

# Pershore Town Council



## Annual Report 2021/2022

**12<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

## **Report from the Town Mayor – Councillor Julian Palfrey**

This last council year has literally seen an incredible transformation as the town of Pershore is now “back in action” and normal service is fast being restored!

For the first few months when I took over as Mayor, we were beginning to emerge tentatively from a long transition with terms such as lockdown, furlough and social distancing still in common parlance. With gradual easing of lockdowns we may have reverted from council meetings via Zoom to socially distanced meetings, but last year’s Annual Meeting was our first for two years and unusual in that for the first time with social distancing in force we moved from our usual venue of the Town Hall to the Civic Centre with a strict limit on the number of guests and no opportunity for celebrations or a proper “thank you” to those charitable and volunteer organisations who had worked very hard in an extremely difficult year to help and support Pershore residents. Whilst the Town Hall was closed to the public at the height of the pandemic, our hard-working staff were still kept busy with telephone enquiries, offering advice and support and helping to organise the prescription run.

In such circumstances my civic duties were extremely limited and were mainly outdoor events with the first a pleasant afternoon visiting Pershore’s Open Gardens in early June. Apart from attending a socially distanced but impressive service in Worcester Cathedral launching the Three Choirs Festival there was little until the unveiling of a memorial plaque at the Vale Crematorium and an enjoyable day with my consort Helen at Ludlow’s Charity Market both at the end of July and an evening aboard the Mayor of Droitwich’s Riverboat cruise from Stourport-on-Severn in early August.

But with lockdowns easing further planning began for the popular events in Pershore’s calendar and it was great to be a small part of Pershore’s Carnival restored after a three-year absence and to see the crowds lining the High Street for the procession and the numbers of residents and visitors thronging to the many attractions on the Abbey Park. It is also good to see the restoration of other popular events such as Pershore Midsummer Brass in July and the Pershore Plum Fayre at the end of August.

Lockdowns also affected the ability to arrange fund raising events last year for my Mayor’s Charity - Pershore Talking Newspaper - but they got off to a storming start thanks mainly to volunteers from PTN organising a Mayor’s Coffee morning in December and the same night following a concert by Worcester Male Voice Choir in the Abbey the choir generously decided to give all the contents of a bucket collection to my charity - funds which were further boosted by a skittles evening and just last week a successful quiz evening.

This is an important year marking HM The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee and to help mark the occasion I was pleased to support Pershore Rotary Club in the planting of an English oak in our Abbey Park. All my generation (I was born in Coronation year!) - and younger - will have known no other monarch and none can fail to be aware of

the incredible service and dedication Her Majesty has shown to our country and the commonwealth over 70 years. In this important year I was pleased to organise a special concert by Alcester Victoria Silver Band in aid of my charity and celebrating the Queen's 96<sup>th</sup> birthday - the band's first "gig" for two and a half years due to Covid restrictions. Pershore Town Council is taking part in the jubilee celebrations with the lighting of a beacon at the top of Holloway, a special Platinum Jubilee service in the Abbey and a Lunch in the Park event in our Abbey Park.

It is good to see progress on some outstanding projects with Princess Diana's Gardens at the entrance to the King George V playing fields now looking much more attractive following delays caused by a worldwide shortage of resin. Avon Meadows car park was taken back by the Town Council recently and has taken the opportunity to tidy the area up, install a new bridge and make the area more attractive to residents and visitors with the provision of seats and picnic benches as well as completely refurbishing the old slipway.

Councillor Chris Parsons and I were invited to the opening of the Well Being hub - supported by the Town Council - now in its new premises in the High Street which provides an important service for local people seeking advice or support with the hub also helping to tackle the issues of social isolation for people just looking to meet over a cup of tea and a chat.

Pershore residents responded magnificently when town councillors and volunteers worked hard to organise a successful bring and buy sale in the Town Hall raising over £4,000 on just one Saturday morning to raise funds to assist Ukrainian refugees, together with a successful coffee morning two weeks later raising a further £1,000. Please support a further coffee morning being held to raise funds for the people of Ukraine this Saturday morning in the Town Hall from 1000-1200.

