

Since the summer break I have been quite busy with the usual duties but outside council I was able to attend quite a few engagements.

I was privileged to attend the launch of Next-generation high speed wireless internet using light technology installed in Kyle Academy to enhance the learning environment

Scottish secondary pupils have become the first in the world to benefit from next-generation high-speed wireless internet connectivity – using light. pureLiFi, the pioneering technology company using light to create next-generation wireless networks, has deployed its LiFi solutions – which use light to wirelessly connect to the internet – at Kyle earlier this Month.

The project is being conducted in conjunction with The University of Edinburgh and with Scottish Futures Trust overseeing the project, who support the Scottish Government's Digital Strategy. The Scottish Government also supported the pilot with a £16,000 grant through its Digital Schools initiative for equipment and installation. pureLiFi and the LiFi Research and Development Centre at the University provided resources for the execution of the pilot with hands-on support and subsequent testing.

South Ayrshire Council's Kyle Academy is the first school globally to pilot real LiFi technology within the classroom, which is the next generation of wireless communications technology. The installation of pureLiFi's LiFi-XC system, comprises of eight LiFi-enabled LED light bulbs in the ceiling and students have been given access to LiFi-XC Stations that plug into their laptops enabling high-speed connectivity through the lights.

LiFi technology, which was born out of Professor Haas' 16 years of research in light communication, and productised and further developed by pureLiFi, is a high-speed, bidirectional, secure and fully networked wireless communication that uses light, rather than radio waves used in Wi-Fi, to transmit data. By using light waves, LiFi offers unprecedented bandwidth, which significantly enhances the connectivity of the classroom to enhance the learning environment by allowing access to high-bandwidth learning materials such as videos and e-books. With the increasing number of internet-connected devices in classrooms, installing LiFi alongside Wi-Fi provides additional bandwidth to reduce network congestion – enabling students to stream educational videos and download resources with seamless connectivity. Wireless connectivity is also in growing demand as schools seek to cater for more students by maximising the use of space with flexible work areas through the use of mobile devices, such as laptops, rather than a room of wired-internet PCs. For further information on LiFi technology, please visit: <https://purelifi.com/technology/> External link

I also attended a Civic reception held by the Provost, in the Town Hall to celebrate Outstanding Achievements in Sport in South Ayrshire. Recognising Ayr United, Carrick Rugby Club, Whitletts Victoria and a list of individual winners on sport.

You will see the Former Station hotel now has scaffolding erected to move forward with reinstating rail services south of Ayr, for further info please visit <https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/station-hotel>

New led street lights have been installed on Masonhill Road and Shavin Brae along with new road surface completed on Alison Street and on Glencairn Road. Next on the schedule is Morton Road.

New QMA Campus Cop was officially appointed at the beginning of September after tireless lobbying for this by myself and Councillor Peter Henderson since my our election, now every secondary school in South Ayrshire has a dedicated police officer.

Thursday 27th was the 'Topping Off' ceremony for Queen Margaret Academy, which is progressing steadily. In attendance were fellow ward councillors, teaching staff and pupils to receive a tour of the new facilities.

I took part in the September Sleepout with Riverside Community Trust on Friday 28th September until Saturday 29th morning to raise funds in support of homelessness and addiction. I and 30 other volunteers swapped our pillows for a pavement on what would be seen as a mild night, the temperature dropped to 4 degrees but I was lucky enough that I own a good quality sleeping bag which kept me comfortably warm. Although we slept on the street, we were in a controlled environment, had stewards watching over us and emergency services notified of the event so, we were pretty safe, with no real worried, not really a real life experience, but it was enough to appreciate the hardships faced by those unfortunate enough to be homeless.

Last week I got the news I have been shortlisted for the Environmental Impact Award at the inaugural LGiU Scotland and CCLA Councillor Awards. I Shall be attending the award ceremony in November at Edinburgh City Chambers, where hopefully I will win.

Chris Cullen

Ayr East Councillor SNP