



YATE TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

7.30PM

TUESDAY 26 APRIL 2005

POOLE COURT



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**THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE
ON TUESDAY 26 APRIL 2005 AT 7.30PM AT POOLE COURT, YATE**

A G E N D A

- 1 To confirm that the notice of meeting has been advertised according to the law.
- 2 To approve the minutes of the previous Annual Town Meeting held on Tuesday 27 April 2004 as a true and accurate record.
- 3 To receive the Yate Town Council Annual Report:
 - (a) To receive annual report from Councillor Alan Monaghan, Chair of Yate Town Council and Town Mayor.
 - (b) To receive and approve statement of accounts for the year ended 31 March 2004.
 - (c) To receive annual report from the Chair of Yate Town Council's Environment and Planning Committee.
 - (d) To receive annual report from the Chair of Yate Town Council's Finance and General Purposes Committee.
 - (e) To receive annual report from Wills Davis Attwell Charity.
 - (f) To receive annual report from Yate United Charities.
 - (g) To receive annual reports from South Gloucestershire Councillors for Yate.

Councillor Ruth Davis	Yate Central
Councillor Sue Walker	Yate Central
Councillor Ian Blair	Yate West
Councillor Mike Drew	Yate West
Councillor Alan Lawrance	Yate North
Councillor Mike Robbins	Yate North
Councillor Tony Davis	Dodington
Councillor Kay Crowe	Dodington

- 4 Town Affairs.

Signed: _____

Councillor Alan Monaghan.
Chair and Town Mayor of Yate Town Council.

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 27 APRIL
2004 AT 7.30PM AT POOLE COURT, YATE**

PRESENT

Councillor Alan Monaghan – Town Mayor/Chair

**Members of Yate Town Council and South Gloucestershire Council.
(Councillors Ian Blair, Margaret Bracey, Kay Crowe, Mike Drew, Sue Evan-Jones, Ruth Davis, Tony Davis, Martin Monk, Mike Robbins, Cleo Trotter, Sue Walker and Chris Willmore.)**

Town Council Appointed School Governors, members of the public and a representative from the press.

Town Clerk, Senior Admin Officer and RFO.

Apologies received from Councillors Arthur Adams, Diane Adams, Clare Beasley, John Ford, Alan Lawrance, David Marshall, Margaret Marshall, Robert Munro, Wully Perks, Geoff Say and Audrey Young.

Mike Atkins (School Governor), Annette Parsons (Youth Forum).

1 NOTICE OF MEETING

It was confirmed that the notice of meeting had been advertised according to the law. The Chair declared the meeting to be a properly constituted meeting.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

RESOLVED The Minutes of the previous Annual Town Meeting held on 8 April 2003 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

3 CHAIR'S REPORT

Councillor Alan Monaghan welcomed everyone to the meeting and reported on the projects and activities of the Town Council during the past year, which have included the Witches Hat refurbishment and the formation of the Friends of Kingsgate Park Group. Councillor Monaghan extended thanks to the residents, organisations and clubs in Yate, which make our town an interesting and stimulating place to live.

4 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

A detailed statement of the Town Council's Accounts for period ending 31 March 2003 was presented to the meeting. The RFO offered to respond to any questions. No questions were raised.

Thanks were extended to the RFO.

RESOLVED The Town Council's Statement of Accounts for period ending 31 March 2003 be accepted.

5 REPORT FROM CHAIR OF ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING COMMITTEE.

Councillor Mike Robbins, the Chair of the Town Council Environment and Planning Committee, having circulated a written report, highlighted some of the environmental projects undertaken by the Town Council during the past year. Councillor Robbins also drew attention to the picturesque environmental delights within Yate including the River Frome, Ridge Woods, Kingsgate Park and Tyler's Field.

6 REPORT FROM CHAIR OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Councillor Mike Drew, the Chair of the Town Council Finance and General Purposes Committee, having circulated a written report, highlighted the capital projects undertaken during the year and the support given to local groups by way of grants including Youth Outreach Work, the Night Bus and the Cinema Bus. Councillor Drew also highlighted that the Town Council has identified a sum of money to underwrite the Youth Café project.

Councillor Drew thanked the Town Clerk and the RFO for their support.

