

COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING
16 SEPTEMBER 2020

(7.15 pm - 8.35 pm)

PRESENT The Mayor, Councillor Janice Howard,
 The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Edward Foley

Councillors Agatha Mary Akyigyina OBE, Stephen Alambritis, Mark Allison, Stan Anderson, Laxmi Attawar, Eloise Bailey, Thomas Barlow, Nigel Benbow, Hina Bokhari, Kelly Braund, Mike Brunt, Adam Bush, Omar Bush, Ben Butler, Tobin Byers, Billy Christie, David Chung, Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Pauline Cowper, Stephen Crowe, Mary Curtin, David Dean, John Dehaney, Nick Draper, Anthony Fairclough, Brenda Fraser, Jenifer Gould, Edward Gretton, Joan Henry, Daniel Holden, James Holmes, Andrew Howard, Natasha Irons, Sally Kenny, Linda Kirby, Paul Kohler, Rebecca Lanning, Najeeb Latif, Edith Macauley MBE, Russell Makin, Peter McCabe, Simon McGrath, Nick McLean, Oonagh Moulton, Aidan Mundy, Hayley Ormrod, Dennis Pearce, Owen Pritchard, Carl Quilliam, David Simpson CBE, Marsie Skeete, Peter Southgate, Geraldine Stanford, Eleanor Stringer, Dave Ward, Martin Whelton, Dickie Wilkinson and David Williams MBE JP

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

There were no apologies for absence.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

3 ELECTION OF MAYOR FOR 2020/21 AND THE MAYOR'S APPOINTMENT
 OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR FOR 2020/21 (Agenda Item 3)

It was moved by Councillor Alambritis and formally seconded by Councillor Allison that Councillor Sally Kenny be elected Mayor of the London Borough of Merton for the 2020/21 municipal year.

Councillor McLean also spoke in support of the nomination.
(Copies of their speeches are attached at Appendix A to these minutes)

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

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

Councillor Kenny signed the statutory declaration of office and was invested with the Mayor's chain and badge of office.

The Mayor announced that her Deputy Mayor for the 2020/21 municipal year would be Councillor John Dehaney. Councillor Dehaney signed the statutory declaration of office and was invested with the Deputy Mayor's badge of office.

The Mayor announced that her consort would be Mrs Amanda Woodman. The Mayor's Chaplain would be Father David Rudduck. To preserve social distancing, the Mayor would present badges to the outgoing Mayor, Deputy Mayor and their respective consorts outside the meeting.

The Mayor, Councillor Sally Kenny, thanked the Council for her election for the forthcoming year and announced that her two Mayoral charities would be Morden Little League and Merton & Morden Guild of Social Service.

(A copy of her acceptance speech is attached at Appendix B to these minutes)

4 VOTE OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING MAYOR (Agenda Item 4)

The Mayor invited Councillor Janice Howard to receive the Council's vote of thanks.

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

In doing so, both Group Leaders, along with the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, the Leader of the Merton Park Ward Independent Residents and Councillors Macauley, Holden, Moulton and Williams all spoke in praise of Councillor Janice Howard's year in office.

(A copy of these speeches are attached at Appendix C to these minutes)

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

That the Council places on record its sincere thanks and appreciation to Councillor Janice Howard for the dedicated manner in which she served as Mayor of the London Borough of Merton for the 2019/20 municipal year.

5 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 5)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2020 are agreed as an accurate record.

6 CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES AND OTHER BODIES (Agenda Item 6)

The report was moved by Councillor Allison and seconded by Councillor Whelton.

The Liberal Democrat amendment as set out in agenda item 7 was moved by Councillor Gould and seconded by Councillor Fairclough.

Councillors McLean and Southgate spoke on the item and Councillor Kohler spoke on the report.

