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## COUNCIL

18 MAY 2016

(7.15 pm - 8.31 pm)

### PRESENT

Councillors Agatha Mary Akyigyina, Stephen Alambritis, Mark Allison, Stan Anderson, Laxmi Attawar, Hamish Badenoch, John Bowcott, Mike Brunt, Adam Bush, Tobin Byers, Charlie Chirico, David Chung, Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Pauline Cowper, Stephen Crowe, Mary Curtin, David Dean, John Dehaney, Nick Draper, Edward Foley, Brenda Fraser, Fidelis Gadzama, Ross Garrod, Jeff Hanna, Joan Henry, Daniel Holden, James Holmes, Janice Howard, Mary-Jane Jeanes, Abigail Jones, Philip Jones, Andrew Judge, Sally Kenny, Linda Kirby, Abdul Latif, Najeeb Latif, Brian Lewis-Lavender, Gilli Lewis-Lavender, Edith Macauley, Russell Makin, Peter McCabe, Oonagh Moulton, Katy Neep, Dennis Pearce, John Sargeant, Judy Saunders, David Simpson, Marsie Skeete, Peter Southgate, Geraldine Stanford, Linda Taylor, Imran Uddin, Gregory Udeh, Jill West, Martin Whelton and David Williams.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Council held a minute silence for the sad passing of former Councillor Maxi Martin who had died recently. The Mayor invited Councillors Stephen Alambritis, Oonagh Moulton, Peter Southgate, Edith Macauley, Dennis Pearce and Andrew Judge, to say a few words on former Councillor Maxi Martin.

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillors Michael Bull, Suzanne Grocott and Ian Munn.

### 2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

No pecuniary declarations were made.

### 3 ELECTION OF MAYOR FOR THE 2016 / 2017 (Agenda Item 3)

The Mayor called for nominations for the office of Mayor for 2016-2017.

It was moved by Councillor Stephen Alambritis, and seconded by Councillor Marsie Skeete that Councillor Brenda Fraser be elected as Mayor for 2016-2017 (*A copy of the nomination speeches are included within Appendix A to these minutes*) Councillors Oonagh Moulton and Peter Southgate addressed the meeting expressing their support for the nomination.

There not being any other nominations the Mayor put the motion to the meeting and it was

#### RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

Councillor Brenda Fraser made the statutory declaration of acceptance of office and was invested with the Mayor's chain and badge of office.

The new Mayor announced that her Deputy Mayor of the Municipal year 2016-2017 would be Councillor Stan Anderson. Councillor Stan Anderson signed the declaration of acceptance of office and was invested with the Deputy Mayor's badge of office.

The Mayor announced that her consorts would be Lloyd Fraser and Gillian Fraser and that in her chaplain would be Reverend Gerry Stanton.

The Deputy Mayor announced that his consort would be Jennifer Anderson. The Mayor presented badges to the outgoing Mayor, Deputy Mayor and their respective consorts.

The Mayor, Councillor Brenda Fraser, thanked Council for her election for the forthcoming year and announced that her Mayoral two charities as Age UK Merton and the Avanti Club.

(A copy of her acceptance speech is included within Appendix B to these minutes).

#### 5 VOTE OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING MAYOR (Agenda Item 5)

The Mayor invited Councillor David Chung to receive the Council's vote of thanks.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Alambritis, moved and the Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor Oonagh Moulton, seconded the vote of thanks to the retiring Mayor.

In doing so both Group Leaders along with the Leader of the Merton Park Ward Independent Residents Group, Councillor Peter Southgate (*A copy of these speeches are attached as Appendix C to these minutes*) and Councillor Martin Whelton spoke in praise of Councillor David Chung's year in office.

#### RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

That the Council places on record its sincere thanks and appreciation to Councillor David Chung for the dedicated manner in which he has served as Mayor of the London Borough of Merton for the year 2015-2016.

**Mayoral Citation:**

Councillor David Chung. Mayor of Merton 2015-2016

At the time of his election as Mayor in May 2015, Councillor David Chung had completed 13 years as a councillor representing residents in Longthornton ward, Mitcham.

Councillor Chung has taken every opportunity to highlight the good things in Merton and has attended 333 engagements in his mayoral year. The Mayor's chosen charities for 2015-2016 were Merton Centre for Independent Living and Friends In St Helier. He also supported the children's charity One Life. Councillor Chung very much focussed on community organisations representing the more vulnerable in the borough.

