

Chairman, Karen Plumridge's Report to the ACDPC AGM 2008

At last year's AGM we were at something of a loss to understand the Association's financial standing due to the long term indisposition of the Secretary. Following the AGM the Acting Secretary identified and contacted the bank holding the Association's account and I visited the Secretary and collected the financial records, so we then knew where we are with regard to the finances. As the balance was considered to be healthy with only minor outgoings anticipated, the Executive agreed not to ask for subscriptions for the year 2007-8, and for subscriptions for 2008-9 to be at the previous level.

Another topic referred to at the AGM was the lack of Charter with Chelmsford Borough Council. Despite lobbying from several quarters, as far as I am aware, the position has not changed. A proposed general meeting which was to be attended by Steve Packham would have been a suitable opportunity to get a straight answer on this issue, but due to various factors this meeting has been delayed.

At last year's AGM I announced that the Association had been allocated a seat on the Local Strategic Partnership. Following a review of the Partnership's governance arrangements, we now have two permanent seats plus two floating seats. It is envisaged that the floating seats will be allocated to town or parish councils who have an interest in a specific item being addressed at a particular time.

At one of the Association's Executive meetings it became apparent that not all councillors were seeing a copy of the County Council's monthly publication for the town and parish councils, *Making the Links*, so they were posted on the Association's website until the County Council started publishing them online. It was felt that the information about Local Area Agreements in the *Making the Links* over the summer months should be accessible to all councillors. From time to time information about relevant consultations has also been posted on the website. The website is an essexinfo.net site but you can find it easily by typing *acdpc* into Google.

During the year it became apparent that the Association's constitution was very old and needed review. This has been started but is not yet complete. It will have to come back to a general meeting for ratification once the Executive have overhauled it.

You will no doubt remember that we all had to adopt the new Code of Conduct and advertise it. The majority of the Association's membership opted for a combined newspaper advertisement with Chelmsford Borough Council. Although we expected councils to be billed for this, in the end we were not charged, so each council that participated saved a few hundred pounds, so I think thanks are due to the Acting Secretary for arranging this.

Sadly, in July, the Acting Secretary and I attended former Chairman, Fred Anelli's funeral on behalf of the Association. The attendance showed what a well liked and busy person he had been.

I'd like to thank on your behalf the individuals who have represented the Chelmsford town and parish councils at the various bodies that you see listed on the Agenda. It's

only by such attendance and representation that local councils are understood and appreciated by such bodies, and it is becoming increasingly important that we maintain a high profile.

I'd also like to thank the Acting Secretary for her support and initiative, and Great Baddow Parish Council for their hospitality again this year.