7 CHARITY REPORTS

Reports were received from Yate United Charities and Wills Davis Attwell Charity and were accepted by the Meeting.

8 REPORTS FROM SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCILLORS

Written reports were received from South Gloucestershire Councillors Sue Walker, Ruth Davis, Mike Drew, Ian Blair, Alan Lawrance, Mike Robbins and Tony Davis. Councillor Kay Crowe provided the meeting with a verbal report.

9 REPORTS FROM TOWN COUNCIL APPOINTED SCHOOL GOVERNORS

Written reports were received from Town Council Appointed School Governors. The meeting thanked the School Governors for all the work undertaken.

10 TOWN AFFAIRS

Parking Within Bennetts Court

Local residents raised the issue of heavy congestion within Bennetts Court, Yate due to onstreet car parking.

Members of South Gloucestershire Council and the Town Council gave an assurance that every effort would be made to reinforce the concerns of the residents to South Gloucestershire Council. Residents were thanked for bringing the issue to the attention of the Town Council.

Garden Wall Surrounding Selected Properties in Bennetts Court

It was reported that a small garden wall bordering a public footpath in Bennetts Court has been knocked down in part and is unsafe.

The Town Council agreed to write to South Gloucestershire Council and ask for a report of findings, on the grounds of environmental health.

Bus Timetables

It was reported that the bus timetables within Yate display a notice stating the night bus service is suspended. Those present at the meeting were assured that this issue would be followed up by the Town Council.

Ridgewood Community Centre

The Manager of Ridgewood Community Centre thanked the Town Council for its support and reported that the Centre is thriving.

Tree – Windsor Drive

It was reported that a healthy tree at the end of Windsor Drive, Yate had been cut down.

The Town Council advised the resident that this issue would be pursued.

Windsor Drive Play Area

A resident from Windsor Drive thanked the Town Council for agreeing to meet to discuss issues relating to the Windsor Drive Play Area.

Crossing From Shopping Centre to Link Road Car Park

A resident enquired about the possibility of a pedestrian crossing from the shopping centre to the Link Road car park.

The resident was advised that this proposal will be implemented as part of the Tesco extension.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 8.40pm.

The residents were thanked for bringing various issues to the attention of Members.

Councillors, Town Council Appointed School Governors and Town Council Staff were thanked for their commitment to the town of Yate.

Chair's Report to the Annual Town Meeting
Councillor Alan Monaghan

Town Council members and staff have had a busy and productive year developing and implementing plans and projects that have ensured that Yate remains a pleasant place in which to live, work and raise a family.

We live in a good town with a varied history that is being brought to life through the activities of the staff and volunteers at our Heritage Centre.

People in our town have continued to support the Council's efforts by joining us at spring cleaning events and helping us to facilitate the many groups that work together to look after our Common and other open spaces. The Friends of Yate Common have worked hard to protect The Common and to ensure that it is maintained and improved. The Council and residents came together to fight and win an objection to a suggestion that a traveller's site could be developed on The Common. The message from the town was clear: 'Keep The Common free of any development.'

The Summer Holiday Playscheme ran for six weeks. It was a great success. Children aged from 5 to 11 enjoyed activities that included face painting, badge making, crafts, sports and games. I was fortunate enough to be able to visit the children and staff. It was wonderful to see so much enjoyment and commitment to the scheme. The Council has also continued to improve the town's play areas. This year saw the opening of a revamped play area in Templar road. Sadly the play areas do continue to attract large groups who often commit acts of thoughtless vandalism, but I believe that these groups are made up of a very small minority who would change their behaviour if they realised the heartache and despair that their actions cause.

We now have a Yate Town Council website. The website is growing in popularity as people are beginning to use it to research what facilities Yate has and to use it for advice on how and who to contact for Council services. The website is being continually updated and is helping us to make the Council more accessible, not just to local residents, but also the rest of the world. The website and Town Guide have been well received. The staff and members of the Council produced the Town Guide and we are all very proud of it. The cost of the guide was met from the inclusion of advertising from the many and varied businesses in Yate. The guide was delivered to every home in our parish.

The website and the Town Guide are just two of the tools that we have introduced to elevate the profile of the town but we have also seen the production of regular, high quality Town Council Newsletters that give regular updates on our activities. The newsletters also give residents the opportunity to complete a return slip so that the Council can record and act upon the views of residents.

