

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 – November 2013.....

Name: James Hunt.....

Position held: Conservative Lead Member for Communities.....

A general outline of the special responsibilities you perform

- Work with the two other lead members for Communities, the Director of Environment and Community Services and appropriate officers to formulate policies, budgets and addressing appropriate responses to issues as they arise.
- Represent the committee at times of celebration and confrontation.
- Ensuring decisions and policies come forward which are fair and reflect the needs of the residents of South Gloucestershire.
- Championing Council themes and objectives which lie within the communities remit by sitting on ancillary bodies such as the Waste Forum, Equalities Forum etc. and also policy steering groups.

Key Milestones/Achievements during the reporting Period

- Consulting with the public around the council budget leading to a further council tax freeze.
- Continuing with the transformational program for Community Services delivering efficiency savings.
- Securing major capital investment in play areas, parks and community facilities.
- Responding to the public's concerns over reduced street lighting.
- Delivering the Waste Review implementing an increase in recyclables.
- Responding to the public's concerns over charging for Green Bin collection by opposing the move and developing alternatives, which were unfortunately not adopted.
- Working with partners to deliver the USA Cook Islands Rugby League World Cup match at the Memorial ground.

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

- I have acted as one of the three main points of contact between residents and the Community Services department.
- I have been able to represent the various communities of South Gloucestershire when working with officers to ensure that decisions are fair and in the best interests of all.
- I have been able to bring my experience and commitment to the department to ensure decisions and policy are in the best interests of residents and best value for money.

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

- The progression on the transformation program and the delivery of the required savings allow the Council to concentrate more on core services and delivery a fair and balanced budget.
- Proper planning and scrutiny at the decision formulation stage has encouraged strong positive decisions to be put before the committee for final decision.
- Quick and full engagement with officers and the public allows the Council to be efficient and effective in its actions.

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

- All strands of the Council's core objectives are supported in some manner by the Community Services department. This ranges from being one of the prime delivery mechanisms, such as in health, equalities or community engagement and priority neighbourhoods, to supporting other departments priorities such as cutting carbon emissions.
- The Equalities Forum, on which I sit, has an important role in supporting the Council in its delivery of services to and its interaction with the many equalities groups reflected in South Gloucestershire as well as the sharing of best practice with other organisations.