

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: 2016-17

Name: Councillor Ian Boulton.....

Position held: Labour Lead Member for Communities

A general outline of the special responsibilities you perform

Develop and lead on Labour Group policy. Scrutinise and hold the ruling group to account for their policies and outcomes. Provide input into council policies relating to the wide subject area covered by the committee. I ensure the Labour Group is fully engaged by attending Agenda Briefings, the Communities Committee and Full Council meetings. The Lead members now under the Committee System share some responsibility for producing the agenda but also have to ensure that the committee reviews and comments on subjects under the remit of the Communities Committee's role and responsibilities. I ensure that the Labour group have a high profile within the Communities Committee by actively participating in Committee meetings.

I ensure information is fed back to the Labour group for discussion.

My two Labour colleagues on the team are fully briefed and contributed to our policy positions. I also send press statements and I am the point of contact for the Labour Group on Communities Committee for the public when they raise concerns.

I attend the Safer and Stronger Strategic Partnership Meetings, Joint Parish Forum meetings, Armed Forces Day, the Engage Community Festival Steering Group (and volunteer at the Festival as well). I attended the Annual Sports Award event and I'm an active member of the Friends of Page Park Group who I also comper the annual summer festival for.

I am also the Council's representative on the Staple Hill Regeneration Partnership which I Chair.

Key Milestones/Achievements during the reporting Period

I have campaigned to protect the Priority Neighbourhoods initiative which supports the most vulnerable wards in South Gloucestershire.

The number of crimes has continued to rise in South Gloucestershire and I have worked to highlight this. I have been on 1 'ride-a-long' with the police in order to better understand

the unprecedented pressures they are working under. I have brought the lessons I have learned from these experiences into the Council debates.

I have highlighted that the reduction of green bin charges at the expense of other valued services does not help the Council's environmental objectives and have been supportive of efforts to encourage home composting.

I have been working with Library user groups across South Gloucestershire to highlight the importance of our library service and have actively worked with campaigners in support of our library staff.

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

I run, and volunteer with, a Job Seekers Support Group which provides advice and support for South Gloucestershire residents who are working to get back into employment and training.

I am the Chair of the South Gloucestershire LGBT+ Equality Network. I have been working with SARI and The Diversity Trust to work to tackle inequalities and hate crime in South Gloucestershire.

I am an active member of the Friends of Page Park. I sit on the Steering Committee and host most Friends of Page Park events held throughout the year.

I actively use social media to publicise our work in the community. As well as running my own social media accounts I manage the Friends of Page Park Twitter Account and the Staple Hill Residents Facebook Group and continue to develop our online presence.

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

Providing effective scrutiny and oversight of the activities of the ruling group in order to provide an alternative viewpoint and practical alternatives to the decisions that they take.

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

To support the Council in ensuring that South Gloucestershire becomes an even better place for everyone to live and work.