

# Annual Report – Special Responsibilities

(Under the South Gloucestershire Scheme of Members' Allowances, certain councillors who perform significant responsibilities over and above those of other councillors are entitled to receive additional allowances to recognise those extra responsibilities. The Scheme requires councillors in receipt of such allowances to report on their actions. This report is published on the Council's website).

**Report for period: 2016-2017** .....

**Name: Cllr Matthew Riddle**.....

**Position held: Leader of Council (and Chair of Policy & Resources Committee)**.....

## A general outline of the special responsibilities you perform

Leader of South Gloucestershire Council and Leader of the South Gloucestershire Council Conservative Group, Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee, representing the Council on number of outside bodies, locally, regionally and nationally. Chair of the West of England Strategic Leaders Board. I am a member and Chair of the new Joint West of England Committee and a member of the new West of England Combined Authority.

## Key Milestones/Achievements during the reporting Period

1. Negotiated the £1 Billion Devolution Deal with Government, to bring more decision making and new money locally within the West of England Region on infrastructure and skills. This has been achieved while still keeping South Gloucestershire's identity and boundaries.
2. Protected front line services from reductions in central government funding.
3. Entered into the government's business rate retention pilot, available only those Councils that had done a Devolution Deal. This will have a positive effect on the Council's revenue budget in the short and medium term.
4. Decision made to rent out surplus office space.
5. Reduced the cost of running the council and council meetings, by merging committees.
6. Returned the Council to a Cabinet form of governance, from a Committee structure.

## **What “added value” to the local community have you been able to achieve through your special responsibilities?**

Protected front line council services, while receiving lower government funding. This has made been possible by council assets working harder and, developing and introducing new ways of delivering services.

In terms of identity I have championed the work of the Council amongst local voluntary organisations and charities, building up relationships with many of the Council's partners.

Promoted the area's uniqueness and identity, while addressing the issues of working closer with neighbouring councils on cross boundary projects. I chaired the new West of England Combined Authority until the election of the new West of England Mayor in May 2017.

## **How have your special responsibilities enabled the Council to be more effective?**

Reducing the cost of running the council and a focus on protecting key front line services eg services to vulnerable children and adults. This has made been possible by making council resources work harder and, developing and introducing new ways of delivering services.

The joint working across the West of England and the West of England Combined Authority has made the delivery of housing and transport infrastructure more effective as many of these cross council boundaries.

## **In what ways has the exercise of your special responsibilities supported the core objectives of the Council?**

1. Protecting front line services for vulnerable children and adults.
2. Taking the Council through a period of change to reduce costs and become more efficient by cutting out waste and duplication.
3. Ensuring that in the future the area has the infrastructure for the planned new growth.