During his mayoralty, Councillor Chung raised the profile of disabled people in Merton, recognising that further work needs to be done with regards to people who live with disabilities. He emphasised the need to work with the Social Model of Disability. He also sought to shine a light on elderly people in Merton, in particular, those who live on their own, and on issues around growing older. He supported the Silver Sunday initiative and invited over 120 older people and their carers to afternoon tea. At this memorable event, he spoke about the importance of keeping active and also of how friendship helps to maintain a healthy body and mind. He demonstrated his commitment to championing health by completing a sponsored swim at Canons Leisure Centre, highlighting the importance of exercise.

Councillor Chung's love of music and of education shone through as he organised a 'Winter Warmer' concert, produced by Merton Music Foundation. Attended by 280 people, this charity event brought together an eclectic wealth of musical talent from children across Merton and raised over £1,500 for his charities.

The Mayor visited many schools and spoke to the children about democracy and the role of the Mayoralty. He also invited the borough's headteachers to the Mayor's parlour.

The Mayoress and the Mayor visited 144 businesses in the Mitcham area and held three receptions for the business community in recognition and appreciation of their role as the wealth producers in the borough. Councillor Chung also hosted a reception in honour of Faith in Action's Merton Homelessness Project.

The Mayor has a love of cricket and has forged a link with the Lord's Taverners, a charity which gives young people a sporting chance. He negotiated with the CEO of the Berkeley Foundation to include Merton as a participant in the Lord Taverners Disability Cricket Championship. With Merton School Sport Partnership, the borough will participate in the Lord's Taverners' Disability Cricket Championship each year. As part of this project, the Mayor also successfully set up with the Berkeley Foundation, an opportunity for eight young people from the borough to attend Longridge Activity Centre during the summer holidays.

Councillor Chung has also initiated an annual cricket competition to encourage further integration among the many diverse communities within Merton. Enabling teams from different backgrounds to play together and to give young people the opportunity to continue playing once they have left school, are two of the motivations behind this initiative. Councillor Chung has instigated work to form a committee to continue this initiative into the future.

Mitigating climate change is also close to the Mayor's heart and he has supported the Going Green event at South Thames College, which celebrated environmentally-conscious businesses in the borough. He was also guest of honour at Merton's environmental sub-group in early 2016 at which experts from the community discussed how the borough could plan for a low carbon future.

Throughout his mayoralty, Councillor Chung has focused on the unsung heroes of the borough – those people who do so much for the benefit of our communities, but who are rarely praised for their work. In recognition of the work of carers who provide care and support to vulnerable individuals, the Mayor hosted a reception for people in 34 organisations including Mencap.

The New Year's Day Parade in Central London was a great highlight of the year, displaying Merton's talent for creativity and the arts with its fantastic magic carpet-themed float. This brought in £4,000 for the Mayor's charities.

The theme for the Mayor's Charity Ball reflected the flora and fauna of Councillor Chung's homeland, Guyana. The All England Lawn Tennis Club was adorned with beautiful photographs of the rainforest and many of the animals who live there. Impressive photographs of Guyana's Kaieteur Falls were also on show, enabling the Mayor to highlight his passions for the natural environment and his position on what should be done to minimise the effects of climate change. Over 184 guests supported the fundraising night raising in excess of £8,500. Adding this to all the other fundraising events the Mayor has organised, his chosen charities will benefit from a share of about £40,000.

The complete and unstinting support of his wife of 47 years, the Mayoress Mrs Irina Chung, a Christian, played a significant part in the achievements of the Mayor's mayoralty. Recognition is also due for his Deputy Mayor, Councillor Pauline Cowper and the support of her consort and husband, Michael Cowper.

A humanist himself, the Mayor invited representatives of a variety of faiths to conduct the reflection at council, building social cohesion by celebrating differences.

Councillor Chung is recognised by the council for his community-focused work and his unstinting support of disabled people and the elderly in Merton. His belief in the importance of community and the part that everyone has to play in making Merton a successful place has resulted in a very rewarding mayoral year.

## 6 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 6)

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

## 7 CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES AND OTHER BODIES (Agenda Item 7)

The report was moved by Councillor Stephen Alambritis and seconded by Councillor Mark Allison.

Councillor David Simpson also spoke on the item

The recommendations were put to the vote and were carried – votes in favour 37, and votes against 0 with 19 abstentions.

