

BCBC Councillor's Annual Report

This is the report by the Councillor below regarding their key activities between 7 May 2019 and 30 May 2020. It is provided for the information of all constituents and for no other purpose. The views expressed in this report are those of the Councillor and do not necessarily reflect the views of Bridgend County Borough Council.

Councillor: Malcolm James

Ward: Llangynwyd & Cwmfelin

Party: Plaid Cymru

Constituency Activity

I am in my third term as the Borough Councillor for Llangynwyd and Cwmfelin, I have stood down as Leader of Plaid Cymru (but remain vice -chair of the group) to allow my colleague Cllr Tim Thomas to gain experience in this role. I am also no longer a Community Councillor, I have reluctantly stood down from this role after 28 years, I believe in working for the Community not against them as my long-standing work has shown. I do hope that the Community Council can show that this is what it stands for, and rather than looking inwards constantly being negative, now try and justify the money they cost, I believe if this is not done, we will see the end of their existence.

It's been a very difficult few months with Lockdown and the worry over Covid 19. I am thankful that we in the Valley have managed to come through it in a positive way. Although there have been some police incidents which were disappointing. Thankfully as we start the slow process to return to what was normal day to day activities, we will be all continue to realise that this Pandemic will take many years not months to get over.

I continued to support my constituents while on Lockdown , it's surprising how much more proficient we have all become in using Zoom/Skype/teams now and how much more focused meetings have become. My constituency work has continued on a wide range of issues including planning, neighbourhood disputes, environmental issues, highways, V2C housing, recycling and numerous other matters.

I continue to get the grass cut at the open spaces at Parc Tyn Y Waun Llangynwyd This continues to be a challenge as the areas are not BCBC's responsibility and look unkempt. I was managing to maintain the cutting of the grass currently by referring this to the probation service and paying for the petrol so that the Probation Service people can cut it a few times a year under the Community court orders scheme, unfortunately this is now all on hold , however I am hopeful that this will restart when the scheme does. I continue to have discussions with BCBC about this issue, unfortunately it remains unresolved and now with even less local government funds available, its even less likely.

The Llangynwyd Village Hall Association now has charitable status and are fully up and running, this is a superb facility for the community. The property has disabled access and a lovely coffee area, it is booked with daily community groups and is also booked for birthday and christening parties at weekends. It is lovely to see the community being able to get together in a purpose-built hall which they haven't had for many decades.

I continued to be one of the three quiz masters in The Railway Public House, Llangynwyd (I am now in my 25th year of this) on a Sunday night for the charity quiz. All the money raised is donated to help local people and local charitable organisations. This has been on hold but we hope to recommence this fund-raising activity when it is safe to do so.

I continue to be the BCBC governor for the Welsh medium comprehensive school in Llangynwyd, dealing with disciplinary and many other issues. It is so good to see how well the school is doing in the league tables, extremely good for such a new school. There are now extreme difficulties linked to pupils returning to formal education, something that the school and governors are working hard to arrange. The problem is

that most pupils are bused in for all over the County and this needs to be arranged safely and with extreme care.

I continue to be available 24 hrs a day for contact with my constituents as I feel that they should always be able to contact me for help and assistance. I have been contacted when they are having emergency problems, which was apparent during the bad weather and flooding last winter. I receive a considerable number of telephone calls from residents seeking advice and help on a range of personal issues and I am always prepared to listen to their concerns and offer appropriate support and where possible guidance.

Recently car parking issues have been prevalent; these continue to cause anxiety as many houses in my area do not have designated parking. I feel that this is a problem that will continue to get worse, hopefully common sense will prevail but with more cars per household this is a difficult issue.

The most pressing problem is the issue with cars speeding by Cwmfelin School on the corner. We now have had a school crossing patrol person. Thankfully ,highways are continuing to look at numerous alternatives, a zebra crossing, pelican lights, speed bumps, a flashing sign are just a few ideas, and however, none are suitable due to its proximity to the bend and the options of car parking, but as we have a school crossing patrol person in place hopefully the situation will continue to improve.

The "paper mill" has started its large extension, its good to see a business developing here. Whilst there is always so disruption with new development, this seems to have been managed well, I will continue with my other colleague in the area to monitor this situation. Hopefully this will result in many more good quality jobs and a secure future for one of the last large firms in the area.

It is also good to see that after a period of over 4 years a local business has reopened and is doing well. The oldest pub in the area has been refurbished (the Old House) and has had community events like a free father Christmas visit together with choir and mince pies. The other hostelry, The Corner House has a Welsh New Year celebration (in February) with the Mari Llwyd and has been superb during the recent crisis helping local and vulnerable people by making and delivering meals almost daily, over 300 some Sundays. While the Full Moon's micro brewery has continued to produce and deliver Cerdin Ales and kept the valley people who have been isolating happy.

Finally and thankfully most people have been sensible during the crisis and have followed the rules Stay home, Stay Safe allowing our superb NHS, carers and all front-line staff to do their job as safely as possible. I want to say a big thank you to them all-Diolch .

Role & Responsibilities

I have been appointed to the following committees: from May 2017 to date

Licensing Act 2003 Committee and subcommittee

Democratic Committee

Attendance details for these committees can be found here:

<https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/mgUserAttendanceSummary.aspx?XXR=0&DR=14%2f05%2f2015-18%2f05%2f2016&ACT=Go&>

I sat on the following internal groups: during May 2019-May 20

Please insert

I sat on the following additional organisations: May 2019 – May 2020

Ysgol Gyfun Cymraeg School , Llangynwyd as a Governor plus I am Health and Safety Committee Governor , Link Governor , Grievance Committee Governor, Staffing Committee Governor , Finance Committee Governor ,Complaints Committee Governor , Disciplinary Committee Governor 18

Maesteg Harlequins RFC beverage supplier during matches 20

Railway Inn – Quiz Master events 48

Initiatives and Special Activities

I am also hugely involved with Plaid Cymru on a local level, being their Chair and membership secretary for the Branch and Constituency

Learning & Development

I attended the following Learning and Development initiatives during the past year:

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Other Activities and Issues

I annually entertain the congregation and guests at the St. Cynwyds Church, Llangynwyd ,Harvest Festival, local WI meetings and charity events

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