

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

COUNCILLOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2017 / 2018



Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council operates under executive arrangements. Responsibility for the authority's functions is overseen by a Leader and Cabinet made up of Councillors from the party or group with the most members. The allocation of Chair and Vice Chair posts is also based by law on the number of seats each party or group has, and this number again will have influence on the appointment of Councillors to outside bodies.

Opinions, advice, conclusions and other information in this report shall be understood as neither given nor endorsed by the authority or on its behalf. It is a report by the Councillor referred to below regarding their key activities for the municipal year 2017/18. It is provided for the information of constituents and for no other purpose.

Councillor:

Gareth Richards

Political Party:

Labour

Ward:

Treharris

Comprising the communities of:

Treharris, Cilhaul, Edwardsville and Quakers Yard

Committee Membership, Roles and Attendance

This section relates to membership as an elected member, not in a personal capacity. Democratic Services has provided information on committee membership and attendance for Council Committees. However, where Councillors are a member of any other committees outside the Council's responsibility, they have provided details from their own records.

Council Committees:

[Link to Councillor Gareth Richard's Attendance Page](#)

External Committees and Outside Bodies (as a representative of MTCBC):

[Link to Councillor Gareth Richard's Personal Page](#)

Other Bodies (not in their capacity as a Councillor):

Community Governor Edwardsville Primary School

My Work as a Local Councillor

Under this heading, Councillors have identified the work undertaken on behalf of local constituents. Reference has also been made to any major initiatives or special projects they have been associated with on behalf of MTCBC, which have a direct impact on local constituents.

Since being elected in May 2017 I've been an active Councillor working hard for people across the Treharris Ward, Edwardsville, Quakers Yard and Treharris. Together with my Ward colleagues we have held regular monthly advice surgeries at Treharris Library and also once a month we've held less formal "Cuppa with your Councillors" sessions these circulates between Edwardsville, Quakers Yard and Treharris. On a twice monthly basis I advertised via social media (Facebook and Twitter) that I would be available at Treharris Square and Post Office to meet residents. This gives residents an opportunity to talk to me about any concerns they have. I also maintain a Councillor Social Media page keeping residents aware of ongoing issues and information and provide a monthly up date of my work.

I manage a very busy case-load, representing local people and working hard to resolve their issues, making myself as accessible as possible by face to face meetings, telephone, email and social media. I've worked with community organisations across the Ward to discuss their concerns and help improve the lives of

Treharris residents. I've help organise litter picks in the Treharris Ward liaising with Keep Wales Tidy and encourage community volunteers to assist. I've attended all Police and Community Together [PACT] meetings held in Treharris Ward and have used these meetings to bring up issues residents have raised with me. Good working links have developed between myself and the Neighbourhood Police Team
The last year has continued to be challenging for the Council and for my community, continuing austerity has meant Council services are stretched and services are affected which local people value and depend on. I've tried to work closely with Council Officers to try to bring about satisfactory resolution. I try to attend as many meeting, seminars and courses as possible and have made regular contributions to meetings and debates at the Civic Centre to ensure that the concerns of residents are heard

Salary

The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales sets how much is paid to a Councillor depending on their role is, e.g. Cabinet Member, Chair of a Committee, Scrutiny Member, etc. The attached link will take you to the Schedule of Remuneration which lists what each individual receives.

[Link to salaries, expenses and allowances](#)

I have opted to forgo part of the Salary set by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Learning and Development

In the Learning and Development section, Councillors have demonstrated instances where they have taken the opportunity for personal development by taking part in initiatives and events aimed at improving their understanding and awareness.

I have taken part in the following Learning and Development initiatives during the past year:

- Members' Code of Conduct
- General Notice of Registerable Interests
- Data Protection Training
- Introduction to the Services provided by Community Regeneration
- Introduction to the Services provided by Neighbourhood Services
- Introduction to Corporate Services within the Authority
- What Elected Members of Local Authorities need to know about Health and Safety also including the Authority's Lone Worker facility
- Social Media Training

Other Activities and Issues

Under this heading, Councillors have provided information on themselves to demonstrate the 'personal' aspect of their role as a local Councillor which they believe would be of interest to constituents.

I've taken part in and supported numerous community events, school events, older persons clubs, pre school clubs, meeting various local sports clubs and the local male and female choirs. One of the highlights of the year was the centenary celebration of Treharris St John's Ambulance. Liaising with the local vicar, librarian and veterans to ensure the smooth running of things on Remembrance Sunday. I am a member of the Quakers Yard Community Association and Taf Bargoed Development Trust.

Councillor Gareth Richards
Date: 8 June 2018