The Council joined in the D Day anniversary when we remembered those who gave their lives in the Second World War by planting a tree of remembrance on the Peg Hill – Lark Rise Roundabout. We were honoured to be joined by Mr Danny Cleverly, a Yate resident and World War Two veteran.

The Civic Service was well attended and gave us all an opportunity to reflect on how fortunate we are to have lives that are peaceful and fulfilling. I used the opportunity to thank as many groups as possible for their contribution to the life of our town. The range of groups is huge. We have local interest groups that help to add interest and companionship to our daily lives, but we also have local groups with international links. Yate has a China Bear Rescue group that are working hard to alleviate the suffering of those poor animals; we also have the Genieri Link that is working to provide clean water and education to this small village in the Gambia. Yate-Bad Salzdetfurth Twinning continues to flourish.

The Annual Garden Competition was well supported by a huge variety of entries. The competition is an opportunity for us to encourage and reward those residents whose wonderful gardens are such a pleasure to behold. Our local schools also joined in the competition. We held a special prize giving ceremony so that all entrants could come together to celebrate the event. The standard of entries continues to be very high. The judging panel had the very difficult but pleasurable task of viewing and judging every entry.

This cycle of the Council was witness to another Kingsgate Park Easter Extravaganza. This year's event saw over three hundred Easter egg tokens discovered by local children, who were then rewarded with an Easter egg. We were also fortunate enough to be able to share the event with the South Gloucestershire Adult Education group. Your Council worked closely with the Friends of Kingsgate Park to ensure that the event was a success. Another great event this year was our St Georges Day celebration. It was wonderful to see the traditional centre of our town being used in celebration by so many people.

We face another busy year as we continue to work towards the establishment of a cinema and Youth Café. The development of Kingsgate Park will continue and I hope that we are able to introduce a programme of musical events and picnics in the park. Millside Play Zone will be revamped and we will continue to work closely with the Friends of Yate Common. I also hope that this year we can introduce a Christmas Lights completion that will allow us to recognise the efforts of those busy people who light up our town during December. I also hope to see the development of a sensory garden that we can all be proud of. We will also do all that we can to ensure that this year's 20th anniversary of Yate and Bad Salzdetfurth Twinning is supported by our Council.

Yate Town Council will continue to work towards being recognised as a Quality Council.

I cannot list every club and group that contributes to life in our town but I would like to record my thanks to the many groups, clubs and associations that are based in Yate. Your work and the interest and support that your groups bring to our town help to make Yate a good place to live.

I would also like to record my sincere thanks to Yate Town Council staff for their hard work and commitment to our Town.

Councillor Alan Monaghan, Chair of Yate Town Council, April 2005.

**FOR ANNUAL ACCOUNTS, PLEASE VISIT:
PUBLICATIONS/ANNUAL ACCOUNTS
ON THE YATE TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE.**

Yate Town Council Accounts – Annual Audit Information

The Annual Audit of the Yate Town Council Accounts for the 2004-2005 financial year has been booked for the week commencing 22 August 2005.

The Accounts, together with all the books and documents connected therewith, will be deposited at the Town Council Office, Poole Court, Yate and may be inspected there by any person interested from:

Monday 25 July 2005 – Friday 19 August 2005
(Monday to Friday only)

between the hours of 10am – 12.30pm by appointment.

Full details will be prominently displayed in the town and a notice will also be placed in The Gazette two weeks prior to availability for inspection.

Chair of the Environment and Planning Committee Report
Councillor Margaret Bracey

Highways and Transportation

During the past year, we have responded to several Highways and Transportation consultations including the proposed Nibley Park and Ride scheme.

Planning

We continue to play an active role in submitting our comments on all planning applications within Yate parish.

Shopping Centres

A year ago, the Yate Coat of Arms was homeless. I am pleased to report that this year, it was again erected on the shopping centre. Recently we have discovered that Yate Shopping Centre is being sold. Yate Town Council hopes to continue with the ongoing town centre projects by working with the new owners.

Play Areas, Parks and Sports Facilities

The teenage seat on the open space at Longs Drive has been successful. Also, the enhancement of the St Mary's Play Area is giving much pleasure to the children using the new equipment.

