

Chairman's Annual Report

Community Well-Being

The year started with an entirely new committee membership, including myself as Chairman. I would like to thank all members of the PDG for their input.

Over the past year we have continued to receive presentations from the various organisations to which we allocate grants.

In June we welcomed Churches Housing Action Team (CHAT) and INVOLVE (Voluntary action in Mid Devon) followed in August by AGE UK and the Tiverton Tourist Information Service. In October the Market Drop-in Centre and the Community Housing Night Service gave a presentation.

Our November meeting was dominated by the allocation of the grants budget for 2016/17. After much discussion, including a lengthy debate regarding the grant to the Grand Western Canal, the PDG could not come to an agreement as to the allocation of funds. A working group was set up to look further into the matter. We convened another meeting in December, where it was agreed that the grant for the Grand Western Canal would be removed from the grants budget and be funded from the New Homes Bonus. All other allocations were approved. It was also agreed that the Community Well Being PDG would be involved in initial discussions regarding future grants for following years. It was also agreed that more detailed monitoring should take place on the organisations that are in receipt of grants.

At the February meeting we were introduced to the new Public Health Officer, who will be working with Devon County Council, along with other outside bodies. Public Health will be very much on the agenda in the coming year. We will be looking at how we can do things differently and how we work more closely with other agencies, especially regarding health and social matters.

February is the month that we have to agree the budget each year, prior to it going to Cabinet and Full Council. I would like to thank Andrew Jarrett and his team for keeping us informed throughout the past year.

Also in February we discussed Leisure pricing for our three leisure centres. We recommended the basic fees, lets and charges be increased by 5%. There were also some adjustments to be made to the 60+ membership regarding pricing. This was not an easy decision to make but we have to work towards Leisure becoming self-financing by 2020.

I would like to close by thanking the many officers who have helped us over the past year. My thanks also go to Julia Stuckey, our Committee Clerk for her help and advice.