

# County Councillors report AGM

Inbox

## Mark Carter

My apologies for not being here tonight but I am attending a family event I am now starting my ninth year as County Councillor for Solva and during this time, I have remained as an opposition member in the Conservative group. Our mission as a group is to scrutinise PCC decisions to ensure the public get the best deal in terms of Services and fairest levels of Council Tax and charges. This is usually quite challenging. The Conservative group this year proposed an alternative Budget which would have meant a 7.5% increase instead of a 9.35% and a change to the way some services are delivered and also a pause on major regeneration projects. However there was not sufficient support in the Chamber and the higher rate succeeded. Close to 75% of all expenditure now goes on Social Care and Education with Social Care now for the first time being the highest spend over Education. More money from the Second Homes premium than ever before will be going in the "general pot" this year with less for affordable housing and those community projects that has so greatly benefitted Solva over the years. There are some difficult years still to come with, I am sure, greater service cuts and tax increases for the public to endure.

For the last 3 years I have chaired the Services Overview and Scrutiny and we have looked at some very interesting topics including most recently the privatisation of the airport resulting in a huge financial saving each year and also the policy that applies to dog bans on beaches. I have now left this role and for the next 12 months, I will be Chairing the Planning Committee, a role I very much look forward to. I will also remain on the Scrutiny and Licensing Committee along with several other more minor roles.

We are about 6 months away from the end of the National Park funding that keeps Solva toilets open. It is my view that as the Park gets a large income from the Car Park it is them who should to continue to fund the toilets and not PCC and certainly not the residents of Solva.

To be clear on my position on the Newgale road scheme, the Standards Committee have stopped me from engaging as a Councillor due to owning the shop in Newgale. Therefore I am only able to comment as a business owner.

On the DARC scheme, which seems a bit quiet at the moment, as I am a member and indeed Chair of the Planning Committee, I cannot pre judge the subject and hence will not be making a final decision of my views until the planning application is to be determined.

At a local level I have to say the highlight of my year is always the fireworks display, which seems to go from strength to strength each year. The crowds that attended were incredible and the bucket donations reflected this. As usual I will continue to write my monthly piece in the Solva News and I always welcome residents who require help to ring or text me on any Council related issue  
Best regards Mark



Cllr Mark Carter

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