The Witches Hat Play Area is now the site of the Community Arts Wall; a project undertaken by local youths to promote anti-racism. The Play Area also has a new sign, designed by the pupils of Culverhill School.

Kingsgate Park held a very successful Easter Egg Event again this year. As the Chairman of the Environment and Planning Committee, I would like to express my gratitude to those who gave up their Bank Holiday to make this possible.

This year's Spring Clean event was held to clear debris from The Common. We also held a litter pick day at Love Lane.

For the first time, we will be holding an event to celebrate St George's Day at St Mary's Green.

Buildings

We are in the early stages of the Yate Parish Hall Refurbishment project.

Garden Competition

The Garden Competition Working Group had a very enjoyable time judging the lovely gardens in Yate, so lovingly tended for by all ages. The results were very close.

The Future

Looking towards the future, we will be installing a new piece of equipment at Tyndale Play Area, working once again with the local school children.

Millside Playzone is also due for a revamp.

We are also still working towards obtaining a kickabout area in West Yate.

Councillor Margaret Bracey, Chair of Environment and Planning Committee, April 2005.

Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Report
Councillor Mike Drew

Finance and General Purposes Committee is the main place in which detailed scrutiny of the financial management of the Council takes place: budget preparation, project costs, grants, insurance. It also covers a range of services and management support: buildings and community halls, youth support, grants to local groups and internal management practices.

The Town Council provides a range of much sought after public meeting facilities. The longest standing facility, the Parish Hall in Station Road, is currently the subject of a fundamental rethink. In the normal course of events it would shortly be due a refit. However, rather than simply decorating and repairing it, a feasibility study is being conducted to look at how to use the building to meet the changing needs of the community. Users – and potential users – have been consulted, and architects appointed to identify options and provisional costs in the light of the views of users. Developed over the next two years this is an exceptional opportunity to adapt the building to meet current needs, whilst respecting the tradition of this building.

The Council has reviewed all its policy statements and has taken steps to ensure it is following best modern practice in its financial operations. We have been able to adopt a prudent but responsive approach, achieving savings in some cost areas to move money to new initiatives in the community which needed swift response, such as the Abbotswood Youth Project.

During the year continuing financial support was given to:

- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Tourist Information Centre
- Community Transport
- CPRE (Council for the Preservation of Rural England)
- Frome Vale Special Needs Play scheme
- Twinning Association

In addition, over £15,000 of grants have been made to a wide range of non-profit making local groups providing a service or facility for the community of Yate. Any local group can apply for a grant – the deadline is at the start of June, with all applications considered fairly against each other later that month. If a new group starts up, or a crisis occurs, a small pool of money is available for additional emergency funds.

An exciting part of the Committee's work this year has been reviewing the Town Council publications and communications. The Town Council's website was launched this year and is achieving a good level of 'hits.' A new town guide has been produced – very different in style and content from any that have gone before. This has been widely praised and is well used by the public. A major expansion of noticeboards is taking place. The Council's newsletters are becoming a regular feature of the local landscape, advertising facilities/forthcoming events and consulting on proposals such as play area refurbishments.

F&GP oversees the Town Council's support for the Pop Inn Cafe for the over 50's. This Pop Inn Café is now well established and well used. Its ethos is to provide a facility run by over 50s for over 50s. F&GP also oversees the Heritage Centre, whose work continues to grow. The Centre is gaining an excellent reputation and is well used. It has developed a Friends Group and a trust structure so that it can gain greater access to external grant aid.

F&GP oversees the Council's support to young people: providing financial support to the Yate Outreach Youth Project, which provides youth workers to work with young people on the streets, the Youth Forum (YDC Ursay), night bus and funding three weeks of summer holiday playschemes. This year we consulted with users of the summer playschemes and as a result have decided to change the structure of the summer schemes and to provide activities in other school breaks in line with the changed school year structure. We have also been able to support a new initiative in Abbotswood working with young people. It is important for the Committee to retain the flexibility to be able to respond to such new developments – young people in particular need quick responses not months of bureaucracy. We have been able to respond quickly to their new ideas, such as the anti-racism wall young people recently painted.

