

# ANNUAL REPORT

MAY 2013 - MAY 2014



Councillor James Pritchard

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**ELECTORAL WARD:** Morgan Jones

**PARTY:** Labour

**PROFILE:** Equalities Champion (from February 2014)

## **COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

Council

Education for Life Scrutiny Committee

## **SUBCOMMITTEES/WORKING PARTIES/PANELS**

Community Council Liaison Sub-Committee

Caerphilly Town Centre Management Group

## **OUTSIDE BODIES AND ASSOCIATIONS**

Young Persons Forum

GAVO (from February 2014)

## **SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY**

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Caerfilli (until March 2014)

Plasyfelin Primary

## **ATTENDANCE**

From May 2013 to May 2014 my attendance at Council meetings was as follows:

Meeting

No. Attended

No. Held

Council	8	9
Education for Life	6	8

## **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

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

E Voting	Creative Thinking
Questioning and Listening Skills	Holding Effective Pre-Meetings

## **CONSTITUENCY ACTIVITY**

### **Disabled Bay Campaigning**

In the summer of 2013 I undertook to revisit disabled parking provision in Caerphilly town centre after a number of disabled bays were withdrawn under a previous traffic order. I campaigned for an increase in dedicated disabled bays and called meetings with officers of the council to try to work towards a situation where dedicated bays were installed in the town. I'm pleased a new traffic regulation order is now going through in response to the public concerns over the original decision.

### **Outdoor Gym Campaigning**

In the summer of 2013 I began campaigning for a new outdoor gym to be installed in Morgan Jones Park after viewing an outdoor gym in Barry. I began by calling Vale of Glamorgan Council to look into how they secured funding for the gym and following that I arranged to meet with Council Officers to help progress the idea for Morgan Jones Park. I was delighted to see funding secured for a new outdoor gym in Morgan Jones Park and the installation of the gym took place in May 2014.

### **Caerphilly Library Campaign**

In September and October 2013 myself and a fellow town councillor went around the doors in the Morgan Jones Ward to ask local people what their views were on the old Caerphilly library building and what potential future facility would people want to see (if one could be achieved). Overall there were over 100 responses to the community consultation with people generally expressing that they wanted the building to be used for a community purpose following the closure in November 2013. Following the news that Cabinet have agreed to invite interested parties to come forward with their ideas, I've continued to press for a long – term plan for the site.

### **Working Week in a Wheelchair**

In April 2014 I spent the working week in a wheelchair to try to gain an insight into access issues facing wheelchair users across Caerphilly Borough. I found the week challenging but this I expected. Following my week in a wheelchair I compiled a report and sent it to the Chief Executive of the Council and all 73 Councillors. I have asked all members for their support to improve access and received some feedback from members outside my ward which was pleasing. Contained in my report were examples of poor access which I believe the authority should be looking to rectify. I've received some semi – positive news so far and

hope to make further progress within the next 12 months. During the week I raised over £100 for two disability charities.

### **Regular Surgeries**

Since becoming a Councillor in 2012 I made it a priority to hold a regular surgery. Since August 2012 I've held a twice – monthly surgery in the old Caerphilly Library building and shortly after the building closed I transferred to St Catherines Church. I feel its important that I try to reach as many people as possible and not wait by the phone for residents to call me. Over the last twelve months I've attended 22 surgeries seeing an average of 1.5 people per surgery.

### **Door Knocking and Leaflet / Letters**

I regularly go around the doors to speak to people about the issues of the day. On average I knock on about 250 doors per month and this enables me to knock every door in the ward in a year. I feel this is a crucial way for me to get to what the local issues are. 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.

### **Residents Association**

I try to attend meetings of the Heol Trecastell Residents Association which has been recently formed to offer my support to any problems that arise on the estate.

### **PACT meetings**

I appreciate the value of PACT meetings and always try and go along. Over the last twelve months I've kept in regular contact with Police Officers and PCSO's and have worked on the PACT Priorities voted on by the public. Some of these priorities I'm hopeful can be resolved as recent Traffic Regulation Orders are being progressed at the moment. Unfortunately due to illness and family commitments I missed some meetings last year but I hope to attend more PACT meetings next year.

### **Communities First**

I've been working with Officers of the Council, the Voluntary Sector and the Head Teacher and Governors of Plasyfelin Primary School to encourage community events in Churchill Park as part of the Communities First Programme. In April 2014 I worked on a family fun day event attended by around 30 people in Plasyfelin School. It was pleasing to see local people enjoying themselves and future events are planned for 2014 and 2015.

### **Equalities Champion**

I became the Council's Equalities Champion in February 2014. Since becoming Equalities Champion I've represented the authority at two conferences in Cardiff relating to Hate Crime and general equality issues in today's society. As the equalities champion I'm now consulted on policies in this field and my input is appreciated. I also undertook my working week in a wheelchair in consultation with the equalities team in the Council and reported my experiences to them.

I produced regular newsletter for all residents of the ward and if there was a particular matter of interest I produced an additional leaflet specifically relating to that concern and the outcome achieved. To further keep constituents up to date with my activities I've maintained a facebook and twitter account.

As a member of Caerphilly Town Council I attended all but one meeting since in 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 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. I valued my membership of the Town Council immensely. I find it's the really local issues that matter to local people.

As governor on Plasyfelin Primary School I've been working closely with the Head Teacher and fellow governors. 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.