The Mayor advised that a recorded vote had been requested by six Members of the Council, in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules. Voting was as follows:

Votes in favour: Councillors Bailey, Bokhari, Fairclough, Foley, Gould, Kohler, McGrath and Southgate (8)

Votes against: Councillors Akyigyina, Alambritis, Allison, Anderson, Attawar, Braund, Brunt, Butler, Byers, Christie, Chung, Cooper-Marbiah, Cowper, Curtin, Draper, Fraser, Henry, Irons, Kirby, Lanning, Macauley, Makin, McCabe, Mundy, Pearce, Pritchard, Quilliam, Skeete, Stanford, Stringer, Ward, Whelton and the Deputy Mayor Councillor Dehaney (33)

Not voting: Councillors Barlow, Benbow, Adam Bush, Omar Bush, Crowe, Dean, Gretton, Holden, Holmes, Andrew Howard, Janice Howard, Latif, McLean, Moulton, Ormrod, Simpson, Wilkinson, Williams, and the Mayor, Councillor Kenny (19)

The Mayor declared the amendment to be lost.

The Mayor then called for a vote on the substantive report and it was

RESOLVED

- A.
 - i) that the constitution of committees, sub-committees and scrutiny bodies set out in Appendix A be approved; and
 - ii) that the allocation of seats, chair and vice-chair positions and the appointment of members to those seats be agreed;
- B.
 - i) that the constitution of consultative forums and other bodies set out in Appendix B be approved; and
 - ii) that the appointment of members to those seats be agreed;
- C. that the allocation of seats and appointment to the outside organisations as detailed in Appendix C be agreed.
- D. that the terms of reference of consultative and other bodies appointed by the Council, detailed in Appendix D be agreed.
- E. that the changes to the appointments to the Cabinet including their respective portfolios (Appendix E) be noted; and
- F. that the Council's Constitution be amended to incorporate any changes resulting from the approval of recommendations A to E.

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Speech by Cllr Stephen Alambritis welcoming Mayor Cllr Sally Kenny as the First Citizen of the London Borough of Merton at the Annual Council Meeting on Wednesday 16 September 2020

Cllr Sally Kenny was first elected in Lower Morden in 2014

Until very recently, in fact until today, Sally was the very efficient Chair of the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

And she was also a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission since

Sally was also a Member of the Appeals Committee

These are roles Sally will be relinquishing as we welcome her to be our First Citizen and Mayor for the municipal year 2020/2021

In times gone by Sally was a member of the Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel between 2014-19

And she was also a Member of the Appeals Committee 2016-18.

Sally has also has been a substitute member of Standards and General Purposes Committee and of the South West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

All those positions get put to one side as Sally prepares to represent this great South London borough of ours

But who really is Sally Kenny I hear you all asking

Well I for one know she is a high flyer

Born in Huntingdon to a father who was big in the Military Police within the RAF.....there you get the high factor!

Now we all go to a school where at least one rich and famous person also went

For myself I only went to the same school as someone who played Bond, James Bond, yes Pierce Brosnan...why should I hanker for his looks and wealth?

Sally was in the same position. She went to Primrose Primary School. Who else went there...well Ed Milliband of course but I do not know if Sally envies Ed for anything...I do not know...she might just tell us one day..

Sally was of course a teacher of some 15 years standing including stints as the deputy head at Cranmer at a time of the middle school system

But there was nothing middling about Sally. She collected degrees as one would Panninni cards...oh don't tell me none of you have heard of them?

And so after teaching Sally went on to work for Roehampton University and was a key person in the initial teacher training course at that time

A little secret here and why we are going to be well looked after by Sally who loves Merton to bits

All her brightest and smartest aspiring trainee teachers were sent to Merton Schools by Sally...She would have it no other way and the pupils were made an offer they could not refuse

Not just a teacher and then a trainer of teachers but also has such a passion for schools that saw Sally on governor boards at Gorrington, Raynes Park High, Aragon and Cranmer. I am sure I have missed one out

As Mayor, Sally will teach us a thing or two about being for the community and in the community because that is what she does day in day out in Lower Morden

Her time spent walking Archie the dog is also time spent learning the names of all other dogs and their walkers and that way she has got to know most of her ward residents

The boroughs other residents in other wards will I am sure get to know her as a superb, caring Mayor

It is very hard work being the Mayor or so I am told by Carl

And so it is good that Sally is known for not being afraid of hard work

Sally works every year with the council and residents in leading the great Lower Morden bulb plant off in King Georges Playing Field...this has now been going for 6 years...Sally never lets go of a good idea

Colleagues we will be in for a treat with Mayor Kenny and I know she will be well assisted by her Deputy Cllr John Dehaney

They will be a tireless duo for residents during these difficult times and I know they will both rise to the challenges posed

Speech to Mayor of Merton Cllr Sally Kenny

Welcome Madam Mayor,

On behalf of the Conservative Group and wider conservative family I would like to wish the very best for your Mayoralty and time as the London Borough of Merton's first Citizen.

