**Cornwall Councillor Report – Mevagissey Parish – July 2022**

As we head into the summer months with June in the rear view mirror it is good to see our communities continue to return to normal after a difficult couple of years.

The last week of June into the first weekend of July saw our Feast Week. The weather was mostly kind and Mevagissey came together after three years of no formal events for what will surely go down as one of the best Feast Weeks Ever!

As ever, a massive thank you to the volunteers and in particular the Feast Week Committee, who work tirelessly fundraising throughout the year to make this happen.

There's something soul-affirming about Feast, people from Meva, who live or who have lived in Meva over the years, coming back to make merry, have fun and create more memories on top of those past generations have laid, and ahead of those our children, the future generations will make.

I was also pleased to help out at the Mevagissey Gig Regatta, which was another brilliant return after a few years off, even though Mevagissey Men A’s were shockingly beaten by those rascals from Gorran!

Turning to other business, I took part in a walkabout of Mevagissey on 1 July with Cornwall Council officers and Parish Councillors to look at some of Cornwall Council’s assets in the parish ahead of the parish council’s meeting with Cornwall Council officers on this subject, which took place last week. I thought this was a very productive meeting and I look forward to seeing these proposals continue to be explored.

Cormac have cut the vegetation back on School Hill, but are also making arrangements for the site to be added to the safety cutting inventory from next year onwards, to avoid the need for reactive cutting requests to be made, something which I have been doing every year since I have been a councillor.

Thank you to Parish Councillors Christie and Barham for helping me make the case for this sensible action to be taken.

Cormac also cut all the parks, green spaces and verges as planned just before Feast Week.

I have reported broken streetlights at Lower Well Park that have now been fixed.

I asked Cormac to attend and do some repair work on the pedestrian bridge to certain properties on Valley Road. This has now been done.

Well done to the Parish Council for getting through to next stage of the bid for CIL funding for a potential new Skate Park. This is one that I have supported and put some work in on and I am very happy to continue assisting with this as it moves forward.

I have joined with our MP Steve Double to raise concerns about the timing of a decision made by Cornwall’s Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority, and the impact this will have on Mevagissey’s fishing fleet.

In June Cornwall’s Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA) voted to recommend approval to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and DEFRA, a new byelaw that restricts fishing in waters off Mevagissey, including Mevagissey and St Austell bays.

We believe it was made prematurely, without being based on evidence, and could negatively impact on the port of Mevagissey’s inshore fishing fleet.

As a former member of Cornwall IFCA for seven years, I have always been well aware of the need to ensure the preservation of our marine environment and ecosystem, but also that it is balanced against the need for our inshore fishing fleets to be able to make a living.

With this in mind, it is only right that all decisions taken by IFCA must be evidence-based and not rushed into, because of pressure from lobbying groups who do not have the best interest of our fishing fleets at heart.

Sadly with their latest by-law I am not convinced that IFCA have done this. Despite evidence-backed submissions from Mevagissey’s fishermen, they have persisted in pushing through new rules which if implemented will see the vast majority of Mevagissey’s inshore fishing grounds rendered off limit, for no appreciable gain, conservation-related or otherwise, a vote pushed through by an IFCA that was very much split, without evidence, backing of key stakeholders, and because of the lobbying of recreational anglers.

I am very concerned about this, and will be working with Steve to ensure this decision is highlighted at the top of Government, and that every attempt is made to properly scrutinise it and act accordingly before it comes into play.