

CHAIR'S REPORT 2018-2019

The last year has without question been the most challenging in my tenure as Chair.

Due to the long term absence of the Clerk last year, Council was faced with unprecedented challenge and a period of difficulty and uncertainty.

During this time, the Vice Chair, Committee Chairs and I, did our absolute best to maintain a steady state so that Council could continue to work for the benefit of residents.

This involved countless hours given over to Council business on a daily basis, often undertaking on a voluntary basis those tasks which would ordinarily have been completed by office staff. This was done willingly, so that the Community Council could continue to deliver on planned projects and also to support a newly appointed Admin Assistant.

Throughout this difficult time, expert advice was sought and provided from our advisory body One Voice Wales and shared with Council to ensure that, in the absence of our Proper Officer, Council continued to make informed and correct decisions.

However - a number of lessons have been learned from this time, including the need for robust contingency and continuity planning - and this needs to be addressed as a priority by Council in the coming year. I look forward to continuing to contribute to this process.

I was sad to receive a number of resignations recently from Councillors who felt that they had faced hostility and as such their position on the Community Council was simply no longer tenable. Council must carefully consider their opinions. This will be a key challenge for the incoming Chair. Council needs to be transparent in its actions, act with integrity and ensure that Council business is conducted at formal Council meetings.

This will go some way to begin to address the feelings of exclusion and mistrust which has prevailed of late. The office needs to work in partnership with Council and the Chair so that key projects and priorities are delivered for the community, without the time consuming distractions which are created when there is not a unity in approach.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to our former Chair of Parks and open spaces and Communications and Community Liaison Committees, former Councillor Mike Boyland, who gave up so much of his time during this period and who was instrumental in ensuring that the business case petitioning for the section 106 funding was successful.

Mike also played a key role in forging closer links with MUCH and this has resulted in Magor with Undy Community Council fully supporting the endeavours of MUCH and this will significantly benefit the community.

I would also like to thank Councillor Jenny Barrell for all her endeavours on behalf of the Council over recent months.

I am pleased that, despite the many challenges facing Council, we have been able to continue to support local community groups and events with funding and it is pleasing to see a wide diversity of community activity flourish within Magor and Undy, across all age groups.

There are many challenges facing Council and the new Chair in the year ahead - but perhaps a reminder of the mission statement of the Community Council and its reason for existence - which is **"To conserve and improve Magor with Undy as an attractive and sustainable place in which to live, visit and do business"** will set them on the right track.

Donna James
Chair