In comparison with May last year this month has been an incredibly busy time with no less than seven mayors – Evesham, Worcester, Malvern, Droitwich, Stourport and Tewkesbury – as well as myself – and the Chairman of Worcs County Council standing down. The Mayoral diary has been full with a number of special events, civic services and mayor makings which my consort, Helen, and I have been privileged to attend and made to feel very welcome. My own Civic Service was postponed for almost a year due to Covid restrictions taking place near to the end of my term last month and I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our vicar Claire Lording, my chaplain Peter Stansbie, Pershore Abbey Choir and organist John Wilderspin and all involved including family and friends and many civic guests, some travelling from as far afield as Ross-on-Wye, Ludlow and Ledbury, in joining us for a moving and most memorable service.

No annual report from me would be complete without a mention of public transport and after years of campaigning it is great to be able to report that Pershore Station now has an hourly service of trains throughout the day to Oxford, London, Worcester and Malvern upgraded to half hourly in the late afternoon peak. The full service is now being restored after cutbacks during Covid restrictions from this Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup>.

Progress on the long running saga of the new footbridge and station car park appears desperately slow but four partners – Great Western, Network Rail, Wychavon District and Worcestershire County Councils – have identified a suitable footbridge and are now working together to get the necessary funding in place. Following the loss of local bus services and the failure of Worcestershire County Council's bid for central government funding for its Bus Service Improvement Plan, Pershore Town Council has been in regular contact with the three MPs in the south of the county who now appear to be hopeful of finding some solution to the crisis.

Just before the Evesham Civic Service last Sunday in All Saints Church, Evesham, I was sitting with my consort, Dr Helen Whitwell, admiring Evesham's pedestrianised Town Square with its impressive Town Hall building, its welcoming environment with attractive seated areas, tree cover and outdoor cafe and thinking how in the future Pershore could similarly offer a real attraction and focal point for residents of the town and visitors alike,

Of the three Wychavon towns Pershore is the only one without a town square. Your Town Council is now planning for the future and following a successful initial bid for funding is hoping to work with Wychavon District Council and Worcestershire County Council in a project to help make Broad Street more pedestrian friendly, welcoming and an attractive focal point both for residents and visitors alike. The council has launched a consultation exercise and would welcome your views.

I would now like to thank a number of people for their help and support over not just this year but in recent times. I never thought I would be standing in front of you all today after a year as mayor of the town of Pershore. I was first approached around seven years ago, but it was at a difficult time when my mother was unwell, and I thought I had "missed my chance" in the future.

I would like to thank town councillors for their support in this challenging year but particularly to Councillor Charles Tucker who 35 years ago first encouraged me to stand for council, and to Councillor Chris Parsons who gave me every encouragement to take on the mayoral role after a record three years as Deputy Mayor.

With my somewhat disorganised approach I would like to offer my sincere thanks to Rose in the Town Council office for her fantastic efforts in ensuring that as Mayor I was in the right place at the right time and to know what I am doing there. I would like to extend those sincere thanks to Ann as our Town Clerk for all her help and advice and to our Deputy Town Clerk Charlie and to Alison for their cheerful help and support throughout the year.

I would also like to thank my consort Helen basically for "being there" and accompanying me to so many of the mayoral events which have been made even more enjoyable for her presence and sense of fun.

And finally, before closing I would like in particular to thank my Deputy Mayor Councillor Matthew Winfield who as a good friend has always been someone I can

rely on for advice and help, and who has readily attended functions for me when I have been unavailable.

Despite the fact that Matthew is half my age he has already served on this council for nine years – six of those as a very able and effective chairman of one of the council's two main committees and I hope that as our youngest ever Mayor councillors will give him the same support they have shown to me in his forthcoming year as Mayor of Pershore.

Cllr Julian Palfrey  
Town Mayor

### **Councillor Activities:-**

During the year, as well as attending Council meetings and making decisions, councillors have also represented the Council on a number of outside bodies. These include:-

Citizens Advice  
Persnore Volunteer Centre  
Persnore Town Football Club  
Emergency Planning  
Council for the Protection of Rural England  
Vale Public Transport Group  
Riverside Youth Centre

A report from each of the Council representatives on these groups will be available on our web site in due course and are available for residents on request.

### **The Town Council owns and manages:-**

- Riverside land at King George's Field and Avon Meadows
- Avon Meadows Car Park and picnic area
- Grassed play area at Cherry Orchard
- Allotments in Defford Road
- Pershore Cemetery and car park
- Town Hall and walkway
- Pershore Library and Visitor Information centre
- Land off Holloway – available to walkers for picnics and a rest area
- Small area of land adjacent to Holloway
- White Railings moorings (leased to A.N.T.)

