

## **A Message from your County Councillor - June 2019**

Following on from the Swale Borough Council elections in May I have suffered two further defeats on issues I care deeply about. The first was at the Health Overview Scrutiny Committee at the end of May when despite arguments from myself and other mainly East Kent Members, Kent County Council decided by 7 votes to 6 to support the NHS proposals for the allocation of Hyper Acute and Acute Services across Kent and Medway. I expect you all know that future services are to be provided from just 3 hospitals, none East of Ashford. Also, none in the Medway area. This was followed by a narrow vote in favour of going ahead with the introduction of some changes at household waste sites. Although I voted against the decision I believe some clarification is needed. It is ONLY soil, rubble and hardcore at £4 per sack and plasterboard at £6 per sack which will be charged for. For most residents they may never need to pay any charges. Please note that Faversham recycling centre at Salters Lane does not accept plasterboard.

There have been some highlights in the six weeks covered. Being invited to Evensong at the Cathedral and the subsequent reception to say goodbye to Bishop Trevor was one such. We also took our usual post-election break. This year we travelled to Northumberland, a part of our beautiful country we had often travelled through but never spent time in. The Cheviot Hills are perfect for walking, we took the Collies with us. Also, we visited Lindisfarne (Holy Island) and Kielder Water with its glorious famous "dark skies" totally unspoilt by light pollution from street lighting etc. We also took the opportunity to catch up with elderly relatives, both in the North East and in Norfolk on the way home.

We have made two visits to the Marlowe Theatre, one to see the stage version of the Bodyguard and the other to hear the extraordinarily funny Jasper Carrott. The last weekend of June saw our annual Selling Church Fete on what proved to be an amazingly hot day. A lot of work by volunteers in the days leading up to the actual date and again after the event. All worthwhile as, despite the extreme heat, the Fete was a great success.

Finally, I would like to continue the theme of my last report and quote from the editorial in the latest edition of the Local Government Chronicle:

"Local Government Association research reveals the growing levels of violence, intimidation and abuse suffered by Local Government officers and Councillors, largely fuelled by social media which amplifies the harshest and most ignorant voices ..... officers and members are usually motivated by a genuine desire to improve, the places they live and work in. They deserve better."

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