

# ANNUAL REPORT

MAY 2020 - MAY 2021



Councillor Ross Whiting

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**ELECTORAL WARD:** Risca West

**PARTY:** Labour

**PROFILE:** Ward Member for Risca West  
Cabinet Member for Learning and Achievement since 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

## COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Council

Cabinet since 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Cabinet as Trustees for Blackwood Miners Institute since 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Appointments Committee since 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Democratic Services Committee until 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Education Scrutiny Committee until 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Licensing and Gambling Committee until 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Taxi and General Committee until 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Planning Committee until 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

## SUBCOMMITTEES/WORKING PARTIES/PANELS

Community Council Liaison Sub Committee until 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Licensing and Gambling Sub Committee until 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Taxi and General Sub Committee until 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee until 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020  
Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm Working Group  
Risca Town Centre Management Group  
Advisory Panel for the Appointment and Removal of Local Authority Governors since 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020  
Corporate Joint Consultative Committee since 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020  
Pensions/Compensation Committee since 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020  
View Point Panel since 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

### **OUTSIDE BODIES AND ASSOCIATIONS**

Coleg Harlech WEA North since 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020  
Corporate Parenting Group since 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020  
Corporate Safeguarding Group since 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020  
Islwyn Indoor Bowls Club Management Board since 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020  
PFI Liaison Committee since 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020  
Schools Admission Forum  
Schools Budget Forum  
WJEC  
Youth Forum

### **ATTENDANCE**

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

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

### **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Armed Forces Covenant Briefing (recommended)  
2021 Census (seminar)  
Mass Vaccination Programme Briefing (recommended)  
Homelessness (seminar)  
Team Caerphilly (seminar)  
Treasury Management (seminar)

### **CABINET MEMBER ACTIVITY**

Lockdown brought many new challenges to my Cabinet role, with daily updates and situations never before experienced.

As Cabinet Member for Learning & Achievement since 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020, I acted as the Cabinet representative in these areas, to ensure that the views and needs of the service are built into the Council's policy framework and the decision-making process. I attended Scrutiny meetings, where I regularly updated other Members about my key portfolio activities.

I have regular meetings with Directors, Heads of Service, Officers, MPs and MS' and, along with my regularly scheduled committee, cabinet and council meetings during 2020/21, I attended the following:

Schools Strategy Board, Coach of the Future 2020/21 Launch, Caerphilly Placemaking Plan, EAS, Schools Budget Forum, WG Education – Reassurance Campaign Filming, Schools

Causing Concern meetings, School Development Plan meetings, WLGA & LA Education Cabinet Meeting, EAS - Joint Executive Group, Walking Tour of Caerphilly Town Centre, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme, Touch Base Meeting at Cwmaber Infants and Juniors, Ministerial Meetings, Youth Cabinet, Carbon Literacy Climate Ready Gwent, Foster Care Fortnight Filming.

I met regularly with Heads of Service, Directors, and the Chief Executive with regard to my portfolio priorities.

### **WARD ACTIVITY**

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

### **COVID19**

As the COVID-19 pandemic has progressed, I have continued helping individuals and businesses that have had issues and questions relating to the lockdown, and helped to signpost towards available support. I have also been able to support the introduction of 'parklets' outside interested businesses to increase their outdoor capacity and attract people to the area.

### **Parking Enforcement**

I have been made aware of ongoing parking related issues and continued to raise these matters with the parking enforcement team. This includes parking near schools and one-way systems, and I will continue to raise these matters.

### **Church Road**

Regarding the matter of excessive horn use and other issues related to Church Road, I have continued meeting with officers and raising residents' concerns. Within the next few months, once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, officers will be conducting a traffic survey to determine the flow of traffic on Church Road and will subsequently introduce an experimental one-way system to deal with this issue.

### **Planning Enforcement**

I have been made aware of planning enforcement matters and have raised these issues with the relevant officers. This has led to relevant action being taken on these matters but some of these remain ongoing issues.

### **Environment**

I have continued to report 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. I have also raised queries with officers surrounding the quantity of litter on the A467 and cleaning schedules on that road.

### **Risca Town Council**

Although I am not a member of Risca Town Council, I have continued to attend as many of their meetings as I have been able over the past year, including the virtual meetings which have been set up as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions. At these meetings and through emails 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 the Clerk to the Town Council, as appropriate, and raised them with the relevant officers within the County Borough Council.

### **General Casework**

In addition to the above, I have also continued to receive 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 continue to be lifted, it will be possible to do this more in the coming months.