### RESOLVED

That the Council:

- A. approves the constitution of committees, sub-committees and scrutiny bodies set out in and agrees the allocation of seats, chair and vice-chair positions and the appointment of members to those seats; as set out in Appendix A of the report
- B. approves the constitution of consultative forums and other bodies and agrees the appointment of members to those seats as set out in Appendix B of the report
- C. agrees the allocation of seats and appointment to the outside organisations as detailed in Appendix C of the report
- D. agrees the terms of reference of consultative and other bodies for which the Council is responsible and the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – South West London as set out in Appendix D of the report,
- E. agrees the terms of reference for the new formed combined Standards and General Purposes Committee and an updated Borough Plan Advisory Committee as set out in Appendix E of the report,
- F. agrees to delegate to the Planning Applications Committee the authority to appoint a non-voting co-opted member if this is deemed appropriate.
- G. notes that the Executive Leader has made changes to appointments to his Cabinet or to their respective portfolios as set out in Appendix F of the report,
- H. agrees that the Council's Constitution be amended to incorporate any changes resulting from the approval of recommendation A to E.

## Appendix A

### The nomination of Cllr Brenda Fraser, For Mayor of Merton 2016-2017 By Cllr Stephen Alambritis, Leader of the Council

Mr Mayor,

I first took soundings from within my Labour group **last year** about nominations for Mayor elect **this year**

I was delighted to hear one name constantly being referred to

When I shared that information with other political leaders in Merton **that** name pleased them

When I asked that councillor if they were happy to be put forward **that** person obliged Mr Mayor

**That name, that councillor, that person** is the individual I am about to nominate for the position of Mayor of Merton for the municipal year 2016/17

I am of course referring to Councillor Brenda Fraser

And this is the bit where I feel a bit like Eamon Andrews

and presenting "This is Your Life" **complete** with red folder!

Brenda Fraser, you were born in Kingston Jamaica and lived at 4b Milk Lane

Your parents came to England in the 1950's and you followed them soon after and made your home in Mitcham

You met Lloyd in a restaurant **locally** and got married **internationally**

Why do I say that?

Well, You found a job abroad and told Lloyd to wait for you

Lloyd did not think much to that idea and followed his instincts and sought you out in your new work place where the wedding took place in of all places, **Canada!!!**

You have two grown up children in Gareth and Gillian and you are both now proud grandparents to Lucas

Mr Mayor

Cllr Fraser was elected to Merton Council in 2010 and has served Longthornton Ward since then

She has also has served on many **important committees**

Brenda's career has taken in the worlds of health education policing and the law

Brenda went **straight** into the nursing profession when she arrived in England and has also worked for the Police. Sticking with the legal theme Brenda is also a Justice of the Peace

Brenda spotted what a great educational establishment Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson set up in the 1960's and she has been a lecturer in health at the **Open**

**University**

Her educational credentials were recognised when she was appointed to the board of South Thames College

Mr Mayor

I know Brenda will talk about her choice of Deputy Mayor and without naming names

I am delighted with her choice

I also know Brenda will name her chosen Charities and there again I will leave her to name them

Those are her choices but I now want to talk about Brenda's choice in music

And of course it can only be soul music and I know Brenda will bring real soul to her Mayoral year

Brenda's favourite singer of all time is of course soul legend Luther Vandross  
Vandross had hits such as "**The Best Things in Life are Free**"

While there is not much going **for free** here in the council

I do know Brenda will be free in abundance with her time for the community in the coming year

Vandross was also commonly referred to as "**The Velvet Voice**"

Mr Mayor velvet feels good in my book and I have a feeling we are about to have an excellent and busy community filled Mayoral Year with an equally excellent hardworking Mayor

Finally Mr Mayor let us not forget that Brenda who will soon become Merton's **first ever female Jamaican mayor**

Jamaica was originally known as Xaymaca meaning "The Land of Springs"

I know that Cllr Brenda Fraser will spring some wonderful and surprising events on us in the forthcoming year and I for one cannot wait!

So, Mr Mayor

It gives me great pleasure to nominate and I urge this council to then elect Cllr Brenda Fraser as Mayor of the London Borough of Merton for the Municipal year 2016-2017

**Speech by Councillor Marsie Skeete in seconding the nomination of Councillor Brenda Fraser as Mayor.**

I would like to second Cllr Brenda Fraser's nomination as Mayor.

Cllr Fraser has been my ward colleague since 2014 where she has been a great example to me of the difference a local Councillor can make to the every day lives of our residents.

I think she knows every single resident in Longthornton – she knocks on their doors morning, noon and night until she catches them in!

But this means she knows exactly what local people are concerned about.

On many occasions when we've been out and about she's disappeared into a resident's back garden to look at an overhanging tree or an overflowing drain.

No problem is too small for her to champion and no issue is too big for her to handle.