We have continued to support the Youth Café project and have identified means of raising a substantial part of the costs of the project. However this scheme is in turmoil once more as a result of the recent announcement that CIT plan to sell the shopping center. This is a flagship scheme. The Town Council has committed itself to sourcing a substantial part of the cost of the Café, but has rightly deferred doing so whilst it looked as if CIT would fund at least the building /conversion costs. Until the buyers are in place and have had a chance to review the scheme we will not know whether this commitment will continue or whether we need to revert to a self-funded scheme.

An increasing feature of the Town's work is in pump-priming community activities rather than in the provision of facilities e.g. the highly successful Easter Egg Hunt and St George's Day. These are very labour intensive, but by using the Council's resource and expertise, we have been able to help develop these new community initiatives.

Finally, in standing down from the post, I would like to place on record my enormous thanks to all the staff who support the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Sue Tubey, Hayley Tovey, Mark Williams, Anne Woolfenden, Gerry Willis, all the staff at our halls and facilities, and most particularly Steph Davies, our Finance Officer, who continues each year to rise to whatever new challenges are thrown at her. I am delighted that new councillors, from the 2003 intake, are now keen to take on this role. The life of a good Council comes from its new blood.

Councillor Mike Drew.
Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee.
April 2005.

WILLS DAVIS ATWELL CHARITY
ACCOUNTS AND REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2005

INCOME

Balance Bought Forward

Business Reserve	£ 5,836.40
Current Accounts	£ 581.78
One Year Fixed Rate Bond	<u>£ 15,000.00</u>
	<u>£ 21,418.18</u>

Income

COIF Int Div	£ 158.21
Fixed Rate Bond Interest	£ 602.80
Heron Homes	£ 25,000.00
Rents	£ 230.00
Interest Business Reserve	£ 120.21
Interest Current Account	<u>£ 2.79</u>
	<u>£ 26,114.01</u>

£ 47,532.19

OUTGOING

Expenditure

Grants Paid	£ 250.00
Solicitors Fees	£ 176.26
	<u>£ 426.26</u>

Balances Carried Forward

One Year Fixed Rate Bond	£ 15,000.00
One Year Fixed Rate Bond	£ 25,000.00
Business Reserve	£ 6,009.76
Current Accounts	£ 1,096.17

£ 47,105.93

£ 47,532.19

The Trust owns two parcels of land, which they currently lease.

The Trust is applied as follows:

Education, etc – the yearly income of the Charities shall be applied by the Trustees in assisting poor young people under the age of 21 years' bona fide resident in the Parish of Yate, to further their education or training or to purchase the necessary equipment for their advancement in life or to enable them to earn their own living as the Trustees think fit.

The Trust awarded grants to 4 young people in the parish of Yate in the 2004/2005 financial year.

The availability of the Trust fund is advertised widely through the Town Council Annual Newsletter, on school notice boards and in the Library.

Applications are available by telephoning 01454 866507 all completed application forms to be returned to Poole Court by 30 September each year.

Trustees: Reverend David Harrex
 Councillor Mike Drew
 Mrs Stephanie Davies

This year one Representative Trustee (Mrs Stephanie Davies) was reappointed to office for a further four year term.

Yate United Charities

Financial Statement Year End 31.03.05

RECEIPTS			EXPENDITURE		
2004			2004		
1 April	Balance at bank	211.13	14 May	Beneficiaries	110.00
28 May	Interest on shareholding	33.06			
31 August	Interest on shareholding	34.32			
30 Nov	Interest on shareholding	32.42			
2005			2005		
28 Feb	Interest on shareholding	35.89	31 March	Balance at bank	236.82
	TOTAL	346.82		TOTAL	346.82

Report for Yate Town Council – Yate Central
Councillor Ruth Davis

South Gloucestershire Council remains a politically balanced council, which means that the positions in the cabinet and related select committees are allocated across all three political parties.

I rejoined the cabinet as executive member for traded services in May 2004 as well as attending Central Health and Safety and Joint Consultative committees and the local Frome Vale area forum.

Apart from dealing with local casework most of my time this year has been spent on the threatened travellers' site on the Road to Nowhere, proposed changes to the town centre and health issues, both around acute services and the promised community health facilities for the area.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all those residents that took part in the successful campaign against the siting of a travellers site on Yate Common for their tenacity and well measured comments and actions during a very worrying time. Their attitude even drew comment from the Gazette editorial.

