

ANNUAL REPORT – 2013/14

Councillor: Mair Rowlands	Group: Plaid Cymru
Ward: Bangor - Menai	
Purpose of the annual report: The aim of the Annual Report is to assist the electorate to become better informed of the work and activities of their elected local authority member during the year.	
Role and responsibilities: Champion of the Voice of Children and Young People Member of: Corporate Scrutiny Committee, Language Committee, Corporate Parent Panel, Bangor Ogwen Forum, Bangor Project Team.	
Constituency activities: <u>Ensuring Upper Bangor is kept clean and tidy</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Arranging and attending several litter collections with students in the area- Attended several meetings to discuss the problems of waste in the ward especially the problems with waste from student houses and discussions are ongoing but it is anticipated that working collaboratively with the Students' Union will see action soon. <u>Community Safety</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- I have walked around the ward several times during the year with the police community support officer responsible for the ward to draw attention to any problems. Cold-callers are a cause for concern at the moment and some of the older vulnerable residents of the ward have been targeted and the police are keeping a close eye on this. I have also had a meeting with Inspector Neil Thomas regarding licensing issues. <u>Licensing Matters</u> <p>I have represented electors as the local member at Licensing Committees to argue against six licensing applications dealing with variation of premises licences to extend standard hours of licensable activities for the provision of late night refreshments and the sale of alcohol into the late hours of the night and one new application for the same type of premises and licensing requirements.</p> <p>I argued against applications because residents had expressed their concerns regarding extending the hours. The applications were contrary to two of the licensing objectives, namely leading to more public nuisance and crime and disorder in a residential zone and contributing to an increase in disturbances in Upper Bangor with more people congregating on the street causing antisocial behaviour, an increase to the level of litter that contributes to social concerns and noise in the early hours of the morning.</p> <u>Houses in Multiple occupancy (student houses)</u> <p>I have attended meetings with residents of Victoria Park, who were concerned about the effect of the very substantial increase in houses in multiple occupation and the constant experiences and difficulties for the permanent occupiers of the area because of their impact, the large number of this type of housing having a negative impact on the social and environmental character of the area. Following these concerns, several meetings were held between officers and Bangor councillors regarding the issues and I attended one meeting between cabinet members, councillors and concerned residents to discuss the concerns and to consider the way forward.</p> <p>Following these meetings the following were considered as possible options for action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The new Joint Local Development Plan is an opportunity to look at what can be achieved.• There is a need to look at how licensing can contribute to improving the standard and quality of houses in multiple occupation• For enforcement activity to be effective, there is a need to target some 'major'/bad cases and to give the work and any results a high profile.• There is a need to work to ensure that owners/landlords take responsibility for improvement and see whether it is possible to use business rates to drive this forward. <u>Parking Problems and Road Safety</u> <p>I have had several discussions with officers and the police regarding problems with motorists parking their cars across footways and pavements causing substantial problems for pedestrians and other road users in the area of Upper Bangor. Following discussions the Council and North Wales Police</p>	

have launched a joint campaign where a notice will be placed on any vehicle parked on a footway or pavement in the area of Upper Bangor.

Surgeries

I have held two surgeries for residents of the ward, one with the Arfon Assembly member, Alun Ffred Jones and one with the Member of Parliament, Hywel Williams. Following the surgeries, I have dealt with several individual cases with residents of the ward.

Others

I have attended meetings of the **Upper Bangor Society** on a monthly basis and the Society's coffee morning

I have attended meetings of Bangor Cycling - a local campaign group for cyclists

I have attended meetings and supported the local *Tyfu* group – looking at attempting to respond to the demand for allotments in Bangor. The council is now looking to leasing land for establishing allotments on part of the Nantporth site in Bangor (Menai Ward).

25/04/13 Launch of the Bangor Time-line

I visited the Bryn Llifon residential home for the elderly

Other initiatives and activities:

- **Menter Iaith Bangor** – Member of the Menter Iaith Bangor's Steering Committee
24/09/13 – I arranged and attended a Public Meeting for establishing Menter Iaith Bangor (I spoke on *Post Prynhawn and Newyddion 9*. **31/03/14** – event to launch the logo for Menter Iaith Bangor
- I am a member of the **Arfon Community Language Group**
- I have supported and volunteered with the People of Bangor Community Group with Bangor High Street Christmas Events and Bangor Carnival
- Company director of Dewis Chwarae
- I have facilitated and attended a meeting between the former Chief Executive of the Council and members of staff of the University regarding opportunities for closer collaboration
- I have attended the Community Building and Governance Workshop and the Community Building and the Third Sector Workshop: A Civil Society and Sustainable Community at Bangor University
- I attended a session of the Use of Welsh in the workplace as Part of the Gwynedd Business Week
- I was a speaker in the ceremony of Ysgol Ardudwy's Year 11 Progress File
- I am a member of the Gwynedd Forum feeding into the *Cynhadledd Fawr* on the Welsh language
- An interview with the BBC for the CF99 programme – Is there a need for more of a variety of people in local Government?
- Meeting of the Welsh Communities League in the Eisteddfod 08/08/13
- Gwynedd Council's celebrations of the Wales Fair Trade Status fifth anniversary
- 11/12/13 – Plaid Cymru's Annual Conference – Aberystwyth, 22-23/11/13 – Plaid Cymru's Winter School, Glan Llyn, Bala, 7- 8/03/14 Plaid Cymru's Spring Conference – Cardiff. I regularly attended meetings of the Plaid Group during the year.
- Annual EEAC Conference, 'Managing Ecosystems for People, the Environment and Economy' at Bangor University
- A visit to GISDA which provides support and opportunities for young people of the county
- Public Meeting of 'No Pylons' (in response to the plans of the National Grid)

I attended the following Committees:

COMMITTEE	PRESENT
The Council	3
Corporate Scrutiny Committee	4
Language Committee	4
Services Scrutiny Committee Preparatory Meeting	1
Ogwen Area Forum	3

Percentage of Attendance: 71%

I participated in the following additional meetings, seminars, investigations and workshops:

Scrutiny Forum

Sustainable Procurement Scrutiny Investigation – Chair of the group

Working Group – Increasing the Social Use of the Welsh Language in secondary schools

Strategic Plan Workshop

Savings Strategy - The Council's Financial Position and the proposed financial strategy

Joint Local Development Plan Seminar

*Local Development Plan Sites Seminar
 Information Session for Members – Gwynedd's Economy
 'The Role of the Council's elected members in engaging with the public' Workshop
 Workshop to discuss how to encourage recycling and food composting in the county
 'Have Your Say' meetings for Looked After children and young people in Gwynedd
 Meetings with Children and Young People Verifying Manager to discuss the Promise for Looked After Children.*

I represented Gwynedd Council on the following outside bodies:
*Community Health Council
 Ysgol Cae Top (School Governor)
 Ysgol Friars (School Governor)
 Gwynedd Referrals Unit Management Board
 Bangor University Liaison Group*

I represented Gwynedd Council in the following meetings:
*Ysgol Ardudwy's Year 11 Progress File Ceremony
 Bangor University Liaison Group
 Community Health Council's Gwynedd Local Committee*

I attended the following Learning and Development training sessions:

Corporate	
Authority and Schools Performance Data	
School Governance and Safeguarding Children	
Information about People: Your own responsibility	
Housing Allocation Policy and Statutory Responsibilities	
The Structure and Condition of Gwynedd's Economy	
Additional	
Communication (Influencing/Negotiating Skills)	
Dealing with the Press	
WLGA's Academi Training Programme on Leadership (3 week ends)	

Total number of hours: 23.5