### **The Town Council controls and manages:-**

- St Andrews Gardens

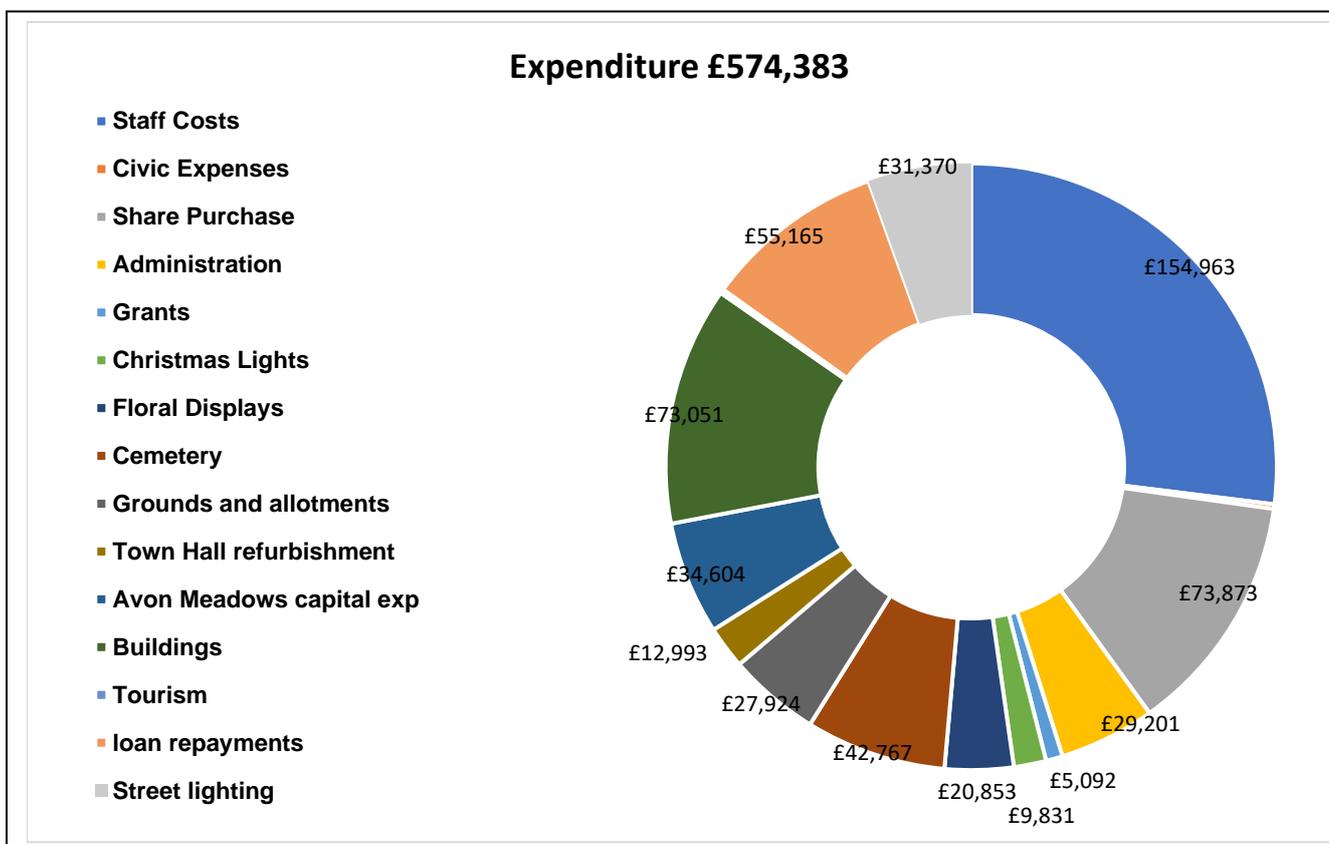