The town centre has recently acquired yet another new owner, but the local team that has been supporting the developments wanted following consultation will still hopefully be the same. Negotiations are moving forward on the new cinema and it has been confirmed that there will be more health facilities sited locally, such as minor injury and x-ray facilities.

Unfortunately following public consultation on acute health facilities there are plans to downgrade Frenchay to a small community hospital, moving the accident and emergency and acute departments to Southmead. However we believe the data on which this decision was made was flawed and certain important issues not considered so this decision is being challenged at every level.

There has also been concern at the reducing number of secondary school children in the area, the lack of breadth of curriculum accessible locally and standards generally. This has led to a review of secondary school provision in the Yate and Sodbury area and there should be consultation on possible ways forward in early summer.

Both Wellesley and Brimsham Green schools have been successful in getting funds to improve their buildings, Brimsham getting its long awaited sports hall.

Councillor Ruth Davis.
Yate Central.
April 2005.

Report for Yate Town Council – Yate Central
Councillor Sue Walker

My year as Chair of South Gloucestershire Council finished at the end of May last year. It was enjoyable but very busy, so it was good to settle back to my regular council duties and become involved with the several important issues affecting my ward this year.

The first major concern was about the future of Yate Common. Many local residents became involved in organising a petition, objecting to part of The Common being used as a travellers' site. Friends of The Common were also active and Councillor Chris Willmore led a Yate Town Council campaign to highlight local opinion and secure The Common for the future.

Another high profile concern affecting my ward has been the introduction of parking charges at Yate station. This led to many train users parking in the surrounding streets and business park, causing traffic chaos. Steve Webb was involved from the start and is working together with South Gloucestershire Council to try to resolve this problem.

Another great concern in my ward is the review of schools in the area, which led to speculation in the press about the future of King Edmund Community School. I am in contact with staff and parents and am urging everyone to become fully involved in the public consultation due to take place next month.

At South Gloucestershire Council I serve on the Health Scrutiny Committee, which has been looking in depth at proposed changes to local health services. It has been an opportunity to challenge decisions and represent local opinion and fight for local services. We have also studied in detail several other topics which affect the health of local residents (i.e., dentistry, nursing homes.) I also serve on the Licensing Panel and Social Services Complaints Panel. I have heard from many local residents over the year and have been pleased to represent your views and serve the community.

Councillor Sue Walker.
Yate Central.
April 2005.

Report for Yate Town Council – Yate West
Councillor Ian Blair

I have served on the following South Gloucestershire Council Committees:

Children & Young People Select Committee
Corporate Co-ordination Select Committee
Licensing & General Purposes Committee
Development Control (East) Committee
School Organisation Committee
Admissions Forum
Frome Vale Area Forum

Carrying out reviews by the Children & Young People Select Committee into provision for gifted and talented children has allowed me to visit a number of schools in South Gloucestershire. I am currently involved in a review of how children with special needs are educated in schools outside South Gloucestershire.

The development of the new Children's Department is a significant change in how the Council is organised. As a member I have been involved in formulating the department's Vision for Children and Young People. I also took part in interviews as part of the three inspections of the authority by Ofsted and the Audit Commission into the standard of the Local Education Authority, 14-19 provision and Youth Service, which took place this year.

The inner workings of the Council are scrutinised by the Corporate Co-ordination Select Committee. This committee also acts as the Councils Accounts Committee looking at how well the Council spends money and ensuring that we get value for money.

With the change in Licensing Laws I have been involved in a number of training exercises to ensure that members are fully prepared to hear applications for the new licenses.

Membership of the Development Control Committee involves me making decisions on planning applications not only in Yate but over a wider area of South Gloucestershire.

The work of the School Organisation Committee and the Admissions Forum is ensuring that South Gloucestershire provides enough places in schools to provide for the education of our children.

Frome Vale Area Forum has been able to give out grants to a number of voluntary groups in the area. The Forum has also been able to bring forward a number of road improvement and safety schemes.

As a member of South Gloucestershire Council I have involvement with some other groups working in the area, South Gloucestershire Museums & Heritage Group and Yate West Community Safety Group.

During this year, I have also had contact with a number of local residents with particular concerns.

