

Annual Report for Councillor Rob Jones, (under the Local Government Measure 2011) for Municipal Year 2015-16

This is my fourth and final annual report before the 2017 local elections since being elected as the Councillor for the Margam Ward. As ever I am keen to ensure that people of the ward are kept informed as to what their councillor has been doing over the past year.

This year has been quite traumatic with the proposed sale of the TATA plant and all its associated problems that have been well documented in the press, however life goes on. This past year has seen again a large number of complaints ranging from fallout and noise, to visual complaints in the Margam area and I encourage people to ring the TATA complaint line on **08001386560**. It has been particularly bad with problems with the Blast Furnace recently that appear to be resolved. Please remember it is NRW (Natural Resources Wales) who licence TATA to operate not the council although during our joint meeting with them both I and my colleagues who sit on this consultative group will continue to ensure that your complaints are brought forward

I still serve as a Governor and Vice Chair on both **Coed Hirwaun Primary** and **Dyffryn Comprehensive** schools governing bodies. Coed Hirwaun has done well to move from its Amber banding to Yellow and I am sure with the head teacher driving performance progress, it will move to Green very soon. **Groes Primary** also received a “**GOOD**” Estyn inspection report this year. **Well Done.**

The Bio Mass2 plant is well under construction with a finish date mid-2017. Even though it is only under construction, the community benefits fund it is already providing to the area is substantial. Like the Newlands Community benefit fund I would urge all groups and associations to apply for grant funding. To do so please contact Paul Hinder at Port Talbot Civic Centre on **01639 763390**.

One major development on the horizon (if you will excuse the pun) is the erection of 4 large wind turbines on **Mynydd Brombil**. This planning application was rejected by the Planning Committee but won on appeal by the developer. This will mean the skyline will have these turbines on top of the mountain, and while it will also produce a substantial community benefit fund, many people fought not to have them placed there, myself included.

The funding for a new school at Dyffryn has finally been approved by Welsh Government. The new school to be built on the site of the current school will be a 3 – 16 through school and looks if it will include Groes Primary as part of the build. I **STRESS** a full consultation process will take place with all stake holders

having their say before any major decisions are fully committed. I will as part of the initial planning consultation ensure that the current parking problems that exist around the **Bertha Rd** area are brought to the attention of the architects and planners to mitigate against the current problems residents experience with parked cars. I will keep you informed.

Many people are struggling with the changes with refuse collection and recycling. Perhaps an explanation as to why we have a need to change may be in order. As a society we cannot continue to send all waste refuse to landfill, it's expensive and no good to the environment. Welsh Government introduced a system of fines a couple of years ago linked to how much waste an authority sends to landfill. Knowing the amount already being sent, it introduce targets for each authority to recycle with a gradual increase in those targets so **2013-14 52%** of waste had to be **recycled**, **2015-2018** the target is **58%** from **2019 to 2025** the target is **64 %**, For a tonne of waste sent to land fill over our target the authority will be fined by **£200 PER TONNE** two years ago we had an **£800K** fine hanging over our head. This is why the authority reduced the wheelie bins size from 240 Litre to 140 Litre to encourage **MORE** recycling and has been experimenting with the hessian sacks to likewise encourage more recycling. This also means that when we sell the recycled products on, we get more money in return. This money is ploughed back into frontline services. I hope that this makes sense to you. **WE MUST** recycle for future generations. Some householders do not like it, but it has to be the way forward surely? As a household you can have as much recycling equipment as you need and the bags come in a variety of sizes so that various people can cope with what is best suited for them. Either look online to the **NPTCBC website** and click on "**request it**" fill in your details and you will see what's available to you or telephone 01639 686868 and speak to an officer. If you have any further issues or want further clarification please contact me. You will be receiving a letter shortly about further changes if you have not already.

I continue to fight for our share of resources even against these severe financial times I will look for further opportunities to encourage use of the benefit funds with local community organisations. It is money sitting there waiting to be used in the community for the benefit of the community

I am here working for you and the community, I promised when elected to try to call at every home I can, at least **once a year** even if only to delivery this newsletter and not once every five years. So far I am succeeding in 95% of the time over the area of the ward which is the largest in the County Borough

Yours sincerely,

Rob Jones

Margam Ward Councillor