

County Councillors Report - April 2019

Local issues

Arranged for a drain be moved closer to the roadside in order to capture the surface water. Followed up on disabled bay issues at King Edward street. Organised a site meeting for white lines and protective access areas to be remarked on the car park behind the Town Hall. Requested a planning application be determined by the Planning Committee. Planning enforcement investigations being undertaken in respect of three areas of the Ward. One long-standing and ongoing, one request to submit a planning application and one new investigation with connection to a WTC lease with an unauthorised build by a resident. Numerous complaints about the recycle centre rules have been reported to CCC.

Town of Culture

Attended the Carmarthenshire Cultural Awards held at Y Ffwrnes in Llanelli with Cllr Ffion Scourfield who spoke about the events planned for a Whitland and gave an overview of the history of the Community. Whitland appeared on S4C at the end of March and I have recorded the section of the programme on the iPad for Cllrs.

One Voice Wales

This was held at the Roadhouse Restaurant in Whitland and was attended by Cllrs from all over Carmarthenshire. Topics included the new audit systems and Brexit was mentioned. Peter Hughes Griffiths attended to pass on information about community grants. Llinos Evans is the contact for Clerks. There will be a discussion on 17th June about community lighting at the town and community council forum. A reminder that there is a Discover Carmarthenshire website at CCC to upload local events. <http://www.discovercarmarthenshire.com/submit-your-event/>

Rural Affairs Task Group

There have been two meetings this month and we are at the draft recommendations stage and have formulated around 50 recommendations broken down to themes of housing, transport, economy, education and health, sport/ social. At the most recent meeting representatives of Carmarthenshire business spoke about their individual reflections on the economy. A manufacturing business based in Llandovery, a niche market restaurateur and a larger food producer were present.

Ysgol Llys Hywel

A new Headmistress has been appointed to start in September 2019. Cllr Scourfield, as the Town Council Governor representative was part of the interview panel.

Rural Poverty Task Group

In one extended meeting of this group there was a presentation from the PhD research fellow undertaking research for the place plan in Llandovery. Notable is the 40% poverty rating. Whitland is on the list of rural Towns that will benefit from this work. It can be noted from the demographics that there are a shortage of males in the area but as to the significance of this I await the full report.

Scrutiny Committees

The Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee - is undertaking some work on loneliness in communities and I have highlighted the initiatives within the Ward of a Whitland that have a direct or indirect benefit. Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee - (I requested a substitute as I was in Ireland but followed up details). Key agenda items included the Welsh language strategy and the following areas are to be targeted because they have the potential or require assistance to increase the number of Welsh speakers. Llanfihangel ar Arth, Carmarthen Town, Kidwelly / Mynydd the stone, Llanelli Town, Llandeilo, Llandovery, Brynamman / Glanamman.

Appointment of the new Chief Executive

There are a number of stages to the appointment procedure. There is an Appointment Committee A made up of Cllrs that select the shortlist and candidates have to undertake independent assessments and are scored accordingly. The final stage is when the shortlisted candidates do a presentation to Full Council and the independent scores are revealed. Cllrs debate the results and there is a ballot to select the CEO. Wendy Walters was chosen. She has formerly served in the retail sector and as a regeneration Officer for the Council. She has been closely involved with the City Deal negotiations and a former winner of Woman of the Year.

CWM Environmental

There have been management changes to this formerly arms length company. The new management CEO consists of Mr Owen Bowen a recently retired senior accountant from CCC and Mr Dave Gilbert a retired CCC head of regeneration involved in developments such as Parc y Scarlets , Carmarthen Shopping Centre and Y Ffwrnes theatre.

Consort CCC

Starting from 15th May for a year I will be acting as Consort for the Deputy Chairman of CCC and the following May 2020 as the Chairman's Consort. This involves some 300 plus events however my commitment will continue to be for Whitland and it is hoped this accolade will benefit the profile of the Town.