I have learned a lot from Cllr Fraser over the last two years and I believe she is an excellent choice for our mayor. She will be a role model for all of us, and for women and black women in particular.

I'm proud to live in the best city in the world, a city that chose a British Pakistani to be our mayor.

And tonight I'm equally proud to live in the best borough in that city, a borough that is choosing a Jamaican woman as our Mayor for Merton.



**Councillor Fraser's acceptance speech: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

This is a very emotional occasion for me as I reflect on the task ahead and the journey getting here.

Firstly I would like to thank all those involved in selecting me to be the Mayor of Merton for the Municipal Year 2016-17. It will be a privilege and a honour to serve all the people of Merton. I promise to serve all groups and I am aware that we have come from various parts of England and indeed the World to make Merton our home. Secondly, I am grateful to all those who have travelled from different parts of the Borough and indeed different areas of England and overseas to witness this momentous ceremony. I might get myself into trouble for choosing a few people in the Chamber to extend special thanks for being here but I must take this chance. There are several relatives from Jamaica and the USA but among them is my uncle Joseph Gordon who will be eighty-eight in August. He felt he had to travel with his wife from the USA to celebrate with me because he did not want to miss this occasion. I am truly grateful to him. There is also my ex-manager from the NHS - Sister Barbara Bohanna and her sister who means a lot to me. There is my son Gareth his wife Julie as well as my dear grandson Lucas, who is three years old, thank you all for coming.

I hope to follow in the footsteps of all the previous Mayors of Merton and as the first Jamaican female Mayor for Merton I have an additional task of making my Country proud.

Finally, I would be delighted if you all would join me in the reception downstairs which follows this ceremony.

## **Appendix C**

### **Councillor Stephen Alambritis, Leader of the Council, London Borough of Merton, Moves the Mayoral Citation and the Vote of Thanks in Honour of Councillor David Chung, Mayor of Merton 2015-2016**

At the time of his election as Mayor last year, Councillor David Chung had completed 13 years as a councillor representing residents in Longthornton ward.

Councillor Chung has attended 333 engagements.

The Mayor's chosen charities were Merton Centre for Independent Living and Friends In St Helier.

During his mayoralty, Councillor Chung raised the profile of disabled people in Merton, recognising that further work needs to be done with regards to people who live with disabilities.

He emphasised the need to work with the Social Model of Disability.

He supported the Silver Sunday initiative and invited over 120 older people and their carers to afternoon tea.

At this memorable event, he spoke about the importance of keeping active and also of how friendship helps to maintain a healthy body and mind.

He demonstrated his commitment to championing health by completing a sponsored swim at Canons Leisure Centre.

Councillor Chung's love of music and of education shone through as he organised a 'Winter Warmer' concert, produced by Merton Music Foundation.

The Mayor visited many schools and spoke to the children about democracy and the role of the Mayoralty.

The Mayoress and the Mayor visited 144 businesses in recognition and appreciation of their role as the wealth producers in the borough.

The Mayor has a love of cricket and has forged a link with the Lord's Taverners, a charity which gives young people a sporting chance.

With Merton School Sport Partnership, the borough will participate in the Lord's Taverners' Disability Cricket Championship each year.

Councillor Chung has also initiated an annual cricket competition to encourage further integration among the many diverse communities within Merton.

Mitigating climate change is also close to the Mayor's heart and he has supported the Going Green event at South Thames College.

Given his strong focus on climate change Cllr Chung will be pleased to note that we are joined tonight by Merton & Wandsworth's recent victorious Assembly Member, Leonie Cooper AM, who has just been elected chair of the GLA's powerful Environment Committee

Throughout his mayoralty, Councillor Chung has focused on the unsung heroes of the borough – those people who do so much for the benefit of our communities, but who are rarely praised for their work.

In recognition of the work of carers who provide care and support to vulnerable individuals, the Mayor hosted a reception for people in 34 organisations including Mencap.

The New Year's Day Parade in Central London was a great highlight of the year, displaying Merton's talent for creativity and the arts with its fantastic magic carpet-themed float. This brought in £4,000 for the Mayor's charities.

The theme for the Mayor's Charity Ball reflected the flora and fauna of Councillor Chung's homeland, Guyana.

The All England Lawn Tennis Club was adorned with beautiful photographs of the rainforest and many of the animals who live there.

Over 184 guests supported the fundraising night raising in excess of £8,500.

Adding this to all the other fund-raising events the Mayor has organised, his chosen charities will benefit from a share of about £40,000.

One confession he has made in public is that he ate an embarrassing amount of strawberries at the opening of the Wimbledon tennis championship last summer

But in view of all his hard work we will forgive him!!

