

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

### **SPEECH FOR CLARE WHELAN**

Thank you Madam Mayor.

Clare Whelan, OBE and also Deputy Lieutenant for the London Borough of Merton. Firstly, I must state that Deputy Lieutenants are appointed by the Lord-Lieutenant to assist him with his duties. The Lord-Lieutenant selects one of his DLs to represent him in each of the 32 London Boroughs, except the City.

The most distinguished Clare Whelan served as a Councillor for 24 years in the London Borough of Lambeth, and was in the Millennium year, Mayor of Lambeth. Clare was appointed OBE for services to local government in 2013. She held many senior roles in the council, including responsibility for social care, also Cabinet Member for the Environment. She became involved in local government at national level, not least working with others to attract people with diverse experience and backgrounds to put themselves forward as councillors.

In July 2016, Clare was elected as new Chair of the London Mayor's Association to succeed Robert Davis. Clare believes passionately in the civic mayoralty and she has encouraged and given support to the London Mayors in the important role they play in their communities. She also sees the role of the London Mayors' Association as giving that support, upholding the values of the civic mayoralty and also maintaining its traditions and ensuring it is relevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

As Chairman of the LMA, she gives great assistance to members of the Executive, the opportunity to enjoy the traditional Civic Service in Westminster Abbey, Annual Dinner, Whittington Walk, overseas and other visits and the New Year's Day Parade for all 32 London Boroughs. I must say that there is a strong officer team and executive members and this is why the LMA is very popular and non-party political.

Clare has shown excellent skills since she was elected as Chair of the Association and also during her term as Deputy Lieutenant for Merton, she has had a very good relationship with officers of Merton Council and also with councillors. Remembrance Sunday in November is a very important role that she plays in the borough and she always gives her full support by attending the annual service with the current Mayor and councillors leading the procession; and she is well known to the Legion in Merton for all her hard work.

On behalf of all councillors, officers, voluntary organisations and residents in Merton, I would like to extend my sincere thanks for all the help, support and assistance which Clare has given to Merton over the years.

We wish you all the best in your deserved retirement with good health.

Thank you Clare, you will be sorely missed.