**BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**COUNCILLORS ANNUAL REPORT**

This is the report by the Councillor named below regarding their key activities over the year ending 30th April 2024. It is provided for the information of all constituents and for no other purpose.

**Councillor: Tommy Smith**

**Party: Labour**

**Ward: Sirhowy**

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| **Section 1 – Roles and Responsibilities** |
| I am the current chair of the People Scrutiny Committee which incorporates and scrutinise issues relating to education and social services. The Committee has continued its work to scrutinise and challenge across a wide-ranging work programme, using skills and experience to put forward recommendations to Cabinet/Full Council for consideration. |
| **Section 2: Constituency Activity** |
| In the Sirhowy Ward, I continue to work with my ward colleagues on behalf of constituents by taking up case work on a daily basis and acting as an advocate on behalf of some of the local residents. This includes working with other partners including Tai Calon, Melin and other social housing landlords, Gwent Police and with other partner agencies and Blaenau Gwent council officers to resolve issues that might affect individuals or the wider community. |

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| **Section 3: Cabinet and Scrutiny Activities** |
| In Children's & Adult Services, the Committee has examined a varied work programme scrutinising reports on critical areas such as:  Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Regional (Gwent) Strategy 2023-2026, Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2022/23. Work is continuing around the Children’s Residential Provision in Blaenau Gwent and Committee continues to monitor this work, Director of Social Services Quarter 1 and 2 update, Corporate Parenting, and regular reporting of the safe reduction of children looked after.    In Education, the Committee has scrutinised reports and made recommendations to the Cabinet/Full Council in areas that include, Safeguarding Performance (Including LGES Safeguarding Policy), Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policy, Improving Schools Programme, ALN Policy Review. In addition, the Committee continues to monitor progress made against Estyn Recommendations, Director of Education Quarter 1 and 2 updates, Safeguarding Performance, Key Stage 4 Results, Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme, Improving Schools Programme, School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education, Education Digital Strategy and the end-of-year report from the Director of Education.    By working with officers and Members, the People Scrutiny Committee continues to respond well to external audit and has developed solid action plans to address any recommendations received.    In addition to my Scrutiny, Chairing and Corporate Safeguarding roles, I also undertake other responsibilities within the Council and the community i.e. I am a Member of the Corporate & Performance  Scrutiny Committee, currently Chair of the Gwent Public Service Board Scrutiny Committee and remain a Board Member/Director of Silent Valley Waste Management Services. |
| **Section 4: Training and Development** |
| I am confident in my role as a chair / scrutiny member and ward councillor. But where possible, I have undertaken further training for personal development, and I will continue to undertake training opportunities wherever possible in 2024/25 to further develop my skills in the Council but also within the community. |
| **Section 5: Initiatives, Special Activities and Issues** |
| I am a Local Education Authority school governor and Chair of Governors at Glanhowy Primary School, Tredegar.  I continue to volunteer in the community - I am secretary for Tredegar Moose No1 Lodge, trustee for Blaenau Gwent Foodbank, long standing member of Valleys Life After Stroke - supporting stroke survivor’s and their families, and I continue to work with community groups and community centres within the Sirhowy Ward. |
| **Signature of Councillor: Tommy Smith**  **Date: 1st May, 2024** |