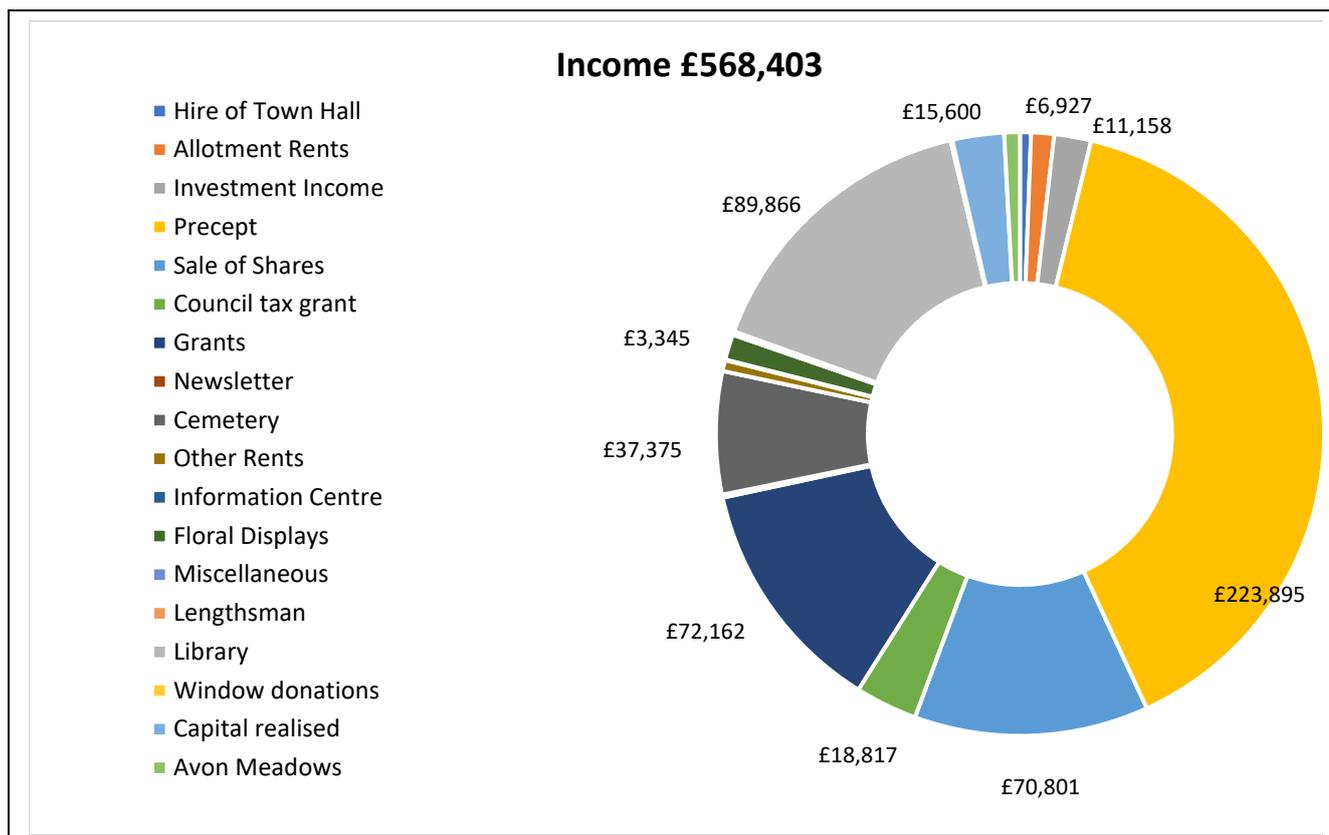
### **The Town Council provides:-**

