

Nomination of Cllr Mary Curtin for Mayor of Merton 2018 - 2019 by Cllr Stephen Alambritis in the Council Chamber on Wednesday 23 May 2018

Tonight is a grand occasion

It is a pageant if you like

It is all about a brand new Mayor for this borough

It is about the First Citizen of Merton

So it is with great pleasure

That I announce

That I am tonight

In this day of our Lord

This Wednesday 23 May 2018

And in this council meeting

In the Civic Centre

Making a nomination

For that First Citizen of this borough

And

Therefore to be the next Mayor of Merton

For the year 2018- 2019

And that Nomination is for.....

Councillor Mary Curtin

But before I say a few words about Mary

Nice words I assure you

I would like to welcome our new councillors from all parties

I would also like to thank all retiring councillors who either lost out on 3rd May or stepped down

Our retirees have together contributed to over 200 years of public service to the residents of Merton

In no particular order they are:

Andrew Judge

Mary-Jane Jeans

John Bowcott

John Sargeant

Gilli Lewis-Lavender

Brian Lewis-Lavender

Philip Jones

Ian Munn

Greg Udeh

Katy Neep

Abigail Jones

Abdul Latif

Michael Bull

Suzanne Grocott

Fidelis Gadzama

Linda Taylor

Ross Garrod

Jill West

Charlie Chirico

Hamish Badenoch

Jeff Hannah

Jerome Neil

Brian Lewis-Lavender

And of course to Judy Saunders who ends her term of office tomorrow

It is also important to note that later we shall also be

Saying thank you to our current Mayor Cllr Marsie Skeete

So Madam Mayor, tonight is special

Mary will have known about tonight and will have prepared for tonight

No doubt she will have invited special guests whose presence tonight will mean much to Mary

So tonight is a special night for them and for us

But yet again before I say a few words about Mary

Yes, nice words, I assure you

I wanted to emphasise the different nature of this council meeting so we all enjoy this special occasion for Mary

In order to do this I am reminded of Walter Bagehot and his book the English Constitution published in 1867

In talking about government and governance he dismissed theories about “the division of powers” and of “checks and balances”

What was crucial he said was to understand the difference between the dignified parts of the constitution and the efficient parts

Tonight we are all about the dignified parts

So tonight is special

Special because it is not about how this place “works and rules” and the politics of it all

But it is about how to “excite and preserve the reverence of the population” and that refers to the dignified parts of the council’s constitution

And so to the dignity that is personified by Cllr Mary Curtin

Mary came to England aged 18 from Tipperary in Ireland

She was a nurse and she married in 1972 and has 2 grown up children and 3 grandchildren

Mary loves music and dancing as we will no doubt witness later in the reception downstairs

Mary moved to Morden in 1984 and was elected in May 2014 for Lower Morden and just re-elected earlier this month

I would worry if any one here wants to play fast and loose at council meetings because Mary was a very very strong and effective Chief Whip to my Group....so watch out, you have been warned!

I know Mary will bring joy to our work in Merton

I am reminded of the song “Tipperary” Girl by Billy O’Dwyer Bob

Critics and lovers of this song say it:

Has an insistent rhythm

Has an highly infectious chorus

Holds wide appeal

Defies the generation gap

Captivates listeners of all ages

Has a contagious melody and

It has very very catchy lyrics

And so Madam Mayor

We will all find that our next Mayor, our Tipperary Girl, will reflect the strengths of that song

Mary Curtain, Madam Mayor, will be

Infectious, appealing, defiant, captivating, catchy and contagious

in a most charming and dignified way with us all and with all our residents

So, Madam Mayor

It gives me great pleasure

As we look forward to our next municipal year

To nominate and I urge this council to then elect Cllr Mary Curtin as Mayor of the London Borough of Merton for the year 2018-2019