from planting but with a sustainable planting scheme, less water reliance and planting that has the ideal mix of seasonal flowering potential. Most of these projects are run under the Faversham in Bloom and the Climate and Biodiversity Committee has been pleased to support.

Working with schools on projects.

A successful project, which took place in spring 2021, was with the Abbey School. We worked with a Geography teacher who pulled together a mix of students, of different ages, to work on a tree and hedge planting project within the school grounds. 400 saplings were planted, from the Woodlands Trust, and 20 more mature trees were planted along the A2, London Road. The process included talking about the benefits of planting a diverse range of species, how this helps create habitat and food for a range of wildlife and how it can help improve air quality. The project will continue with additional plantings and maintenance.

The Mayor provided each primary school in Faversham with a free tree to grow on to inspire and mark a significant year in young peoples lives. These trees were part of the free tree giveaway project.

Allotments.

There are currently four allotment sites in Faversham. Two have committees which oversee the management of them, whilst the others have more direct management by the council. We have been working to create a precedent that we see pesticides eradicated from being used on allotment sites, and encouragement of a diversification of crops and plants to help with pollinators. This includes planting more hedges along the perimeters, wildling areas of communal space and carrying out workshops and events (when restrictions allow) about growing organically and planting for pollinators. Two of the sites have won awards for efforts to support wildlife, reduce plastics and chemicals and carrying out community projects.

Two new living roof bus shelters are to be installed in the Town Centre by the end of the year.

This was inspired by work done in countries such as the Netherlands and Denmark, where they are utilizing urban structures to mitigate pollution problems and the lack of greenspace and insect

habitat, by creating planting opportunities. Working with Clear Channel, who own some of the bus shelters in the town, we have decided to fund two new shelters, within the town centre. One is on Stone Street and the other on the Mall. These are along busy roads where pollution and lack of greenspace is a problem. The shelters will have a living roof, planted with sustainable plants such as sedum, which will flower for pollinators, create a habitat for smaller insects and help tackle air pollution. If this is successful, further sites will be identified. These should be installed towards the latter part of 2021.

Events.

With restrictions, we have been unable to run physical events in 2020. However, we ran a couple of successful virtual events for both Earth Day and World Environment Day. We took videos explaining what we are doing for the Climate Emergency, and involved many other groups who created videos for different projects.

CLlr Chris Williams
Chair Climate & Biodiversity Committee



A Year in Pictures - 2020-21



A Year in Pictures - 2020-21



20's Plenty Committee

So much has changed over the past eighteen months, I feel that I should start with setting the scene for this Committee leading up to the start of 'lockdown' in March 2020.

October 2019

- We received a proposal from Phil Jones Associates for them to draw up 'outline drawings' for a Town Wide 20mph area.
- Chair and vice chair met with KCC highways for a face to face meeting to plan the way ahead.

November 2019

- Committee agreed to commission PJA to draw up the 'outline drawings'.

February 2020

- The Committee received these drawings and shared them with Kent County Council who made a commitment to contribute to the funding of the scheme.

March 2020

- Following feedback, PJA made minor revisions to the design pack.

Lockdown started mid March 2020

April 2020

- PJA and KCC work together to calculate the costings for the 20mph scheme.
- The Committee proposed to KCC a phased approach to delivering the scheme and began to investigate funding opportunities.

May 2020

- KCC scheme manager prepared a report that supported a phased approach, starting with a sign only scheme that will be supported by additional features and measures as required following feedback.

Late May 2020

- Following a brief call to the Committee chair, and a few days later, the Committee is informed that Kent County Council had placed a successful bid to the Department of Transport's Emergency Active Travel fund, set up to encourage more walking and cycling and so reduce pressure on public transport during the lockdown and the essential need to socially distance.
- This initial funding would cover the sign only phase of the scheme, with a deadline of 18th September 2020, to install the signs.



- The Committee was also informed that the 'ground work' completed by the community working group and Faversham Town Council's 20's Plenty Committee, had made Faversham an ideal and most appropriate recipient of the funding.

June 2020

- The Committee accepted a quote from PJA to draw up 'detailed designs' for the installation of the signs.
- The 'Cleaner, Healthier, Safer' mantra started to be used, along with 'Streets are for people, roads are for cars'.
- KCC and FTC issued press statements on how, why and when the Experimental 20mph Road Traffic Order would start.

July 2020

- The 20's Plenty community engagement group started to meet regularly and plan how best to engage with residents and visitors of Faversham.
- It was agreed that Faversham Town Council would actively support and promote the 20mph area, whilst Kent County Council would administer the public consultation.
- Banners, stickers and post cards were ordered to promote the scheme.

