



Tavistock Town Council



Introduction

Tavistock Town Council has a vital role to play in developing and participating in the successful progression of all aspects of life in Tavistock and its locality. The Town Council has four fundamental priorities:

- **Democracy**
- **Community**
- **Economy**
- **Environment**

In support of the Town Council's role in delivering these priorities, this Strategy Document has been produced which identifies a number of key and realistic objectives that will go towards protecting and enhancing the identity and character of Tavistock as well as the quality of life for the three key groups of people of any community – residents, businesses and visitors.

These objectives have been identified as achievable by the Town Council themselves, in partnership and using influence.

The Strategy Document will be reviewed annually before the budget setting process to ensure that the objectives remain relevant to the needs of the community and are affordable as circumstances change.

This plan will influence the direction and content of all other internal strategies and resources of the Council particularly through the budget process.

The 4 Priorities:

Democracy

The Town Council can be described as 'Grass Roots' democracy as it consists of an elected body of local people and provides a strong voice on all decisions and services that affect the everyday life of local people. The Town Council achieved 'Quality Status' in 2003, and re-qualified in 2008 thus demonstrating that it places the highest emphasis on consistently achieving excellence and has an innovative approach.

Community

The Town Council is always at the heart of the community and its activities. It endeavours to work closely with the many local voluntary, business and community groups within Tavistock that are key to providing support and aid to the community. The Town Council vision is to be associated with the creation of a successful town, where people want to live, work, play and visit with all residents having access to a high quality of life both now and in the future.

Economy

The local economy is dependent on two factors:

- Tavistock is vital to supporting the needs, which includes being a source of employment, of all aspects of its community as well as serving a wider rural community – the 'hinterland' - stretching far beyond the parish boundary.
- Tavistock is a popular tourist destination throughout the year with certain times experiencing greater visitor numbers.

The Town Council wants to encourage and ensure the sustained growth of these two factors so that future prosperity is assured.

Environment

Tavistock Town Council seeks to ensure that any aspect of economic development is sympathetic and appropriate as Tavistock has a strong identity and character due to its rich natural and built heritage, which also includes its many public open spaces. The Town Council works hard to make certain that this heritage is protected and enhanced for present and future generations.

What are the Town Council tasks?

The Council runs the Pannier Market, the Town Hall, the Meadows and most of the open spaces, the Guildhall Square car park, the allotments and the cemeteries. The Council is the 'Lord of the Manor' for part of Whitchurch Down. It has in its care a large proportion of the old listed buildings in Tavistock. It provides 'street furniture' such as bus shelters and seats and provides most play parks. It also makes a major contribution to the cost of community organizations ranging from the Citizens Advice Bureau to the Stannary Band. One of its most important functions, though, is to provide a democratic representational voice for the Tavistock community. This commonly involves making representations to the County and Borough Councils concerning matters of relevance to Tavistock such as highways, transport, planning and development control.

TOWN COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

No	Objective	Performance Indicator	Comment
DEMOCRACY			
D1.	<p>Sustain civic and ceremonial traditions including the Town Crier.</p> <p>Arrange the Civic Service, Civic Ball and participation in Remembrance Sunday each year. Continue to fund the regalia for the Mayor, Consort, Deputy Mayor, Town crier and mace Bearers.</p>	<p>Did the Ball and Service occur in the year? Number of Town Council organised events. Number of public attending each function.</p>	
D2.	<p>Develop communications (web site, newsletter, social networking options).</p> <p>Revise and modernize web sites for council, town hall and market. Put documents on the web for downloading. Use social networking to put out the Council 'message'. Respond to all correspondence.</p>	<p>Number of web site hits Time on site records Respond in 5 days unless further information is required in which case an acknowledgement will be sent.</p>	
D3	<p>Consult with electors when appropriate.</p> <p>Ensure consultation before making changes that affect the populace.</p>	<p>Monitor feedback from newsletter and web site Act appropriately on feedback</p>	

D4	<p>Support local youth organizations.</p> <p>Continue to help the Youth Café and its building. Provide skate park and BMX track for clubs use as well as general use.</p>	<p>Note number of members year by year.</p> <p>Annual report showing activities presented to Council</p>	
D5.	<p>Financially assist local community groups Budget each year for, as a minimum, grant support for: Museum Grant (rent/ utilities,)</p> <p>Bowls Club Insurance contribution, CAB</p> <p>Ring and Ride Junior</p> <p>Life Skills</p> <p>Stannary Band</p>	<p>Target Grants</p> <p>£ 14,300</p> <p>£ 442</p> <p>£ 2,000</p> <p>£ 3,500</p> <p>£ 300</p> <p>£ 1,000</p> <p>£ 2,000</p>	
D6.	<p>Co-operate with community groups.</p> <p>At the AGM depute councillors to attend meetings of appropriate community groups.</p> <p>Engage in open dialogue with Tavistock residents to understand their needs, and in turn explain fully how we will address these needs within the resources and powers available to the Town Council.</p>	<p>Make annual review of groups at AGM. Present annual reports to Council.</p>	