It has been a difficult year and as we begin to emerge from the pandemic crisis your kindness and understanding of our communities will be vital.

Of course, I have seen your kindness first hand when I volunteered to help at the FISH Easter party last year – sadly an event that we could not hold this year.

A shame, as I was looking forward to wearing that pinney again as I worked the tea trolley.

The pandemic has of course constrained your Mayoralty and the ability to raise funds for your chosen charities.

But I know that you will not be deterred and will approach your mayoralty with the energy and determination that we have come to know.

Madam Mayor – good luck and you can count on our support for your Mayoralty.

Thank you.

Speech as Mayor
Councillor Sally Kenny
55th Mayor, London Borough of Merton

Thank you to my fellow Councillors for electing me to the position of the Mayor of the London Borough of Merton. This is a great honour and privilege. I plan to fulfil this position with decorum, passion and commitment. I hope that I am a credit to you and the residents of Merton. You all deserve the very best and I shall try, during this difficult time, to do my very best.

Merton has been my home for most of my life. Both my children attended Merton schools throughout their education, during the three tier system.

I know Merton really well. I enjoy living, working and socialising within Merton. My teaching career, which I loved, was in Merton Schools.

I have given much thought and deliberation to choosing my charities. There are so many very worthy causes that this was

certainly a thought provoking and difficult task. Walking my daughter's mini schnauzer, Archie I saw the variety of activities which take place in our amazing parks. I was especially delighted to see, in my local park, King Georges Playing field, the thrive of activity on Saturday mornings, when hundreds of young children and their families congregated to enjoy themselves and were involved in football. Boys and girls from 6 to 14 years were socializing, becoming fit and enjoying themselves. It was a wonderful sight to behold. For this reason I knew that Morden Little League was to be one of my charities.

My second charity become more prominent in my mind when I heard carers saying how grateful they were to have a few hours of respite from their role. I have great sympathy for carers who do the most amazing work to support their loved ones and often feel they do not get enough support and have very little time to themselves. This was particularly reinforced when a close friend, whose husband has dementia, found groups were not prepared to take him for a second time. He was too difficult. I know that FISH does excellent work in this area but they were the Mayor's charity 2 years ago and also 3 years prior to this. My friend was

expecting her husband returned to her with the comment sorry we just can't take him again. She was delighted to hear that they were happy to take him again and provide her with 3 hours a week of personal time. This clinched my decision. Merton and Morden Guild is my second charity.

I look forward to you all supporting the different approach to fund raising. I would love if you will join me in such activities as Zoom Bingo, Zoom Horse racing and a virtual balloon race. Other virtual and socially distanced events are planned.

A huge thank you to you all in anticipation of your ongoing support.

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Annual Council Meeting - Wednesday 16th September

Thanking Mayor, Councillor Janice Howard

I wish to give my personal thanks and recognition to the outgoing Mayor Councillor Janice Howard. She has been an outstanding Mayor; committed, hardworking and determined to do the very best for Merton and for her 2 charities.

Her unstinting efforts have raised an amazing amount to further the work of her charities.

I congratulate her on all she has done.

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Cllr Stephen Alambritis, Leader of Merton Council, London Borough of Merton, Moves the Citation and Vote of Thanks at the Annual Council Meeting on 16 September 2020 in Honour of Councillor Janice Howard, Mayor of Merton 2019-2020

In her inaugural speech as Mayor, Councillor Howard praised the commitment of Merton residents to helping vulnerable members of the community and looked forward to working alongside them. She could not have imagined, back in May 2019, that her spell in office would coincide with an extraordinary period, which would test the resilience of that community.

The coronavirus pandemic saw the suspension of physical council meetings in March 2020. As a result, Councillor Howard presided over the first Full Council meeting conducted via Zoom. She also held the borough's first virtual auction, raising £6,000 for her charities.