The complete and unstinting support of his wife of 47 years, the Mayoress Mrs Irina Chung, played a significant part in the achievements of the Mayor's mayoralty.

Recognition is also due for his Deputy Mayor, Councillor Pauline Cowper and the support of her consort and husband, Michael Cowper.

Councillor Chung is recognised by the council for his community-focused work and his unstinting support of disabled people and the elderly in Merton.

His belief in the importance of community and the part that everyone has to play in making Merton a successful place has resulted in a very rewarding mayoral year and less strawberries for us!!

But, Finally Madam Mayor

We now need to **RESOLVE UNANIMOUSLY**: that the council places on record its sincere thanks and appreciation to Councillor David Chung, for the dedicated manner in which he has served as Mayor of the London Borough of Merton for the year 2015-2016

I Beg So To Move

## **Conservative's tribute to Outgoing Mayor Cllr David Chung presented by Councillor Oonagh Moulton**

Dear Madam Mayor

Thank you for the opportunity to place on record the Opposition Councillors' thanks and our appreciation to Councillor David Chung for his dedicated service and commitment to the Borough over his year as our Mayor of Merton.

### **Fundraising events and Mayoral charities**

Mayor Cllr Chung has held many very successful and innovative events which many of us have enjoyed supporting and he has raised money for his chosen charities the Merton Centre for Independent Living and Friends in St Helier.

In addition he has also supported the children's charity One Life and the Alzheimer's Society.

His fundraising efforts culminated in the Mayor's Ball to which he brought a very original theme and all his efforts have raised a wonderful sum for his chosen charities.

### **Focus on disabled and unsung heroes**

Mayor Chung is particularly recognised for his unstinting support of disabled people throughout his year and through his work he has raised the profile of disabled people. He has also focused much of his work on the many unsung heroes across the borough and he has recognised the inspiring work undertaken by the many carers who provide day in and day out care and support to vulnerable individuals right across our borough. He has also shown to us all the importance of championing health and exercise by completing a sponsored swim and many of us were proud to support his efforts.

### **Love of sport, music and education**

I know of his deep interest in education and passion for sport and music from my earlier work with him on the then Life Chances Overview & Scrutiny Panel. I was pleased to see his support for the wonderful work of the Merton Music Foundation and especially the Winter Warmer Concert. It was also great to see that his love of cricket inspired a special charity match.

I know all Members would like to join with me in thanking and paying tribute to the outgoing Mayor Cllr Chung and the wonderful support of his Mayoress and wife Irina along with The Deputy Mayor Cllr Pauline Cowper and the support of her consort Michael Cowper. They all deserve our thanks and recognition for what has been a very rewarding year.

## **MPWIR tribute to outgoing Mayor David Chung, presented by Councillor Peter Southgate**

On behalf of the Merton Park Independents, I am pleased to add our voices to the vote of thanks to the retiring Mayor, Councillor David Chung.

One of the pleasures of welcoming a new Mayor each year is finding out more about them during their year of office than you had discovered in the course of the previous ten years, or longer. So it has proved with David. I was aware of his interest in education because he held the portfolio in Cabinet when I first became a councillor, but I learned a lot more about him as his Mayoral year progressed. I came to know and like his easy speaking style, thoughtful and yet intimate with his audience, sharing personal experiences to make a point.

I remember David talking about his love of gardens and gardening when he presented the annual awards for the Merton in Bloom competition. The following evening I was back in the council chamber for the presentation of awards to the library volunteers, and David gave a vivid account of his childhood in Guyana, when he would run out of school to go straight to the library, the source of his lifelong love of books and learning. What a polymath, I thought – gardening, reading – how did he find time for it all?

I would like to pay tribute too, to the Mayor's support for charity during his year in office, not just his chosen charities, CIL and FISH, but more widely the charitable and voluntary sector in Merton. I recall him attending the AGM of Faith in Action, where he heard about the funding difficulties they faced. Although he was careful not to make any rash commitments, his support and the publicity his visit generated did result in increased contributions from individual donors and faith organisations and helped to put FIA on a more sustainable financial footing.

Likewise his support for CIL as one of his two nominated charities helped them win a much higher profile in the borough during a challenging period for the funding of disability, and has made sure we all understand the lives of the disabled and those who care for the disabled a little better.

Throughout he has been supported by Irina, always at his side and as full partner in her role as Mayoress. She deserves our thanks too. Now they can both look forward to a well earned retirement from their duties as first citizens of the borough, even as they look back on an eventful year of service to us all.