D7.	<p>Minimise council costs and maximize efficiency.</p> <p>Encourage all members of staff and councillors to constantly consider how value for money and cost savings without loss of service may be obtained. Remind all of Suggestions Scheme (SO 3.9) and reward appropriate changes.</p>	<p>Continue to review services as undertaken during the Best Value era.</p> <p>Use annual staff appraisals to encourage suggestions.</p>	
D8.	<p>Act in partnership with West Devon Borough Council and Devon County Council</p> <p>Support the Liaison Committees. Understand principal council limitations. Suggest ways in which the Town Council may assist in providing better services to populace.</p>	<p>Depute Members to sit on the committees.</p> <p>Circulate minutes for comment by F&GP Committee and Council.</p>	
D9.	<p>Continue to meet 'Quality Council' criteria. Take all necessary steps to re-qualify every 4 years. (Next due Nov 2012).</p>	<p>Successful applications.</p>	

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COMMUNITY			
C1.	<p>Maintain existing play parks.</p> <p>Regularly inspect and maintain play park equipment and grounds as per RoSPA requirements. Prioritise maintenance of play parks over non-play park grounds.</p>	<p>Make inspections and record what equipment is being used and by how many children.</p> <p>Circulate consultation questionnaires.</p>	
C2.	<p>Provide new play facilities where required.</p> <p>Apply for grants for capital expenditure when possible. Budget annual sums to replace and enhance play parks, and provide new areas when necessary.</p>	<p>Make appropriate provision in annual budget.</p>	
C3.	<p>Support National sporting events</p> <p>Make grants and facilities available for Olympic run-up. Provide resources and officer time for national events in the Tavistock parish.</p>	<p>Make appropriate provision in annual budget.</p>	
C4.	<p>Continue to support the Town Museum</p> <p>Budget to grant sums to offset commercial rent and up to £3,000 for annual utilities. Budget for normal listed building maintenance. Make officer time available for project work. Depute councillors as trustees.</p>	<p>Make appropriate provision in annual budget. Note numbers attending the facilities.</p>	

C5.	<p>Continue to support presence of Tavistock Hospital</p> <p>Campaign against any threat to close the hospital or take away existing facilities.</p>	Confirm year by year hospital still present.	
C6.	<p>Continue to provide allotments</p> <p>Support the Allotments Holders Association in their management task. Deny any move to take away the allotments. Actively look for additional allotments. Encourage formation of additional allotment associations and work with them to manage and improve the facilities.</p>	Mayor to attend AGM of Allotment holders Association. Advertise in press for spare land	
C7.	<p>Retain and improve car parking facilities in the Town.</p> <p>Support the Parking Focus Group in its efforts. Object to planning applications for new builds that do not have provision for parking spaces. Object to any applications for 'garage conversions'.</p>	Get PFGp to confirm no loss of spaces year by year.	
C8.	<p>Support improvements to public transport.</p> <p>Monitor weaknesses in bus transport and try to correct them with providers. Support concept of rail links (without subsidy from house building).</p>	Collate reported problems and pass on to appropriate authority or company.	

C9.	<p>Co-operate with local policing concept.</p> <p>Invite police representatives to speak at council meetings. Depute a member to attend the Police Liaison Group.</p> <p>Support planning applications for new police buildings.</p>	Presence at each Council meeting.	
C10.	<p>Work towards minimising cost of burial facilities to taxpayers.</p> <p>Balance of costs between council tax payer and users of the cemetery is wrong. User should pay more.</p>	Increase charges by more than inflation year on year.	
C11.	<p>Acquire new land for allotments, cemeteries and open spaces.</p> <p>Ring fence funds to purchase land when required. Monitor land availability with Borough Council to earmark suitable land.</p>	<p>Maintain earmarked Land Purchase Reserves.</p> <p>Increase in real terms year by year at each budget setting.</p>	
C12.	<p>Work with all agencies for a by-pass/relief road for the A386 through Tavistock</p> <p>Make regular meetings with DCC Highways to consider traffic schemes. Encourage DCC councillor to work on the need.</p>	Contact DCC portfolio holder once a year. Monitor DCC Transport Plan.	

