

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: 2015/16

Name: Trevor Jones

Position held: Chairman, Development Control (West) Committee

A general outline of the special responsibilities you perform

To work with the two other group Leads on DC (West) and the Chair of DC (East)

To help and advise all Members of DC (West), and, indeed, any other Member who seeks advice.

To work with all Members of DC (West) and officers to ensure that the Committee and thereby the Council are held in high regard.

To coordinate activity with planning and other officers.

To support the implementation of the Authorities Planning Policies and support the Group in their understanding

Key Milestones/Achievements during the reporting Period

Support in setting planning budgets

Mediating between the public, Members and planning officers to address disputes, achieve better understanding and fewer appeals.

Briefing meetings with the Major Sites Team have facilitated Member understanding of major projects across the North Fringe, including the Cribbs Patchway New Neighbourhood and Land East of Coldharbour Lane

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

Planning matters arouse some of the most contentious discussions with residents. Attending meetings in the community is often the best way to address local residents' concerns and enables one to explain planning laws and Authority-wide Policy.

I always do my best to attend Applicants' consultation events in my own and neighbouring Wards, for the full length of the session, where possible. It's surprising how many misconceptions may be aired.

As Chairman I am happy to support Members of Committee, should they wish to seek my advice or to attend local meetings. This was especially important during the reporting year when several new Members joined DC (West) after the Council elections

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

I attend Joint meetings of the Planning Lead Members where historical, current and anticipated applications are discussed, together with activity statistics for both planning and planning enforcement are compared with historical data

Briefings by and discussions with the Major Sites Team, both Authority-wide and Ward-specific have enabled areas of concern to be addressed at the earliest opportunity.

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

To implement the requirements of the Authority's Core Strategy with the aim of ensuring that new development occurs within the preferred areas, thereby protecting the Green Belt and maintaining settlement boundaries wherever possible.

Ensuring that the wants, needs and aspirations of the residents of South Gloucestershire are addressed wherever possible and at the earliest opportunity.