

ANNUAL REPORT

MAY 2019 - MAY 2020



Councillor Ross Whiting

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ELECTORAL WARD: Risca West

PARTY: Labour

PROFILE: Ward Member for Risca West

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Council
Democratic Services
Education Scrutiny Committee
Licensing and Gambling Committee
Taxi and General Committee
Planning Committee

SUBCOMMITTEES/WORKING PARTIES/PANELS

Community Council Liaison Sub Committee
Future Generations Advisory Panel
Licensing and Gambling Sub Committee
Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm Working Group
Risca Town Centre Management Group
Taxi and General Sub Committee
Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee

ATTENDANCE

To view my attendance record, please follow the link below:

<https://democracy.caerphilly.gov.uk/mgUserAttendanceSummary.aspx?LLL=0>

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Education Performance Indicators (Seminar)

Communications & Influencing Skills (Recommended Training)

Wellbeing of Future Generations Workshop (Recommended Training)

Strategic Development Plan Workshop (Seminar)

Licensing Committee Training (Annual Refresher)

Civil Parking & Traffic Regulation Orders (Seminar)

Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm Working Group (Annual Refresher)

South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority (Seminar)

Medium Term Financial Plan (Seminar)

Ethics and Standards (Mandatory Training)

WARD ACTIVITY

During lockdown I continued carrying out my role as a Councillor representing my community and providing assistance during a difficult time.

COVID19

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 I have been assisting individuals and businesses that have had issues and questions relating to the lockdown and support that has been available, sharing relevant information on social media. I have also helped distribute neighbour cards to community volunteers and vulnerable residents to ensure that everyone who needs support receives it. I would like to pay special tribute to the fantastic community groups which have been established in the local area to assist those who are vulnerable or in need of support

Storm Dennis

Thankfully for the most part the flood defences along the Ebbw River prevented large-scale flooding of Risca and Pontymister during Storm Dennis. The day following the storm I visited as many areas of the ward as possible to inspect and report any damage or continued flooding issues. The storm had caused damage to the bridge on Fields Road, which has since been fully repaired, and drains had become blocked and/or overflowed. I worked with officers to ensure that drains have been cleared and repaired where possible, to ensure they are able to cope with any future flooding risks. In response to queries I received from residents, I was able to assist the distribution of sandbags to those in most risk. In relation to concerns raised with me about the immediate response to the flood warnings, I have been in touch with Natural Resources Wales to seek reassurance that the flood gates at Waunfawr Park are maintained and operated promptly when needed.

Parking Enforcement

Following on from last year's report, I have supported changes to the parking restrictions on Commercial Street, Fernlea and Park Road. These changes will come into place in due course to ensure that there is adequate residential parking for residents who live in these areas, and to remove parking restrictions where it is possible and practical.

Church Road

Due to the variety of opinion and potential unintended consequences/risks associated with implementing a one-way system on Church Road, I am continuing to discuss with officers on an on-going basis different ways to reduce car horn usage at the bottom of Church Road at the railway bridge where possible. I have also been reporting persistent fly-tipping in this area.

Potholes and Road Resurfacing

I have requested pothole repairs as and when required, and as far as I am aware all reports have been addressed with the exception of two which are ongoing. Some of the roads most affected by potholes were resurfaced, but there are ongoing issues relating to missed areas which I am pursuing.

Environment

I have reported a number of persistent and repeat fly-tipping and litter incidents around Risca and Pontymister. Much like last year, this is an ongoing problem and will continue to be reported wherever issues arise.

Social Media

I have continued using social media to communicate and inform residents about important ward related matters. My Facebook page 'Cllr Ross Whiting – Risca West' has increased to 533 'likes', and I continue to receive queries and messages via the page.

Risca Town Council

Although I am not a member of Risca Town Council, I have continued to attend the majority of their meetings over the past year including the virtual meetings which have been set up as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown. At these meetings I have been able to provide them with County Members' updates on matters important to them. I have also received representations from Town Councillors and raised them with the relevant officers within the County Borough Council.

General Casework

In addition to the above, I have also received a wide range of miscellaneous queries, questions and issues from residents which I have raised and pursued on their behalf with the relevant council departments. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 it has been more difficult than usual to meet residents to discuss matters. Hopefully, as the lockdown restrictions are lifted, it will be possible to do this more in the coming months.