

Elected Member Annual Report and Review 2011/12



Name of Member: Councillor Julian Stanyer

Ward: Speldhurst & Bidborough

Year elected: 2012

Section 1: Attendance at Council/ Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

This section has been completed by Democratic Services and lists all Council and Committee meetings, including how many meetings of each, you attended for the period from Annual Council on 25 May 2011 to the end of April 2012.

Name of Committee	No. of meetings attended	No. of meetings held during the year
Council	6	6
Audit Committee	3	6
Economy & Governance Select Committee	10	10
Cabinet (not a member)	2	13
Joint Transportation Board (not a member)	1	5

Please list how many County Council, Parish/Town Council and Town Forum meetings you have attended.

County Council	Parish/Town Council	Town Forum
0	Bidborough Parish Council - 8 Speldhurst Parish Council - 11	0

Section 2: Community Involvement

Please list details of organisations within the community with which you are involved, including any outside bodies that you have been appointed to by the Council in order to promote joint working and improved service delivery to the public (please contact Democratic Services if you need any information on the number of meetings held by the Outside Bodies per year.

Organisation and brief description of your role	No. of meeting attended	No. or frequency of meetings held during the year	Council Appointment? (yes or no)
<i>Community Governor Drew Primary School London E16</i>	3	4	<i>London Borough of Newham appointment – resigned September 11</i>
<i>Langton Green Conservative Association</i>	5	5	No
<i>Langton Green Rural Society</i>	1	2	No
<i>Langton Green Allotment Association</i>	1	1	No
<i>Molyneux Almshouses Trustee Meetings</i>	4	5	Yes
<i>Sir Thomas Smythe's Charity</i>	1	2	Yes

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

Please give an illustration of the ways in which you have assisted your constituents, or other residents of the Borough (i.e ward walks, resolving problems in TWBC services), including details of any surgeries you have held. How do you make it easier for constituents to contact you?

I have represented the Speldhurst & Bidborough Ward since 2008 and have lived in Langton Green for the last 26 years. I am an active member of both the Langton Green Rural Society whom I help with collecting subscriptions and manning the bookstall for the Village Fete and of the Langton Green Allotment Society, who I have been able to assist in applying for a grant. I also support the Friends of All Saints' Church. For the past year, I have been Chairman of the Conservative Group, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Group, Chairman of the Economy & Governance Scrutiny Select Committee, Chairman of the Budget Working Group and Chairman of the Langton Green Conservative Branch. I also sit in the Audit Committee. Through these many tasks, I have been able to influence the corporate direction of the Council, to scrutinise each of its actions on behalf of residents and to keep costs down and make it one of the most efficient in the country. To give some examples of what each of these roles involve:

- The Conservative Group represented 39 of the 48 seats on the Council and its role is to co-ordinate the policy of the Council, dealing with issues of concern and reaching a consensus on major issues. Apart from my own post of Chairman, the Group elects the Leader of the Council and other post-holders within the Group but the Leader, once elected, chooses the members of the Cabinet. During the past year we have been addressed by Richard Ashworth MEP, the Leader of the Conservatives in Brussels and by Greg Clark MP, the Minister of De-Centralisation at the DCLG with whom we were able to discuss our corporate concerns about the National Planning Policy Framework.

