

## Mary Tavy Parish Council Chairman's Report December 2018

Over the past 10 months Cllr Page has purchased "advertising space" in the Jubilee News in which he has written a series of open letters to the community criticising the work and actions of the majority of his fellow Parish Councillors. This local newsletter is of course published by his close supporter, Cllr Fife Cook. Until now I have chosen to ignore his comments as his letters are full of misleading statements, errors and half-truths which render them to be of little value.

Accordingly, at the December 2018 Parish Council meeting I devoted my Chairman's report to the matter of Cllr. Page's open letters. My report is part of the official proceedings of the Council and in due course will be included within the Minutes of that meeting. A full copy of my Chairman's report is set out below.

Regarding paid for adverts by Cllr. Page in the Jubilee Newsletter.

Misleading misinformation regarding the running and the financial state of the Mary Tavy Parish Council given to the Parishioners of Mary Tavy by Cllr. Roger Page in the Jubilee Newsletter run by Cllr. Michael Fife Cook and his wife Ali Fife Cook.

1. Cllr. Page states in his newsletter adverts the following: 'This is an advertisement by Roger Page in a personal capacity and not acting as a member of the Parish Council'. Cllr. Page is always a Councillor. Personal capacity doesn't exist if you're a Councillor to the point that Councillor Fife Cook runs the newsletter and allows him to publish his 'adverts'. So, the future for the village is that if these two Councillors disagree with any Council decision or Councillor they WILL write or allow to Cllr. Page to write misleading misinformation about that Councillor and the Council. This isn't democracy.

2. Cllr. Page states that he has resigned from the roll of Chair of Finance. He emailed us his resignation letter but the fact of the matter is that his role of Chair of Finance didn't exist from September 2018's P.C meeting as Councillors approved a new financial control statement which made his role obsolete. This document was shared with Cllr Page before the September meeting, which he failed to attend. So the fact of the matter is..... he had no role from which to resign!

3. In Issue 28 Oct, the Nov 2018 edition, he said the following regarding our Locum Clerk Mrs. Penny Clapham, 'the cost to the Parish will be twice that of our original clerk'. This is completely untrue. Penny is a very experienced clerk and looks after three parishes very efficiently. She is actually touch typing the minutes as I'm addressing you all here at this meeting. **The Budget for the Clerk this year was £5,500. At the moment the clerk has cost us a total of £2,500 and by the end of the year it is predicted that the Clerk's wages will be £3,753.** This also includes the Clerk's travel expenses. I would like to personally thank Penny for the great work she is doing and at the same time apologise to you, Penny, for the poor treatment shown to you by one of the Councillors who sits on this Council.

4. Cllr. Page stated that “one year ago the expenditure came to £430”. Expenditure in November 2017 was £8074.73. This included the Devon Air Ambulance landing light. In October 2017 the expenditure was £1452.38. Total outgoings including Clerk’s wages and expenses, Burial Clerk’s wages, grounds maintenance, training, advertising and green waste collection £1,452.38. By seeking to trade on isolated sets of figures Cllr. Page is seeking to create unnecessary concern in the minds of some parishioners as to the financial state of their Parish Council. The financial standing of MTPC remains strong, not only in its operational day to day funding, but it has resilience based on financial reserves which exceed £21,000.

5. Cllr. Page is wrong to state that the PC has decided not to adhere to its budget. Evidence is that the Council is adhering to its budget. In fact, if Penny’s predictions are correct, expenditure for 2018/19 is expected to be £402 less than income.

6. He states that the PC is in a “lethargic state” because no new initiatives were brought to the November meeting. One thing which was discussed at the meeting was the break in the Devon hedge bank by Harrington Homes and I proposed that we contact DNPA planning department regarding this issue. Cllrs. Page & Fife Cook opposed this and said we shouldn’t interfere. You’ll all be pleased to hear that there will no longer be a break in the hedge partly due to our email to DNPA. Through all of the Minutes for 2018 I can’t see any initiative that Cllr Page has brought to the PC. It must also be remembered that Cllrs Page & Fife Cook also opposed the purchase of the gritter, which came as a god send during last winter’s Beast from the East.

7. There has been just one meeting of an ad-hoc Personnel Committee, held on 24.7.18 to discuss the resignation of our second Parish Clerk in six months. The agenda and minutes of that meeting have been published on the notice board. The findings of that committee and the reasons for not replacing the clerk were explained to Cllr’s Page & Fife Cook at the part two meeting on 15th August. At that time, under part 2 restrictions, it was also made abundantly clear to both these Councillors why it would be totally inappropriate for them to be involved in the appointment of staff during the remaining operational term of this Council. That doesn’t constitute a “secret meeting”.

8. Only three councillors formed the Personnel Committee – Chair, Vice Chair and Cllr Bright. Not four as Cllr Page writes. He states that by failing to attend 2 meetings we prevented decisions being made. At the Finance Committee meeting on 23rd August there were no motions and Cllr Page, as chair, refused to allow any, therefore no decisions could be made. The committee were not asked to vote to agree Cllr Page’s actions on the night.

9. Lastly Cllr. Page stated that he will be standing for re-election in May and if members of the community are thinking of standing that they should call him. May I just say ‘don’t call Cllr. Page or any of us Councillors which currently sit on this current council’. If you want to be a Councillor be your own person and stand up for YOU believe is right.

Cllr. John Hill

Chairman Mary Tavy Parish Council