- Street lighting in residential areas
- Bus Shelters
- Vehicle Activated signs
- Town Clock on the Town Hall
- Benches and litter bins
- Flower tubs, hanging baskets and floral displays
- Christmas lights
- Grants to local organisations
- Free accommodation at the library and a grant to the Citizens Advice Bureau, reviewed annually
- Rooms in the Town Hall and the Library for hire to local groups in the town
- Exchanges, through the Twinning and Tourism Committee, to our twin towns
- The Visitor Information Centre at the Library
- The land for the Riverside Youth Centre on a lease
- The land for Pershore Town Football Club on a lease
- The land for the Leisure Centre on a lease
- Free accommodation for the Heritage Centre

## **Town Council Finances**

Please see charts on page 7 showing how the Council has spent your money during the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022. A detailed copy of the financial statements is available on the Town Council website or hard copy on request

Please note that income or expenditure of less than £3500 is not specified.



**Full Council and Committee meetings for the year 2022/23**  
 Pershore Town Hall, 34 High Street, Pershore  
 (Cemetery Committee will take place at the Cemetery Chapel in summer)

**2022**

May 19 <sup>th</sup>	Planning Committee Town Council
May 26 <sup>th</sup>	Cemetery Committee
June 1 <sup>st</sup>	Youth Council (Town Hall)
June 1 <sup>st</sup>	Finance and Property Committee
June 16 <sup>th</sup>	Planning Committee Town Council
July 6 <sup>th</sup>	Youth Council (High School)
July 14 <sup>th</sup>	Amenities and Environment Committee
July 21 <sup>st</sup>	Planning Committee Town Council
July 28 <sup>th</sup>	Cemetery Committee
August 4 <sup>th</sup>	Finance and Property Committee
August 8 <sup>th</sup>	Twinning and Tourism Committee
Sept 1 <sup>st</sup>	Planning Committee Town Council
Sept 8 <sup>th</sup>	Amenities and Environment Committee
Sept 14 <sup>th</sup>	Youth Council (tbc)
Sept 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Cemetery Committee
Oct 5 <sup>th</sup>	Youth Council (tbc)
Oct 6 <sup>th</sup>	Finance and Property Committee
Oct 20 <sup>th</sup>	Planning Committee Town Council
Nov 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Youth Council (tbc)
Nov 10 <sup>th</sup>	Amenities and Environment Committee
Nov 14 <sup>th</sup>	Twinning and Tourism Committee
Nov 17 <sup>th</sup>	Planning Committee Town Council
Nov 24 <sup>th</sup>	Cemetery Committee
Dec 1 <sup>st</sup>	Finance and Property Committee
Dec 7 <sup>th</sup>	Youth Council (tbc)
Dec 15 <sup>th</sup>	Planning Committee Town Council

**2023**

Jan 4 <sup>th</sup>	Youth Council (tbc)
Jan 12 <sup>th</sup>	Amenities and Environment Committee
Jan 19 <sup>th</sup>	Planning Committee
	Town Council
Jan 26 <sup>th</sup>	Cemetery Committee
Feb 1 <sup>st</sup>	Youth Council (TBC)
Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Finance and Property Committee
Feb 13 <sup>th</sup>	Twinning and Tourism Committee
Feb 16 <sup>th</sup>	Planning Committee
	Town Council
Mar 1 <sup>st</sup>	Youth Council (tbc)
Mar 9 <sup>th</sup>	Amenities and Environment Committee
March 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Cemetery Committee
Apr 5 <sup>th</sup>	Youth Council (tbc)
Apr 6 <sup>th</sup>	Finance and Property Committee
Apr 13 <sup>th</sup>	Planning Committee
	Town Council
May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Youth Council (tbc)
May 4 <sup>th</sup>	Amenities and Environment Committee
May 8 <sup>th</sup>	Twinning and Tourism Committee
May 11 <sup>th</sup>	Town and Annual Meetings
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Planning Committee
	Town Council
May 25 <sup>th</sup>	Cemetery Committee

## **Members of the Council until the next election, planned for May 2023**

<b>Cllr David Annis,</b>	7 Woodward Close, Pershore	St Andrews
<b>Cllr Dan Boatright</b>	1, North End, Pinvin	Holy Cross
<b>Cllr Peter Brookbank,</b>	86, Station Road, Pershore	Holy Cross
<b>Cllr M Chapman Pincher</b>	7, Broad Street, Pershore	St Andrews
<b>Cllr Robert Gillmor,</b>	20, Loughmill Road, Pershore	Holy Cross
<b>Cllr Richard Grantham</b>	13, Meadow Walk, Pershore	Holy Cross
<b>Cllr Julie Hemming</b>	32, Nogains, Pershore	St Andrews
<b>Cllr Art Lavelle</b>	Church Street, Great Comberton	St Andrews
<b>Cllr Julian Palfrey,</b>	4, Mill Lane Close, Pershore,	Holy Cross
<b>Cllr Chris Parsons MBE,</b>	13 Allesborough Drive, Pershore	St Andrews
<b>Cllr Valerie Smith</b>	165, Farleigh Road, Pershore	St Andrews
<b>Cllr C G J Tucker,</b>	10 Throckmorton, Pershore	St. Andrews
<b>Cllr Liz Turier</b>	38 Newlands, Pershore	St Andrews
<b>Cllr Matthew Winfield,</b>	34, Hunter Rise, Pershore	St Andrews
<b>Cllr Val Wood,</b>	20 Bridge Street, Pershore	Holy Cross

All members may be contacted through the Town Hall on the numbers or email address listed below. Members also have their details on the Town Council web site:-

[www.pershoretowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.pershoretowncouncil.gov.uk).