

ANNUAL REPORT

MAY 2015 - MAY 2016



Councillor James Pritchard

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ELECTORAL WARD: Morgan Jones

PARTY: Labour

PROFILE: Equalities Champion

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Council

Education for Life Scrutiny Committee (Vice Chair)

SUBCOMMITTEES/WORKING PARTIES/PANELS

Community Council Liaison Sub-Committee

Caerphilly Town Centre Management Group

Community Centres Task and Finish Group

Scrutiny Leadership Group

OUTSIDE BODIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Young Persons Forum

GAVO

Equalities Champion

SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

Plasyfelin Primary

ATTENDANCE

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

Meeting

No. Attended

No. Held

Caerphilly Town Centre Management Group	3	3
Community Centres Task and Finish Group	3	4
Community Council Liaison Sub Committee	0	3
Council	11	12
Education for Life Scrutiny Committee	8	8
Scrutiny Leadership Group	1	3

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

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

Medium Term Financial Plan (Seminar)

CONSTITUENCY ACTIVITY

Former Caerphilly Library building

In 2013 I launched a campaign to retain the old Caerphilly Library building for a future community benefit. I'm delighted to see the building thriving as a new social enterprise, The Old Library. There was a real chance the former building was going to fall in to disrepair but now we have a thriving community building run by dedicated local residents. The community have fully embraced the building and the aims behind the project.

Membership of Caerphilly Town Council

As a member of Caerphilly Town Council I regularly attended meetings the last year. I regularly raised issues affecting the community and on occasions asked on behalf of local residents for the town council to agree funding or part funding for some projects. Working with colleagues on the Town Council we reviewed and approved numerous applications to assist various local schemes, clubs and organisations in the area. In 2013 I strongly argued for the Town Council to actively consult local residents on the annual budget. We've now seen the Town Council consult residents through an online survey. Over the last year I've valued my membership of the Town Council immensely and would encourage anybody who's interested in local decision making to come along to the meetings so see local democracy in action.

Improving the Local Environment

I continue to work closely with Keep Wales Tidy to help improve the local environment. This year I helped local residents with a planting project which was also assisted with a grant from Keep Wales Tidy and Plasyfelin school children. The project improved a nearby lane, turning it from an area covered in brambles in to a nice walk way with a flower bed.

Regular Surgeries

In 2012 I was elected on a pledge to hold regular surgeries in the ward. Since becoming a Councillor I've held many surgeries and will continue to do so as long as I'm Councillor. Over the last twelve months I've held 12 monthly surgeries seeing an average of 1.5 people per surgery. Constituents have raised a number of important personal issues with me which I've addressed. If any resident would like to attend my surgery then I hold one on the first Saturday of every month between [10am – 11am](#) at The Old Library, Nantgarw Road, Caerphilly.

Door Knocking and Leaflet / Letters

I regularly go around the doors to speak to people about the issues of the day. The majority of my casework will be generated by speaking to people on their doorstep who would otherwise not raise the issues. On average I knock on about 200 doors per month and this enables me to knock every door in the ward in a year. In my experience, residents will usually prefer face to face contact rather than communicating via e mail or telephone. Every enquiry I take up on behalf of a resident I send them a letter for their records. Through door – knocking alone I made hundreds of enquiries on behalf of residents primarily to the Council but also to a range of agencies including the Welsh Assembly Government, Arriva Trains Wales, Natural Resources Wales and Gwent Police.

Community Organisations

This year I attended the first meeting of ‘More shops for Caerphilly’. The group has formed to consider what practical steps can be made to improve the town centre. A number of early recommendations have been put forward by local residents and the group will be working together to try to enact positive change in the town.

PACT meetings / Your Voice

PACT meetings no longer exist in the Morgan Jones Ward, instead they’ve been replaced with ‘Your Voice’. I was able to attend some of the meetings where local priorities were put forward. We’ve seen positive developments at nearby B&Q following pressure from residents and Councillors partly through the Your Voice function. B&Q have recently erected a barrier to prevent illegal access during the late hours of the night. Other parking – related problems in the ward are still to be resolved and remain a constant problem for us to tackle.

Keeping in touch with residents

I try and keep myself as accessible as possible to the public. This year I’ve held public meetings to discuss local issues with residents and haven’t shied away from opening myself up to answer difficult questions. There always seems to be a local issue to tackle and getting the word out is vitally important. I always keep constituents up to date with my activities by offering a weekly e – mail update to all those residents who want one. I’ve maintained a Facebook and twitter account providing regular updates about things going on locally. Over the next year I’d like to be using both accounts more regularly to reach more people.

Membership of Plas – y – Felin School

I enjoy being a governor of Plasyfelin School. The governing body are very friendly and work well together. I’ve been working closely with the Head Teacher and fellow governors over the last year to try and improve the learning environment for the school. I’ve been particularly interested to work with the school on community – related activities and it was a privilege to work to try and achieve this. In June I ran the Caerphilly 10k for the school and raised £100 to go towards providing gardening equipment for a school project.