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ECONOMY			
Ec1.	<p>Encourage tourism and leisure to maximise employment opportunities in the Town.</p> <p>Continue to budget for coach driver incentives and Town Advertising. Regularly provide free town guide books.</p>	<p>Monitor number of coaches taking advantage of this facility and number of passengers.</p>	
Ec2.	<p>Support development of Town Centre and a Business Improvement District.</p> <p>Endorse and enable Chamber of Commerce projects to improve viability of town centre. Object to out-of-town supermarket schemes. Monitor planning applications to ensure only appropriate development takes place.</p>	<p>Monitor number of empty premises year by year.</p>	
Ec3.	<p>Act as a good employer.</p> <p>The council will ensure that the rules for the recruitment and management of employees provide for competitive appointment and advancement on merit on the basis of equal opportunity for all applicants and staff. Tavistock Town Council will adopt rules of conduct for its staff which reflect the highest level of public service and management practices which will use resources in the most efficient and effective manner.</p>	<p>Number of formal complaints.</p> <p>Number of congratulations on good service.</p>	
Ec4.	<p>Support Farmers Markets and regular fairs.</p> <p>Allow Farmers Market to book Bedford square. Organise regular fairs in Town Hall and Market to bring in footfall to the centre of town.</p>	<p>Meet set target number in year.</p>	

Ec5.	<p>Manage Bedford Square on behalf of DCC to maximise its attraction as the Town's centerpiece.</p> <p>Work with DCC (as Square owners) to fill the area with visitor attractions in accordance with the agreed regulations.</p>	<p>Monitor number of events year by year.</p>	
Ec6.	<p>Develop Pannier Market and its surrounds.</p> <p>Develop vision of pedestrian zone all round Market, with glass roof to cover perimeter road to allow stalls outside the building. Find architect to expand vision. Consult public and traders. Get planner and conservation on side. Budget for works.</p>	<p>Progress concept year by year.</p>	
Ec7.	<p>Maximise the use of the River as a tourist attraction</p> <p>Plan to use Market Road land in visionary ways to make the area more attractive and a draw to visitors.</p>	<p>Progress concept year by year.</p>	
Ec8.	<p>Support the concept of Tavistock being the Gateway to Cornwall and West Devon mining World Heritage sites.</p> <p>Provide accommodation for the TIO. Endorse and support plans to build visitor centres and interpretation centres to attract visitors.</p>	<p>Confirm existence of TIO.</p> <p>Actively promote special and high profile events in the Tavistock area.</p>	

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ENVIRONMENT			
En1.	<p>Improve public lighting in the Town</p> <p>Monitor maintenance and operation of all lighting. Support 'green' energy saving measures. Improve lighting on land owned by the Town Council (Market Road, Pixon Lane car park).</p>	<p>Maintain 5 day 'call-out' with SEC.</p> <p>Turn off lights at night when appropriate. Make adequate budget provisions.</p>	
En2	<p>Oppose the Tavistock element of the April 2010 version of the West Devon LDF Core Strategy.</p> <p>Support and help fund all measures designed to object to the existing strategy, and to work to get the Borough Council to review and change the scheme.</p>	<p>Confirm adaption and modifications acceptable to Council.</p>	
En3.	<p>Support the taking of the Guildhall into trust ownership and its sympathetic development.</p> <p>Work with the Historic Buildings Trust to ensure the good maintenance of the structures, and that they be put to uses commensurate with their profile.</p>	<p>Support Trust.</p> <p>Monitor how successfully the project moves on.</p>	
En4.	<p>Oppose out-of-keeping planning applications.</p>	<p>Respond to all Applications on which we are consulted.</p> <p>Percentage responded to in 21 days</p>	
En5.	<p>Manage Whitchurch Down for both commoners and the public.</p> <p>Maintain balance between 'theme park' for the public and a working farm for the commoners. Support the Golf Club and Cricket Club in their efforts to improve the Down. Work with the commoners to control gorse and unwanted vegetation.</p>	<p>Implement Management Plan accepted by Council.</p>	

En6.	<p>Maintain trees and shrubs on Council land.</p> <p>Undertake a full tree survey at least every 5 years. Undertake the maintenance works recommended without undue delay. Plant 3 trees to replace each single tree lost.</p>	<p>Keep records of Reports. Make budget provisions.</p>	
En7.	<p>Protect historic buildings.</p> <p>Budget for regular maintenance on Council owned scheduled buildings. Ensure principal councils use statutory powers to look after other historic buildings.</p>	<p>Undertake surveys with Conservation Officer. Rolling maintenance plan.</p>	