

ANNUAL REPORT

MAY 2015 - MAY 2016



Councillor Barbara Jones

ADDRESS: 5 Edward Thomas Close
Rudry
Caerphilly
CF83 3EP

TELEPHONE: 02920 883740

EMAIL ADDRESS: barbarajones@caerphilly.gov.uk

ELECTORAL WARD: St. James

PARTY: Labour

PROFILE: Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Council

Cabinet

Joint Consultative Committee

SUBCOMMITTEES/WORKING PARTIES/PANELS

Caerphilly Town Centre Management Group

Caerphilly Homes Task Group

Rights of Way Cabinet Sub-Committee

WLGA Deputy spokes person for Community safety, Police and Fire Authorities

OUTSIDE BODIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Association of Public Services Excellence (APSE) Welsh Regional Committee

Catalogue Supplies Joint Committee

Greater Gwent (Torfaen) Pension Fund Management Group

Heads of the Valley Joint Organics Project Joint Committee

Local Government Association

Prosiect Gwyrdd Joint Committee

Schools Budget Forum

Welsh Church Fund

Welsh Local Government Association
Welsh Purchasing Consortium

SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

St. James Primary School
St. Cenydd Comprehensive School

ATTENDANCE

From May 2015 to May 2016 my attendance at Council meetings was as follows:

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>No. Attended</u>	<u>No. Held</u>
Council	9	12
Cabinet	15	21
Joint Consultative Committee	3	4
Caerphilly Town Centre Management Group	1	3
Caerphilly Homes Task Group	4	7
Non-Domestic Rate Payers Committee	0	1

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

I undertook the following training and development seminars and courses: -

Medium Term Financial Plan (Seminar x 2)
Gypsy and Travellers and the Housing Act (Regional Seminar)
Negotiating and Influence Skills
Treasury Management (Seminar)
Hate Crime
Cabinet member training for Scrutiny.

CABINET MEMBER ACTIVITY

As Deputy Leader of Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, it means that besides my Constituency work, representing Constituents with various issues and my work as a school governors etc., I have responsibility for Finance, Procurement, Communications, Legal and ICT.

I meet the heads of these services on a monthly basis; I also meet with the S151 Officer (Head of Finance) monthly so that I am able to have an overview of what's happening in all these areas. Being a Cabinet member and Deputy Leader is a full time job but is something I am really enjoying, as the work is so varied and interesting. I have a number of other duty's to carry out, I attend the Cabinet, Welsh Local Government Association meetings with the Leader and other Leaders from across Wales, H.R. Strategy Group, All Wales Procurement Group, Customer Service Group, Policy and Resource Scrutiny meeting where I deliver a report, Schools Budget Forum, monthly meetings with Trade Unions, Caerphilly Homes Task Group, the Welsh Index of Deprivation meetings to name a few. I have also attended a number of events such as the Holocaust Memorial day in Blackwood Miners Institute, the Caerphilly Choirs concert at St David's Hall, the Achievement Awards ceremony for Looked After Children in Caerphilly Castle, and the Local Service Board addressing the issues of how we can reduce the rising poverty in the Borough.

I presented the draft budget strategy to Cabinet on Wednesday the 17th February, the proposals were accepted, I then present the Budget proposals to full Council on Wednesday 24th February. Caerphilly County Borough have had a better than expected settlement figure from Welsh Government this year, we had prepared for the worse but hoped for the best, it is odd to be pleased that we are making saving of £11.1million but when you realise that we were expecting to be having to make savings of £14million, it is good news. That does not mean that we are able to relax, we still have huge savings which must be made between now and 2020.

We had expected to have to raise the Council tax by 3.9% but as a result of the better than expected settlement from Welsh Government, we are able to set the Council tax at only a 1% increase, which I believe will be the lowest in Wales (For a band D property this equates to 19p per week)

Unlike many of our neighbouring Authorities, we have been able to protect front line services and ensure that there continues to be very little impact on the public. In consultation with the public, we took the decision to shrink some services rather than close them, It was really pleasing to see how engaged the public have been with the budget consultation.

CONSTITUENCY ACTIVITY

I continue to have an open door policy where residents of the ward contact me at home or by phone or email, with issues around road surfacing, over hanging trees, floods refuse, illegal dumping of waste, housing issues and many other matters. I have been delighted to be part of the partnership between CCBC Highways department and the Draethen, Waterloo and Rudry Community Council Community Voice Project, which has now achieved a 20 MPH situation outside Rudry village school, a big thank you to all involved.

I continue to support the Gwern-y Doman Conservation Group to have the green field site removed from the LDP.