Lockdown meant the annual mayor making meeting could not take place and Councillor Howard continued in at the helm for an additional four months, making her the borough's longest continuously serving Mayor.

It was a period which saw residents demonstrate genuine community spirit; whether volunteering to help people who were shielding or organising street-based collections for Wimbledon Foodbank. Touched by the generosity she encountered each day,

Councillor Howard's pride in the borough increased - as did her certainty that she wouldn't wish to live anywhere else.

This generosity helped Councillor Howard in perhaps her proudest achievement; raising more than £99,000 for her charities - an impressive sum given the year's major fundraising event, the Mayor's ball, could not take place.

In my welcoming speech cllrs may recall how I described the lengths to which Janice went to catch my attention to make her case to be our First Citizen. My wife got quiet worried " who is that woman" she would say!!! But I knew all along Janice would be approved by the Labour Group and she has made us all proud in the way she has carried out the role.

Councillor Howard's chosen charities were both causes close to her heart. Faith in Action does an amazing job supporting homeless people in the borough with hot meals, clothing, internet access and the chance to have a shower and do laundry. The Macmillan Cancer Support project at St George's Hospital provides information and support for Merton residents receiving treatment at the hospital; this includes access to a support worker to ensure no one undergoes chemotherapy or radiotherapy alone.

Before COVID-19, Councillor Howard led wide-ranging events, which brought communities together. Highlights include a cricket match on Mitcham Green, which pitted a cross-party team of councillors against the local side, raising money through the sale of refreshments.

The Mayor represented Merton at London's annual New Year's Day parade. She championed the borough's entry, in which two giant puppet aliens enjoyed a London day out, complete with taxis and Beefeaters plus a specially-produced song. The leader and cllr Draper were literally waiting on the crowds with offers of a cheap Prosecco!!

Students from Wimbledon College of Art created the puppets and children from St Mary's Catholic Primary School took part, winning £5,000 for the Mayor's charities.

As Merton's first citizen, Councillor Howard had the immense privilege of welcoming Her Royal Highness The Queen to the borough during a visit to Haig Housing Trust's to open their supported housing for veterans in Morden and to inspect a section of the development named after the late Cllr Maxi Martin.

There was the honour of being hosted in the royal box on the first day of the 2019 Wimbledon Championships hosted by the All England Lawn tennis and Croquet Club. In March 2020 it was the turn of Councillor Howard to host a tour of the AELTC followed by afternoon tea. Councillor Howard also welcomed the Brazilian Ambassador to Wimbledon Park in August 2020 to see Brazilian nationals compete in a beach volleyball contest.

In 2019 Mitcham saw its first augmented reality festival, as part of the borough's Film Merton initiative - Councillor Howard was thrilled to get involved and subsequently to have the chance to broadcast live on Radio Mitcham.

During her inauguration, Councillor Howard said she felt greatly honoured and immensely proud to serve as the Mayor, pledging to meet as many people as possible across Merton. Despite the challenges presented by coronavirus, she has certainly fulfilled this promise, supporting the borough's vital volunteers and genuinely working to bring people together.

As Mayor, Councillor Howard has been supported in her work by Deputy Mayor, Councillor Edward Foley and her consorts; her husband Andrew and children Benedict and Isabella as well as her team, Sandra Folkes and attendant Carl Brown

So we come together tonight to RESOLVE UNANIMOUSLY: that the council places on record its sincere thanks and appreciation to Councillor Janice Howard, for the dedicated manner in which she has served as Mayor of the London Borough of Merton for the year 2019-2020.

Speech for Cllr Janice Howard.

Thank you Madam Mayor,

I always knew that Cllr Janice Howard would be an extraordinary Mayor, however, I never thought that she would break the record for the longest serving Mayor of the London Borough of Merton!

It is of course no secret that Cllr Howard was keen for the opportunity to be the London Borough of Merton's first citizen. She accepted the honour with energy and enthusiasm and did not disappoint the Borough's residents.

Since May 2019 Janice has done incredibly well to raise approaching one hundred thousand pounds for her chosen Mayoral Charities - MacMillan Cancer Support and Faith in Action Merton Homeless Project.