Councillor Ian Blair.
Yate West.
April 2005.

Report for Yate Town Council – Yate West
Councillor Mike Drew

This has been the ninth year of operation of the new Council. The Council is still trying to develop ways of using the ‘Cabinet’ model imposed by central government: with little freedom for local choice. Councils could either adopt this approach or move to the model of an elected Mayor. All parties in South Gloucestershire took the view that the Cabinet model was preferable to the elected Mayor – although all parties would actually have preferred the status quo, where *all* parties were involved in decision making according to their size on the council, and where all members were involved. The Executive has been trying to find ways to make decisions as democratic as possible, devolving as much power as it can to each Area Forum and setting up consultative bodies, but even here there is much legislative control over who has to take decisions and what can be delegated to committees of members outside of the Executive. Coupled with new Codes of Practice and the new Standards Committee there is little freedom left for local councillors even to decide how they work – let alone to make a difference in service delivery. Even the ability to speak up for local residents in relation to planning applications is now severely limited by nationally imposed rules.

We saw that when the Local Plan Inquiry Inspector proposed a travellers site for The Common. Residents rightly looked to their South Gloucestershire Councillors to speak up for them, but we were prohibited from doing so. Had any of us expressed a view, we would have been prohibited from taking part in any discussion or vote at South Gloucestershire. We therefore had to ensure we kept our views private in order to be able to make our views count where it mattered most – in the final vote. I am sure all South Gloucestershire Councillors are very grateful to the Yate Town Councillors who fronted the campaign in order to ensure we could all continue to vote in the council chamber to protect our Common.

During the past year I have been on two select committees, various working groups and have chaired the Area Forum. I also represent the Authority on a number of other bodies concerning with personnel, staff pensions and management (from employee appeals to oversight of the area local government employee’s pension fund), and on the Fire Authority.

A key issue this year has been the review of area working. I believe our area, Frome Vale, has been extremely fortunate in its area officer, Sonia Furzland. Without the work of the Area Forum and in particular her input, many of the joint initiatives such as the night bus and the youth café would not have moved forward. Partnership has to be the future. All members of Frome Vale Area Forum were opposed to the decision to remove staffing from the Area Forums and re-deploy them to central work. The experience in this area had been so positive: Sonia had given such excellent value for money we were very disappointed to have her taken away from us. We are now having to learn to work without her. There is a danger the Area Forum will become merely a local committee that deals with small amounts of grant – and takes the blame for any controversial central decisions. We will need to work in the coming year to maintain the partnerships Sonia had developed and to build a strong Area Forum about to influence central decision making. One of the biggest decisions affecting this town next year will be the review of secondary school provision –

resulting from the large number of surplus places here. Traditionally this has been an area of service resistant to the involvement of the Area Forum. Education is run by a Conservative Executive Member from Almondsbury, and we need to ensure she is held to account for what she wants to do to our local schools.

The Area Forum in Frome Vale is now well attended, with a strong level of public participation, and has in the past year been dealing with some high controversial local issues. I hope it will continue to grow so that all the communities in this part of South Gloucestershire have a focal point in which they can address their priorities and find solutions to local problems.

In the coming year, it will play a major role in providing a public interface during the development of the Yate Community Care Facility proposal, in conjunction with the PCT.

Councillor Mike Drew.
Yate West.
April 2005.

Report for Yate Town Council – Yate North
Councillor Alan Lawrance

Since the Annual Council meeting in May 2004 I have been engaged in work associated with Development Control East Committee and the Corporate and Audit Select Committees. I am also one of the member nominations on the Avon and Somerset Police Authority, which includes activities with the Safer South Gloucestershire Committee. I have also undertaken the role of Vice Chairman of the Council.

Within the Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee careful monitoring of expenditure, both capital and revenue is undertaken.

During the last twelve months a planning application for the development of Tesco in Yate came before Development Control East Committee. Though recognising the need for growth, local members secured conditions associated with the development to secure improvements in the overflow car park area and about the bus and taxi terminus which are to be completed before building developments take place. Careful watch has also been taken on other local planning proposals.

