

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: 2017 -2018

Name: Shirley Potts

Position held: Labour Lead Member for Regulatory Committee

A general outline of the special responsibilities you perform

With other lead members to oversee the performance and regulation of the various areas of responsibility involving Licensing, Public Rights of Way, standards and Community Governance by;
Attending agenda meetings and briefing from Officers.
Serving on the Regulatory Committee and some Licensing and Standards Panels and raising any concerns arising from these meetings with the Chair and other Lead Members and Officers.
To attend the meetings of the Taxi Drivers' Group and oversee actions in regard to any issues raised.
With other Lead Members to ensure that members receive notices of applications affecting their wards.
To oversee the training of members and the responses to consultations.
To consider and arrange for establishing training where necessary for license holders. For example; safeguarding training for taxi drivers.
With the help of officers respond to issues raised by members of the public.
To discuss with the Chair and other Lead Members any issue arising nationally which causes concern and effects the service we provide e.g. safeguarding and equality issues.
To address management problems caused by challenges like the significant increases in licensing applications.
Undertaking training regarding developments in taxi legislation e.g. the Swindon Conference.

Key Milestones/Achievements during the reporting Period

Establishing training led by Dr. Barnardo's for members and taxi drivers in regard to safeguarding. Decision that this training should be mandatory.

Set up a dialogue between Community Transport and the Taxi Drivers concerning issues which affect them.

Ensuring that problems regarding the service provided are investigated and rectified - where possible e.g. appointment system for taxi drivers.

Liaising with officers and other local authorities about the issues causing concern e.g. Bristol's complaints regarding cross boundary issues.

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

As well as regulating the working of the Committee according to legislative demands and the Council policy we have attempted to safeguard the interests of the communities by:-
Considering and attempting to meet concerns in regard to Licensing and Public Rights of Way applications raised by groups and members of the public thus ensuring that members and officers are aware of local issues.

Keeping under review the formula for setting fares and fees to ensure fairness to the public providers of the services and the Council.

Making provision for the efforts to be made to establish the public trust of the Council by ensuring that the Members Code of Conduct is maintained, followed and that any breaches are addressed by the Standards Sub Committee.

Maintaining procedures for informing members of applications and legal changes which may affect their wards.

Establishing processes to help to meet the problems of national issues - e.g. the establishing of safety training for taxi drivers, possibly to become part of the Licensing Policy.

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

The added value contributions identified above enables the Council to be more effective. In addition concerns raised at meetings of groups like the Taxi Liaison Group about ‘on the ground’ issues allow officers to identify priority work to be undertaken by services like Street Care and Highways.

Issues raised at Panel hearings and other meetings feed policy reviews and consultation exercises and help to make the Council more effective. The department has regular contact with the public and community groups and members and officers can gauge how effective the Council is in the eyes of the public.

Engaging in a dialogue with members of the public regarding issues currently arising re the taxi service.

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

Engaging with Partners - this happens regularly through working with the Police, Responsible Authorities, Parish /Town Councils and other LA's in regard to Licensing and Policy Developments.

Protecting the Environment is a great concern for the Public Rights of Way Committee and to an extent for the Licensing Panels.

Provision of Excellence to customers and communities, all areas covered by the committee, has the aim of providing excellent service containing the costs.