

Holywell Ward

Ward councillors Nigel Bell, Jackie Connal and Matt Turmaine

Councillors Bell and Councillor Turmaine completed a self assessment

Councillor Bell

Year elected: 2007

Reasons for becoming a councillor:

I wanted to make a difference to the lives of residents in my local area with regard to anti-social behaviour, highways issues and education policy as the father of 2 children. As a Member of the Labour Party I wanted to put forward Labour policies that could help the most vulnerable and least well-off in my local area and across Watford.

Roles in the Council:

Became Leader of Labour Group in May 2012; as the Leader of the Labour Group I have continued to attend the Cabinet to question the Mayor and her Cabinet on their policies and put forward the Watford Labour Party views and policies. Member of Development Management Committee, Budget Panel and the Major Projects Board.

Membership of outside bodies:

I am a member of the Advisory Board of the Westfield Children's Centre and the County Councillor for Vicarage/Holywell division(West Watford)..

Training & Development undertaken:

As a Borough and County Councillor for West Watford I have been a member of and attended the Highways Liaison meetings at the Town Hall in conjunction with Herts Highways and Borough Officers on Highways issues. Throughout the Year I have had meetings with Highways Officers in connection to the Croxley rail link and the progress on the project, important as the 2-new stations in West Watford will be as they are both in my division.

I have also had briefings from County Officers throughout the year on various Highway issues in my area including a specific briefing to Borough Councillors on November 17th regarding the building of the Wiggshall Road Link Road.

Attendance Record: Percentage = 90%.

How he has met Council Objectives

Making Watford a better place to live in

- I have questioned County Officers about County issues in Watford as a County Councillor, arguing for better road repairs. I have also taken up many issues of residents' complaints about potholes and other Highways maintenance issues, such as streetlights and the new LED lights.

- I have been able to use most of my Highway Locality budget to have much-needed repairs to potholes and renew footways in my West Watford division particularly in the old part of Holywell estate (Charlock Way, The Roundway, Combe Road, Healey Road, and Clyston Road).
- As a member of Chessbrook Education support centre as the local County Councillor, I am a member of the management committee and have continued to take an interest in children who are educated outside their school and vulnerable.
- As a member of the County Council's children's services panel and as the County Labour spokesperson for children's services, I have argued throughout the year on behalf of 'Homestart' who provided the vital visiting link to many parents in West Watford and who had their budget cut by the County Council. I have continued to support Westfield children's centre throughout the year in the vital work they have done for vulnerable families..
- On the 9th December I attended a briefing at the Town Hall 'Child sexual exploitation'(CSE)awareness.
- Again on 22nd March 2016 I had attended an updated briefing on CSE.
- I have again taken up school place issues from parents from my division and across Watford and argued for more primary school places across Watford at County Hall, and was pleased to see the new primary school open in Ascot Road in Holywell last autumn that I had campaigned for..

To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth

- I have continued throughout the year to be a member of the Council's Development Management Committee. I have made comments at most Development Control meetings. I take the membership of DC very seriously as it has such far reaching and important implications for the Town.
- I have continued taking up various issues of parking concern by residents regarding enforcement in my division working with the Parking Shop and Highways Officers. I also urged the administration to consult on a possible Controlled parking Zone for the area in my division and I am pleased we finally have a decision on introducing a CPZ into Zone M/N after 3-years since the original consultation...
- As a member of the Major Projects Board I asked questions of Officers regarding the new Watford Market and Charter Place, the Health Campus and particular importance for West Watford the development in Ascot Road.
- As Leader of the Labour Group I was pleased that our Group was able to put forward budget proposals to freeze the Council tax and protect vital services as well as again get St Albans Road regenerated and renewed and although it was defeated it was important to make this point again on behalf of residents there and the town's future growth.
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- As Leader of the Labour Group I organised a briefing for Labour members from senior Watford Council Housing Trust Officers on the trust's plans and recent performance on the 20th January.

Promoting an active, cohesive and well informed town

- As usual I attended the Annual Remembrance service.
- I attended some Watford Live events and 'Imagine Watford' events.
- I have asked questions of Officers throughout the year on planning applications and on building enforcement.

- I have continued in 2015/16 to attend the Holywell Action Group set up by Holywell residents with the help of the Housing trust to inform and influence actions by the Trust for Holywell residents and taken up issues that were raised at the meetings with the Police, NHS and Fire and Rescue.
- My main casework has continued as ever to be Housing related issues as always and I have continued to have contact with the Borough Council Housing Officers on behalf of residents as well as Officers of the Housing Trust. This is by phone, email and meetings.
- I have met my local Police and Police Community Support Officer throughout the year taking up residents' enquiries on crime and anti-social behaviour and I again took part with my fellow Holywell Labour Councillors in the Police's 'safer streets' project in Holywell liaising between Officers and residents.

Operating the Council efficiently and effectively

- This year as a member of the Budget panel I have continued to ask questions of Lead Officers on all aspects of Council finance policy, and particularly on housing and the homeless in the town.
- Again as Leader of the opposition and Labour Group ,with the boundary changes and 'ALL OUT' elections in May 2016,I felt it important to have briefings to the Labour Group from the Council's senior management team so members understood the financial and policy positions of the administration as we prepared our manifesto and policies..
- These meetings led by the managing director of the Council took place on the 16th November 2015 and then again on Tuesday January 5th 2016. .
- Throughout the year I continued to deliver Labour leaflets explaining Labour policy in being able to oppose the Liberal-Democrat administration, as well as continuing to put down motions and opposing the Mayor's policies and questioning her at Full Council and writing letters to the Watford Observer and helping my Labour colleagues in being an effective opposition.
- I have also advised residents with certain issues to contact the office of the M.P.
- I have had contact and communication with the Labour Party nationally and with the Labour Party Local Government Association for advice and help.
- I continue to not only work to promote the Labour Party policies as a local Councillor but also to work with all Councillors of whatever party for the good of the Town and try to give help and advice where I can.

Objective for 2015/16	Update on progress
To continue to represent residents in my ward of Holywell and across Watford to get the best value out of the Council and as Leader of the Labour Group to put forward the Labour view in the Council chamber and question the Liberal Democrat administration.	I have continued throughout the year to scrutinise the Lib Dem Council and Mayor at Council meetings as Leader of the opposition and have put forward the Labour alternative view for our town..

Objective for 2016/17

To continue to represent residents in my ward of Holywell and across Watford to get the best value out of the Council and put forward the Labour view.