August 2020

- Faversham Town Council's 20's Plenty CommonPlace website is launched.
- The community engagement market stall started outside 12 Market Place, distributing the 20's Plenty bin stickers, lapel stickers, A6 postcards and collecting signatures of pledges to abide by 20mph.

Late August 2020

- The signage, including the coloured gateways to the 20mph area, the 20mph repeater signs and the 20mph roundels were painted on the street surface started to appear.

Early September 2020

- Following feedback additional 20mph roundels were added across the town.
- 18th September 2020 - the scheme and consultation are officially launched.

September 2020

- Volunteers continued to man the market stall to encourage both a response to the KCC consultation, to note feedback, and promote the ability to provide feedback and comments to Faversham Town Council on the CommonPlace website.
- The 20's Plenty banners were displayed around the town.
- The autumn FTC newsletter was distributed with a two page spread on 20's Plenty.

Second lockdown started in Swale from 14th October 2020 cutting short our Face to Face community engagement

January 2021

- Community leaders such as leaders of nurseries, playgroups, head teachers, youth organisations and local charities, were all emailed requesting their support and also to sign our 'pledge card'.
- Referring to the feedback being collated from CommonPlace, and reviewing the original 'outline drawings', options for improving the safety of all users of the streets of Faversham were collated and reviewed.

20MPH LIMIT
Help us make Faversham
Healthier - Safer - Cleaner



February 2021

- The Faversham Cycling and Walking discussion group continued to meet, and funding to support the creation of a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, was sought and agreed from and by Swale Borough Council.
- The Committee reviewed a report from PJA and decided to commission PJA for a number of the options for improving street safety, to be drawn up ready for costing.
- Request for a reduction of the speed limit on Love Lane and Ashford Road was made to KCC. Speed surveys April '21, results May '21.



March 2021

- Following the Swale Joint Transport Board meeting the Committee agreed to support a working group which included local people with expertise, to look at how the new traffic light junction on the A2 at the A251, could be further improved for the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.
- The KCC consultation closed.
- An announcement by the KCC Cabinet Member for Highways with the conclusion from the Experimental traffic order consultation, is not expected until October 2021.



April 2021

- the Committee reviewed with PJA and KCC, the new drawings for improving the safety, health and lives of all street users through improved and better pedestrian crossings and suitable interventions to calm traffic speeds.

May 2021

- The committee continues to collate feedback on the 20mph area across the town through its CommonPlace website, and continues to investigate opportunities to improve the safety of all whilst following its mantra of Healthier, Safer, and Cleaner streets.



Cllr Eddie Thomas
Chair 20's Plenty Committee

Policy & Finance Committee

The civic year 2020 – 2021 was always likely to be characterised as unique given the Covid pandemic. Just prior to the beginning of the civic year Faversham Town Council was amongst the first in Kent to organise remote meetings, which allowed us to operate as normally as possible. Looking back through the minutes of meetings and the actions we took, it feels significantly longer than a year ago that Kent was reporting its first cases. Initially we held nightly calls, which moved out to weekly and finally we returned to a regular pattern of council meetings.

Our initial response to the pandemic was to publicise a phone number that would enable the Town Council staff to 'signpost' resources available to residents. This received hundreds of calls over the first weeks and months, where people were directed to agencies and bodies that could help. People across the community provided help to the more vulnerable, be that fetching essential supplies or delivering medicines. The Council also diverted funds, ordinarily assigned to events that it supports, to provide emergency grants to numerous local causes that support the community. It was truly heartening to see people come together and support one another.

Early in the civic year it was recognised that there could be economic impacts on local services and assets. Cllr Julian Saunders proposed that the Town Council should seek ways to work with the community to protect local assets, such as the swimming pool, or events like the carnival. A series of discussions took place with key organisations across the town, which culminated in the creation of the Community Lottery. This lottery will contribute towards over 47 local causes that help create the wonderful community we have in Faversham.

Holding meetings virtually in 2020 has helped increase their accessibility to residents. However a number of the key meetings (full Town Council and (what is now) Policy & Resources) will now return to face to face meetings in 2021. Clearly this is helpful to those without access to the internet, or who prefer to see the meetings in person. It does mean, however, that these meetings will not be available online until such time as we can return to the council premises where we control internet access. The council has also upgraded its website over the last year, which should make it easier to find things and better present Faversham to visitors.

Cllr Kris Barker
Chair Policy & Finance Committee

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PLEASE NOTE

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Town Council opening hours are Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm.





PLAY THE FAVERSHAM & DISTRICT COMMUNITY LOTTERY

Tickets are just £1 and with 60p going towards good causes in Faversham and the surrounding area - this is your chance to support a good cause close to your heart and win cash prizes

Buy your tickets on line at:

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or by phone at:



01795 467017

FAVERSHAM & DISTRICT
COMMUNITY
LOTTERY



TICKETS

£1



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