As a member of the Police Authority members have battled to maintain and improve service though government grants and budgets have not kept pace with need or demand. Most crime levels have been reduced, though detection rates have only slowly risen. The latter has become a priority target for the next twelve months. In comparison with the rest of the country South Gloucestershire and particularly the area about Yate, is one of the safest places in which to live. However, the police are not complacent and recognise that a few can generate discomfort for many through significant anti-social behaviour.

I have much enjoyed my role as Vice-Chair of Council. It has allowed me to represent the Authority on 40 occasions, meeting with a wide range of people both within and beyond South Gloucestershire. Highlights so frequently involved young people, whether it was visiting 2,000 Scouts and Guides enjoying a magnificent weekend or marvelling at the work of a Special Needs Youth Group as they created their own Dr. Who drama. More formal occasions included participation in Civic Services and a number of very telling Remembrance Services.

It is a pleasure to serve the residents of North Yate and respond to their concerns and needs. Small achievements, such as the alterations at the entrance to the Glen, can have a significant impact upon the lives of local people.

I look forward to twelve more months' service to the people of Yate and South Gloucestershire.

Councillor Alan Lawrance.
Yate North.
April 2005.

Report for Yate Town Council – Yate North
Councillor Mike Robbins

Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

The fact that an unelected Quango can determine the future of our health provision in South Gloucestershire and the local area is a source of disappointment.

The Local Health Scrutiny Committee made 38 recommendations to the Bristol Health Services Plan and our local Member of Parliament referred the Plan to the Secretary of State to be reviewed. Whichever party is returned to power, it still leaves local residents with very little control over our future. The consultation procedure response levels were minimal when compared to the importance of the issue. The threat to Frenchay as the only acute health provider in South Gloucestershire was not made clear during the consultation period.

There are not firm plans for community facilities in Kingswood. They have hopes that Cossham will be retained but there is nothing on paper.

The proposals affecting Yate and Thornbury are vague and planning permission has not been sought. Added to this, CIT are now seeking to withdraw from the shopping centre which will directly affect Yate Health Centre provision.

Concern remains over the loss of beds under the BHSP when compared with the rising and aging population and the 25 million visitors we receive every year who put an added strain on our facilities. The proposal to close Blackberry Hill is driven by money along and with no concern for delayed discharge patients and the impact on Social Services which have not yet been calculated to determine any adverse effect. It seems that the Health and Welfare of the local residents are in the hands of bean counters who would appear to have very little regard for the population of South Gloucestershire and the surrounding area.

We can only hope that the North Bristol Trust and the Primary Care Trust realise the increase in general population, the increase in local housing and the increasing number of older members of our society that the area could and will support two acute hospitals and the need for delayed discharge beds at Blackberry Hill.

Whilst I for one have my doubts about the need for so many humps in the road, I cannot deny the reduction from 19 to 8 fatal accidents would appear to prove a point, especially when 5 of those accidents were on the motorways. The need for improvement in traffic congestion at peak times is an imperative and the use of Chelsea tractors for the transport of children to school adds 20% to the 8.30am volume of traffic and that it a problem that will require a solution.

No concern has been shown for the areas of deprivation in South Gloucestershire and the people who live in these areas will have to find £5.75 return to get to hospital in Bristol. As there is no direct bus from Yate to Southmead, Bristol Royal Infirmary would appear to be destined to be Yate's acute hospital provider on the basis of economics and travel time. Who would want to go into Bristol then out to Southmead

if they can be treated at the Bristol Royal Infirmary? Adequate research needs to be done on the provision of Public Transport for the outlying areas.

Councillor Mike Robbins.
Yate North.
April 2005.

Report for Yate Town Council – Dodington
Councillor Tony Davis

I have continued to be the Councillor for Dodington ward on South Gloucestershire Council.

I have been a member of the Quality of Life Select Committee and taken part in a small working group reviewing South Gloucestershire Council's policy on Community Development and Cohesion.

I also sit on the International and European Forum which, as its name implies, looks at the effects of membership of the European and International community on South Gloucestershire.

Apart from local casework, I have been particularly active in issues to do with young people, including working with YDC Ursay (the local youth forum) in their research into a Youth Café for Yate.

I am also a governor at Kind Edmund School and am concerned about the emerging issues with regard to numbers in the Yate/Sodbury area. I hope that when the issues are consulted upon, local residents will take an active interest by taking part.

Councillor Tony Davis.
Dodington.
April 2005.

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