

# 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: *May 2013 to May 2014* .....**

**Name: *John Goddard* .....**

**Position held: *Chair and Lead Member of Resources Sub Committee* ....**

## **A general outline of the special responsibilities you perform**

As Chairman I take the lead at briefings and will also Chair some other related Sub Committees such as, Appointments & Employment panel and sub committee. With the other Lead Members, we liaise, with all corporate and finance functions of the council and attend regular briefings with the Director and Heads of Service, prior to either Resources sub Committee or Policy and Resources and to receive in depth information and current and future outturns regarding the councils budget and all aspects of The "Chief Executive & Corporate Resources" section which is a very important part of the council and comprises the following departments:-Finance & Customer Services; Emergency Planning; Health & safety; Human Resources; ICT; Information Governance; Internal Audit; Legal & Democratic Services, Property Services; Service Planning & Performance; Support for staff going through change; and the Transformation Programme.

The Vision is "To improve Services to Customers by Championing change through Staff and Partners" **No Change Since last year**

## **Key Milestones/Achievements during the reporting Period**

Like many other local authorities, this Council has been facing significant financial challenges over the past few years. Over a four year period to 2014/15 the Council will have to achieve spending reductions of 28%.

In responding to these challenges the Council has taken a very positive and practical approach. Decisions have already been taken and options identified, and agreed, this will leave the Council on track to deliver the first phase of the £43M programme. The annual Governance Report undertaken by the Audit Commission stated that the Council had 'a good track record of managing its finances within available resources' and 'has sound arrangements to challenge how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.'

There have been many challenges in the past 12 months but close budget monitoring and management action taken to deal with emerging difficulties has ensured that the department remains a good service in a good financial position. There have been many achievements including; the roll out of superfast fibre broadband service, delivery of the city deal growth incentive deal, successful submission and publication of our information governance self-assessment and

improvements to the council's IT infrastructure. We also received an outstanding achievement award for reducing carbon emissions across our properties and operations by more than ten per cent over the last four years.

The next six months will present several challenges for the department, particularly in relation to the welfare change agenda, business rate pooling arrangements and continuing to deliver the council savings programme to ensure a sustainable medium term financial plan (MTFP). We are also taking a lead role in exploring the potential for establishing an arms-length company for the Council's Traded Services Division with a view to implementing the new company later in the year.

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

By putting in more time as a small group (i.e.) Lead Members 3 in number, we are able to discuss with and advise senior officers regarding policy and situations, which inevitably will save time and money in saved costs by reducing the number of large committee meetings which would be needed, if Lead Member briefings did not take place, also as these briefings are fairly frequent Lead Members are kept up to date with developments. However I feel it should be said that the previous Cabinet system of Governance in my opinion gave much better added value as the Executive Member was involved on a day to day to basis and was certainly much better informed and able to take decisions much more quickly than now.

**No Change since last year!**

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

I think it has because of the skills and expertise that I bring to the table, which were mainly gained from my previous experience as an executive member together with training such as the Leadership Academy scheme, as has the small group of Lead Members who were chosen by their political groups for their skills and knowledge to work together as a unit for the best way forward for the council and its residents. **No Change during this year!**

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

Through working with the other Lead Members, the Group Leaders and Council Directors and other senior Officers, the Core objectives and a more strategic vision is possible, which gives more clarity, direction and impetus for me and this small group to always have in mind the core objectives. This council has and still does have an excellent record of Member Officer working relationships, which are paramount to the success of this council. **No Change during this year!**