

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: 2018-2019

Name: Councillor June Bamford

Position held: Chair of Development Control East Committee/DMC

A general outline of the special responsibilities you perform

As Chair of DC East Sites and Planning Committee, DMC since October 2019, it is my responsibility to ensure that applicants and members of the public have their say and are treated fairly at meetings in accordance with the Code of Conduct and that decisions taken at planning meetings accord with council policies and National Regulations. This is particularly important because any appeal against the committee's decision could potentially cost the council a large sum of money.

I feel it is also my responsibility to ensure that members of the committee have training to enable them to make an informed decision.

Key Milestones/Achievements during the reporting Period

There have been some controversial applications over the past year which have generated a great deal of opposition. Decisions have been made after engaging all parties concerned and taking decisions in accordance with planning law while balancing the interests of the community.

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

Planning is a quasi-judicial committee and as such is constrained by planning law unlike other committees/Cabinet where they can set their own policies and objectives.

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

Making sure that decisions are taken in a fair, equitable and legal manner whilst also ensuring that the council is not exposed to unnecessary legal costs through appeals.

The committee also has to take into account the fact that South Glos has to build a certain number of homes over the coming years and so when decisions are taken the committee is obliged to consider whether the authority has a 5-year housing land supply so that we can provide for the growing population requiring affordable homes.

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

The Committee supports the council’s core values, e.g. ensuring that decisions are transparent and full engagement with partners/local communities takes place.