

HCC - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – 2016-17

The highlight of the year was the delivery of the carbon reduction project funded by the 106 monies (Community contribution) from the Solar Park.

One hundred and twenty-five households throughout the community used the vouchers to purchase LED bulbs for their homes, which gave everyone the opportunity to benefit directly from this money, and save on their electricity bills into the future.

No monies were wasted, as the unused vouchers were returned in cash to the Council at the full purchase price. This was added to the remaining balance of the 106 monies, and, after examining a number of options, was invested in shares in two wind turbine schemes for the benefit of The Playing Field Association, our free-to-use local charity. The dividends from the turbines should help underpin the fixed running costs of the Playing Field going forward.

Our thanks (again) go to Sue Allen, who facilitated the extraction of the 106 monies from the iron-grip of Carmarthen County Council.

The one issue on which no progress has been made is the retrospective Henllan Farm dairy planning application. This unit was built without planning permission, and its operation has been a cause of concern ever since, particularly the dire situation at the Henllan Amgoed crossroads, where a private property has been repeatedly damaged, and many traffic incidents have been reported.

HCC predicted the problems when this unauthorised development took place, and outlined the concerns regarding road infrastructure and environmental issues when it was consulted as part of the planning process.

Yet Carmarthenshire County Planners have taken no enforcement action after all this time, nor do they communicate their reasons for failing to do so. This contrasts starkly against the enforcement notice swiftly served on a small farm in our neighbourhood which diversified into Camping Pods: an enterprise which adversely affected nobody at all.

HCC Councillors decided to ask the Welsh Government Planning Inspectorate to call this matter in for determination many months ago: but, as yet, we have heard nothing of substance from them.

One further possibility is for the HCC to report Carmarthenshire County Council to the Public Services Ombudsman.

It was an honour to say a few words during the dedication of several benches to the memory of Dave King last month. We all have our special memories of DK, and the benches are a richly deserved tribute to a man who did so much for our community.

As ever, there are some well-deserved thank-you's. Our Deputy Chair retires this year and will be missed for her useful insight into the workings of the County Council.

The HCC Councillor team has worked effectively, particularly on the Energy Project, and I thank them all for their support. I similarly thank Peter Icke for acting as our internal auditor and for his advice over the years. Last, but not least, my thanks to our Clerk Ella, for her cheerful organisation.

Clive Mortlock
Chair
May 2017