

Annual Report for the Faringdon Division (Buckland, Buscot, Coleshill, Eaton Hastings, Faringdon, Gainfield, Gt Coxwell, Little Coxwell, Littleworth) and to the Faringdon & the Coxwells Conservative Branch AGM

This last 12-months have been extremely busy since the County Council Elections on Thursday 4th May 2017. I will try to give you a summary of my role and the diversity of the subject matter I now cover. With the formation of the new council (63 councillors), the Leader asked me to become the Deputy Leader. I relinquished my Cabinet role for Adult Social Care and am now responsible for Strategy, Community Safety (which includes Gypsy and Travellers, Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Trading Standards). I also chair the Thames Valley Fire Control Service and the Thames Valley Fire Control - Collaboration Steering Group. I oversee Human Resources (which includes many areas, such as Remuneration, Pensions, Equality issues, Trade Union relations). I am Chairman and lead member for formulating the new Prospectus and Chair two cross party working groups, the first to formulate the new Corporate Plan and the second to explore the Governance process of the County Council.

The Thames Valley Fire Control Service is the unified fire control centre in Calcot, Reading in the Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue HQ for Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service, Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service and Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire & Rescue Service. The Thames Valley Fire Control – Collaboration Steering Group covers the work being undertaken with OFRS/RBFRS/BFRS and South Central Ambulance and Thames Valley Police in accordance with the Police Crime Act of 2017.

I attend many varied meetings at County Hall, Performance Scrutiny and Audit & Governance Scrutiny where as a Cabinet Member I am “scrutinised” by the elected members and thus held to account on the various pieces of work that I undertake. I attend the internal meetings for Growth and Infrastructure, Political Leaders meetings, Political Cabinet, Informal Cabinet, Cabinet and of course full Council meetings. Locally I chair the Faringdon Area Traffic Advisory Committee, I am a member of the Faringdon Town Team that aims to promote economic growth in Faringdon. I also sit on the Faringdon & Wantage Locality meeting – this financial year each councillor has £15,000 to spend within their Division. Last year each Councillor was awarded a much smaller amount and my share was £4,125. However, due to other Councillors not taking up their allocation I was able to give grants to Gt Coxwell, Farcycles and Faringdon Town Council amounting to a total of £11,557.

I attend my Parish and Town Council Meetings, write a monthly report which is circulated to some 30+ people electronically and I hold a monthly surgery.

I have undertaken in this last 12 months a fair number of Radio Oxford, Radio – Jack FM, BBC Oxford TV interviews on many and varied subject matters eg. the installation of a weight restriction on “New Bridge”, the sale of illegal tobacco, and illegal use of Blue Badges. There have also been a number of named articles published in the Oxford Times, Oxford Mail and our own local paper, the Faringdon Folly.

I attend with the Leader the Bi-Lateral meetings for Cherwell, West, Oxford City and South and Vale and cover for him in absentia. I attend the Growth Boards where the Leaders of the District councils attend together with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), and attend business meetings held at the BMW Cowley Plant with the Leader of the City Council and OCC. I have represented the Leader at the County Council’s Network Conferences and I will be attending in March 2018 the LGA Fire Conference in Gateshead.

Judith Heathcoat
C/Cllr Faringdon Division
Oxfordshire County Council
March 2018