An amount of much-needed funding made all the more amazing considering that Cllr Howard was unable to hold her Mayoral Ball. It is a truly fantastic achievement.

It goes without saying that it was a great disappointment to have not been able to hold the Mayoral Ball – the centrepiece of any mayoral calendar – but of course Cllr Howard in her typically stoic fashion understood the need to protect against the spread of this dreadful virus and our residents must come first.

The dedication that Cllr Howard brought to the Mayoralty deserved a finish full of glamour and pageantry. I think we can say with confidence that it would have been quite the event.

That's said, Cllr Howard held a number of excellent fundraising events and dinners in including:

The Quiz night, Lebanese night, the Christmas Ball and many more.

Cllr Howard injected new ideas for fund raising events.

Like getting me along with Cllrs Alambritis & Southgate and Chief Executive Ged Curran to grow a moustache for Movember. As you can see they all kept theirs – not me.

And on a personal note, I was delighted that the then Madam Mayor conducted my Citizenship Ceremony at Morden Park House in February. It was very special to receive my certificate of nationalisation by not just the Mayor of Merton but also a friend.

Madam Mayor, Cllr Howard attended many civic events engaging with our diverse communities, and representing our Borough with pride on key ceremonial occasions

It is of course a great pleasure to be offering this thanks to my Conservative colleague Cllr Janice Howard on her successful Mayoralty.

Cllr Howard you can be extremely proud of your 17-months as the Mayor of Merton.

I know we certainly are.

The Mayoralty is above all a people business, it thrives on personal interactions, meeting and greeting, talking to people whether individually or in a large audience. And in Cllr Howard – Janice – we had a Mayor whose personality was ideally suited to that role, for both in her professional and political life, Janice is very much a people person.

If she wants to get something done, Janice would always prefer to come and talk to you about it, rather than send you an email. She exudes enthusiasm, and left me in little doubt of her enthusiasm to become Mayor shortly after she was elected.

So, I am glad we were able to set aside the convention that the Mayor is chosen only from the ranks of the ruling party, and select the best candidate for the job, recognising her enthusiasm and dedication.

Janice's year included all the important events that draw the community together, such as Remembrance Sunday and the formal wreath laying ceremonies which she led with dignity. Also Armed Forces Day and the moving Holocaust Memorial Day.

But there were lighter, fun and fund raising events for her two charities as well. I particularly remember the Sambrooks beer tasting evening at the Hand in Hand, a pub I hadn't been inside for 50 years. That was fun, as was the Mayor's Quiz Night at the Wimbledon Club, where consort Andrew gave an assured performance as quizmaster, pointing to a promising future in stand-up comedy. And who can forget the Silver Sunday tea, also at the Wimbledon Club? Certainly not my mother in law, for it was one of the highlights of her 104th year.

Then in March it all came to a crashing halt with the onset of Covid-19 and the lockdown. The last time we met in this chamber was on 4th March for the budget council meeting, more than six months ago.

The pandemic has warped my perceptions of time since then. Looking back to the events I've recounted is like looking through the wrong end of a telescope, they all seem curiously distant. Unremarkable at the time, they now seem particularly precious because they mark a time when we could be together and enjoy each other's company. And Janice was our Mayor for that happier time – let's remember the good things she brought us, and be grateful for them.

It's all too easy for the Deputy Mayor to be overlooked in tributes like this, but as in this case he's my good friend and Merton Park colleague Cllr Edward Foley, I must include Ed and his wife Miranda in this tribute, along with their two children Annabel and Sam. I know Ed has enjoyed his role as Deputy Mayor, and he's performed it with panache, whether it be presiding at citizenship ceremonies or visiting old people's homes. So thank you, Ed.

Cllr Peter Southgate

Thank you Madame Mayor – and welcome to also.

I wanted to express the thanks from my group to the outgoing Mayor, councillor Janice Howard and her consorts – and also to councillor Foley – for the work they have both done and their colleagues have done in this elongated Mayoral year.

When I welcomed her last year I mentioned councillor Howard's lightness of touch and cross party approach, and she certainly followed it up this year despite the difficulties caused by the pandemic. There have still be hundreds of activities and events and fantastic fundraising results as well – it's really, really amazing.

