

## **CLlr Karen Allison Annual Report 2014-15**

Year Elected: 2014

Ward: Newsome

I can honestly say that the past 12 months has been somewhat of a roller coaster ride but having such great support from my colleagues Cllr Andrew Cooper and Cllr Julie Stewart-Turner has made it easier.

Being a Councillor is a hugely important role so I feel honoured and privileged to have been elected to represent the residents and different communities of the Newsome Ward on Kirklees Council.

The decisions that we make affect so many people are now made harder by central Government cuts and budget restraints imposed on not just the Council but the wider community. Regularly we are contacted by residents who are finding it difficult to make ends meet.

### **Council Meetings**

As well as attending Full Council I am also an active member of :

Licensing and Regulatory Panel

Child Sexual Exploitation and Safeguarding Panel

Resources Scrutiny Panel

Newsome/Almondbury Advisory Board

One of the areas I would like to highlight is the Child Sexual Exploitation work that is done within Kirklees Council, following issues highlighted with Rotherham Council it is important that we are sure that we are doing everything we can to protect those at risk in our community.

### **External Groups**

I am on the Governing Body at Hillside Infants and Junior School, Newsome, our school has day to day challenges of its own but does have fantastic staff and a great bunch of pupils.

NMG – Neighbourhood Management Group – it is important that different agencies dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour are working together to give a coordinated response to issues in our area. This is the role of the NMG. Already we have used these meeting to address a number of problems in the area. By its nature these meetings are held in private to ensure intelligence can be provided and acted upon.

### **Casework**

Much of my time is taken up with helping local people with local and individual issues. This can cover everything from sorting out pot holes to pigeons to complex Council Tax and benefit problems.

Having only been a Councillor for 12 months I consider my greatest achievement to be the good working relationships I have built up not just in the community but with staff in Kirklees Council, this has made it much easier to deal with casework.

An example of some of the casework I have been dealing with is ensuring Newsome Mills is secure. It is constantly been broken into which puts the building and the people accessing it at risk. I have spoken to Kirklees Council, the owners and the Police to get action to replace and repair fencing. It is vital that this building is developed to secure its future.

### **Surgeries**

I have joined Cllr Andrew Cooper at the regular Advice Surgery held on the first Sunday of the month at the Monkey Club, Armitage Bridge.

### **Training**

I have attended a variety of training and Member development sessions including:

- Licensing Training
- Safeguarding
- Child Sexual Exploitation and Safeguarding
- Dementia Awareness
- Human Trafficking Awareness
- Drugs Awareness Training
- Community Tension Awareness
- Planning Training

Because the law changes so frequently and new issues are popping up all the time it is vital that Councillors are trained about these matters and how they can best be addressed.

### **Something you might not know about me:**

Even though I am busy with Council work I still manage to find time to have a life outside Kirklees Council, I am proud to say I am Wardrobe Mistress for Huddersfield Light Opera and Longwood Amateurs, I have recently costumed "Sister Act" at the Lawrence Batley Theatre and am currently working on "Carousel" for Longwood Amateurs and when I'm not doing that I steward for the Charter Train Company "Retro Raitours". So all in all I have a very interesting and busy life. Oh yes! And there's an allotment to keep cultivated.

I'm also led to believe that I have two kids and a husband!! Though I see little evidence to back up this assertion!

If you cannot do great things, do small things in a great way  
Napoleon Hill -writer  
1883 - 1970

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