- The Overview and Scrutiny Management Group consisted of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the three Scrutiny Select Committees and reviewed the programme of scrutiny meetings during the year. Scrutiny acts as a critical friend to the executive policy makers within the Council and can call-in decisions for review by the rank and file members. It tries to reflect the views and concerns of residents and seeks to drive improvement in public services. Between them the three select committees have a responsibility for examining and reviewing the Council's work and to positively influence the development of Council policy. It has given a steer on the Leader's proposals for future governance arrangements following the enactment of the Localism Act. The structure of the Council is anticipated to change significantly with the advent of Cabinet Advisory Boards to include only one Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- The Economy & Governance Scrutiny Select Committee has responsibility for reviewing economic development issues and has reviewed the Tunbridge Wells and West Kent Economy, the Tourist Information Service, the Planning Service and the Tunbridge Wells Regeneration Company. In the latter task they held a joint meeting with the Audit Committee, a first for the Borough and the session was addressed by members of the public. In accordance with our stated aim of openness and transparency, it was entirely held in open session.
- The Budget Working Group seeks to challenge all areas of expenditure within the Council prior to the making of the Budget. This year it has considered the savings which could be made by moving to a four-year voting cycle, less members, a reduced Mayoral service, and reducing costs in providing services such as the Assembly Hall, the Museum and Art Gallery, and the Tourist Information Office. It has also reviewed car parking charges and community grants.
- The Audit Committee monitors the accounts of the Council and in particular ensures that there is proper governance, appreciation of risk and accountability. The Committee is augmented by three independent members and by the District Auditor and meets about 4 or 5 times a year.

All of these tasks have of course been immensely time-consuming but they have not got in the way of my commitment to help constituents where there is a problem with a Council service. For example I have met with the parties, tried to resolve issues or if not called in planning applications. In other cases I have been involved with disputes as to easements, tree felling orders and applications for grants.

Most problems have tended to be with planning and related issues because the general level of services is rightly felt to be good. I have referred issues relating to the condition of roads to the County Council with whom responsibility lies. Where I have felt it to be right, I have called in planning applications to be considered by the full committee rather than by officers. I have also opposed plans by the Speldhurst Parish Council to support a Local Needs Housing development to the rear of Ferbies, Speldhurst, because I believe it to be the wrong site and because I think that the research into local housing needs was flawed.

Section 4: Special Responsibilities

Please list any other positions of responsibility that you may hold within this Council (for example: Portfolio Holder, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Champion, or Mayoral duties).

Responsibility	Nature of your duties
Chairman, Economy & Governance Select Committee	See above
Chairman Budget Working Group	See above
Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Group	See above
Chairman of the Conservative Group	See above

Section 5: Learning and Development

This section has been completed by Democratic Services and lists dates and details of attendance at training sessions, conferences, seminars etc during the period 25 May 2011 to end of April 2012 which have supported you in your duties as a councillor. Please check this with your own records and contact Wendy Newton-May, Democratic Services, if you have any queries.

Details of event	Date attended
Members' Briefing: Local Policing	22/06/11
Members' Briefing: Calling Planning Applications to Committee	17/11/11
Members' Briefing: Council Priorities for 2012	12/01/12

Do you have any other learning and development needs that have not been identified or met by the Council? If so, please set out below.

No

Section 6: Internal Meetings Attended

Please give details of role and attendance at internal meetings, including Working Parties/Groups and Political Group meetings.

Details of event	Role and frequency of attendance
Overview and Scrutiny Management Group	All (Chairman)
Member Learning & Development Group	Member
Conservative Group	All but 1 (Chairman)

Section 7: Supplementary Information

Please feel free to add any information you consider may assist in defining your role as an elected Member, any outside obligations that may impact on your role or any additional information you wish to add.

I am a very busy 'working' member of the Council and commute to London daily as well as being heavily involved in the working of the Council. This past year has convinced me that I need to channel my energies.

I have therefore asked to be relieved of all corporate responsibilities other than Audit Committee, which has a comprehensive overseeing role, so that I can concentrate my efforts on issues of local concern. I will of course continue to attend and support civic events but during the next year my energies will largely focus on scrutinising Site Specific Allocations in this ward within the Local Development Framework and continuing controversy over the LNH site. On the former, I have committed to oppose any attempts to compromise the Green Belt and Greenfield status of the Ward and to continue to press for a Referendum on the LNH proposals. I now have a web site - www.STANYER.ORG.UK and a direct e-mail address: Julian@stanyer.org.uk . I would of course welcome hearing from any constituent.

Date completed: 18/05/2012

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM BY 18 MAY 2012 TO
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**