

## **ANNUAL COUNCIL – 16 SEPTEMBER 2020**

### **THANK YOU SPEECH FOR COUNCILLOR JANICE HOWARD**

Deputy Lieutenant, Clare Whelan, Madam Mayor, councillors and officers plus distinguished guests. It gives me great pleasure tonight to give a vote of thanks to the retiring Mayor of Merton, Councillor Janice Howard, for all her excellent work which she has done for her charities, McMillan Cancer Support and Faith in Action's Merton Homelessness Project.

The job as Mayor is a very personal one in that the responsibilities are not abstract or theoretical, but rather direct, specific and intimate.

Councillor Janice Howard and her Consort, Andrew Howard and the Deputy Mayor, Ed Foley, have worked very hard throughout the Mayoral year, and I must say that in terms of her commitment to the role as First Citizen of the Borough, she has been an outstanding Mayor of Merton. She has shown great passion, skill, enthusiasm and countless initiatives in the mayoral role and has raised the profile of the borough, especially in terms of her skills for fund raising events for her two charities.

Early this year, Councillor Howard was planning for her Mayoral Ball in April and I was privileged to accompany her to businesses in the Wimbledon area, and it was great to see how well she was known to the community and the support which was given to her by some of the local businesses in the area. She was given several items for her auction and raffle prizes, unfortunately due to the Covid-19, the Charity

Ball was cancelled. I am sure she would have had a very successful evening due to her great personality.

One of the highlight of events in her Mayoral year was to hold a reception in the Mayor's Parlour for staff of the All England Tennis Club and the Chairman of the Club was delighted to have visited the Mayor's Parlour with most of the senior staff, and he mentioned that they were grateful to Janice for her kind invitation to the Mayor's Parlour.

Councillor Janice Howard has been a very hardworking and fabulous Mayor and tonight I would like to extend my sincere thanks for all her efforts and commitment and also the way in which she has performed her duties as First Citizen of the Borough with her Consort, Andrew and Deputy Mayor, Ed Foley and his consort.

Well done Janice, it's been a wonderful Mayoral year.