

MAYOR'S REPORT
COUNCILLOR ARMAND TOMS
A PERSONAL VIEW

As this is the last report of the year I felt I should start with thanking the town and the Town Councillors for their support over the year. A year that has been difficult in many ways with the situations that have happened in the town and the spirit that they were all handled. In my 16 years of experience as a Councillor I have never known such a period of sustained issues in the town over such a short period. With the sad incidents with the fire and tragic accident which lead to the loss of two of our well known residents from long standing local families. Plus a number of lesser known incidents that happened which brought out the best in people with the raising of funds to support them. The community came together to support people in their hour of need not just with money but with the emotional support needed in each event. At times I look back at the support that this community gave during those times with much pride and I can't thank you enough for what you did. These acts of kindness are a true reflection of the people living in the town as whether long term or new you were supportive of each incident and the people involved. I know you can't turn the clock back to change history but your actions are well recorded and are an exemplar to many other communities in the country.

When not long ago the Looe Music Festival went into receivership the town could have stood back and done nothing. Yet a crazy idea to do something in the 17 days to the event by Councillor Mrs Hannaford and myself got the community together again. Drawing in a fantastic group of volunteers to help lead the idea and a group of professionals to support us gave the town the chance to try to put something on. This group were tested by the authorities and the police but were able to give them the confidence that they were capable of putting an event on. So in that short period we had, the request went out for funding and you the public came forward to support the idea. It was also supported by local businesses, organisations trusts and a benefactors etc and enough was raised to put on a show. The event over four nights and two full days went brilliantly and would have gone even better if the weather had been kinder. People volunteered to help in large numbers not only from the local area but from across the country which showed the power of social media. When PJ Arnold sang that last song on Sunday night it was over and in just 21 days the Festival had been planned, funded and executed. What an experience and what a community to deliver a festival in such a short time. As has been said we did something that many officials didn't think was possible, so the power of Looe and strength of community shone again.

Just recently we celebrated the end of WW1 with the largest crowd attending the war memorial for the service of remembrance in many years. The War Memorial was decorated with a poppy garland by Julie Gregory and a silent soldier by Dave Massey both fitting tributes to the 36 men from Looe who gave their lives for us in WW1. During the day East Looe beach hosted the Pages of the Sea event one of only 32 places in the country to be involved. With a wonderful sand portrait of Kenneth Waltons Grigson and hundreds of silent soldiers etched into the sand Looe paid its respects in this most wonderful way. A big thank you to the team from the Eden Project who took lead of this event. The Looe Junior Academy school made a wonderful effort this year with a whole term of teaching on the history of the war.

I was lucky to attend their remembrance assembly when poems were read that had been written by the pupils and songs were song of the era. It was great to see the respect that the pupils showed to this subject and Councillor David Bryan as Chairman of the RBL in Looe read about the importance of the work the organisation do to support ex servicemen.

I wish to thank all the organisations for the work they have done for the town this year. Without your efforts many of the events would not happen people would not be supported and flowers not grown. Remember it is our aspirations that we can make the place we wish for the future of this town and for the generations that follow us.

Finally, I am very proud to be the Mayor of such a great community and you show each day why we should be proud of the town we live in. Remember coming up to Christmas that a random act of kindness to our elderly, less able or less fortunate is what this time of year is about. Wishing you a very early Happy Christmas and New Year from Rayna, my family and myself to you all. Take care, be good and enjoy the festive period.