Leaders Report 11/12/18

May I take this opportunity to wish all Ribble Valley residents colleagues and officers a Merry Christmas. As we say goodbye to 2018 we can look back upon it with some satisfaction, we saw reorganisation of the management structure with the appointment of a Director of Economic Development and Planning. We altered the direction of the Council to drive the local economy to create jobs, attract new businesses and by doing so get greater control over our income. This will enable us to secure jobs for our staff and a guaranteed future for all our public services.

Among the many projects we have done recently include the commissioning of the 3G Pitch at Roefield, rededicating the Longridge Recreation Ground to the fallen of the Great War. The beacons on November 11th burned across the Borough for the centenary commemoration of the end of this war and all round the Borough were silhouettes of soldiers from the trenches. We saw just last week the opening in the old physiotherapy centre by Clitheroe Market for the Foundation for Ribble Valley Families which I am pleased to say we are able to support.

2018 will be remembered as the year of Brexit negotiations , the position is still unresolved so we will have to be cautious in setting our budgets and the council tax next year as we face an uncertain time with no finalised deal.

Now to the Future

In the last days of 2018 there is work still to be done by the Council. We will address the Mearley Lodge /Primrose Lodge project in Clitheroe in the hope that the owners Becks Developments will recognise their responsibilities to provide green open space on the land beside Woone Lane and cooperate with the Ribble Rivers Trust to provide a major amenity for the residents of Clitheroe and the Ribble Valley. In the new year we will return to consideration of the future of the Market Development in Clitheroe.

The next big steps will be the Economic Development Plan and the 5 year review of the Core Strategy. We need in the New Year to look at Infrastructure improvement. We need to make absolutely sure that every penny is collected from developers through 106 payments for health care, school places, roads, biodiversity and leisure. I am delighted to report that we have at present a 6.1 year development land supply which can be used to prevent inappropriate developments particularly in our 3 main urban centres, Clitheroe Whalley and Longridge.

The government have asked the Ribble Valley Borough Council to run a pilot scheme in the election in May 2019 on voter identification and this will be the subject of widespread publicity well before polling day .

We can look forward to the future and 2019 with cautious optimism as a well run authority with balanced budgets and prudent careful management.

Enjoy your mince pies and turkey and come back in the New Year ready to make the difference in the lives of the people of the Ribble Valley.

Ken Hind CBE

Ribble valley Council Leader