We certainly in my group enjoyed seeing councillor Kohler in his cricket gear for the Charity Cricket match. We are also very grateful for the support you gave at the first ever Motspur Park Christmas Fair, organised by the Liberal Democrat councillors for West Barnes, bringing a real community event to an oft forgotten part of the borough.

I particularly wanted to highlight how important the work of one of one of your charities – Merton Faith in Action – was. As we all know I'm sure, they run homelessness drop in on Kingston Road just outside my ward. Now pandemic aside, they offer homeless people food, warm drinks, a shower, a haircut maybe. But as well as the practicalities it's about treating people with respect.

Now during the pandemic there's been a real focus on homelessness and it's one of the issues that we didn't want to get lost in the recovery. And that issue of treating people with respect needs to be at the fore – and this great charity is showing us the way. Thank you very much for all your work.

Thank you Madame Mayor

Councillor Anthony Fairclough, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

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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.

Thank you Madam Mayor.

I would like to thank Councillor Janice Howard for being a superb Mayor and first citizen of this borough, and her loyal Deputy Councillor Ed Foley. I hope Janice has enjoyed her time as Mayor. Councillor Howard has been a wonderful Mayor and has visited many groups and organisations across the borough and they've all been very pleased to see her.

I also note all the charity events that Janice has very skilfully organised which have been well attended, supported and rather fun. I particularly enjoyed and liked the cricket match which has held at Mitcham Cricket Green and the Christmas dinner. Alas, with Covid locking down the country back in March, it was very sad that Janice's "piece de resistance" showpiece event, the Mayoral charity ball, had to be cancelled.

Again, Councillor Howard showed a remarkable bounce back from this, arranging several auctions which helped generate a lot of funds and cash for her chosen charities. I was quite pleased myself because I won some wine on the latest auction and I do enjoy a glass of vino. I also know that over her time as Mayor Councillor Howard raised I think if I'm not mistaken a record amount in her Mayoral year, which is great to see. Janice, many thanks and congratulations on your time as Mayor of Merton.

Councillor Daniel Holden

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**Speech re Vote of Thanks to the retiring Mayor of Merton – Cllr Janice Howard
By Cllr Oonagh Moulton, Wimbledon Park Ward at Annual Meeting 16.09.20**

Madame Mayor

Firstly I would like to welcome you and offer my congratulations on your election and my very best wishes for your coming year. I appreciate this will not be an easy year but I will endeavour to offer my support whenever possible as I know all councillors across the Chamber would wish to.

Madame Mayor some 16 months ago I stood in Chamber to speak in support of the nomination our then new Mayor, Cllr Janice Howard which as a fellow Ward Member of Wimbledon Park, I was proud to do.

I mentioned then that Cllr Howard would bring added vigour and energy to her role as Mayor. Indeed, as many here tonight know she also has wonderful organisational skills which combined with her great focus and powers of persuasion has ensured that the many Mayoral events and fundraising events that she was able to hold were well supported and that everyone here tonight had the opportunity to be involved and have some fun at the same time!

Madame Mayor, Merton has been lucky to have had such a hard-working and diligent Mayor for a record number of months. She has provided excellent leadership, support and service to our constituents, local communities, businesses & charities across the whole borough. Indeed the amount she has raised is testament to that hard work.

On a personal note I was delighted that one of my former Mayoral charities, Merton Macmillan was chosen to be one of hers too along and along with Faith in Action I am delighted that it has been such a successful fundraising year!

I would I also like to pay tribute to her consort Cllr Andrew Howard and their children Ben & Bella who have supported her and attended many of her wide-ranging events. And of course, also to her Deputy Cllr Ed Foley and his Consort Miranda and their children who have done so much in support too.

Madame Mayor I fully endorse this vote of thanks!

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Annual Council Meeting

16 September 2020

Janice Howard

Madam Mayor, thank you and congratulations on your election. For the Conservative Group it is going to be hard to stop thinking of Janice as Madam Mayor. She had almost become a permanent fixture. Not, of course at our Group meetings – which she correctly avoided throughout her Mayoralty, to stay away from political engagement until last Monday – but at the many Civic events she has presided over, including fundraisers.

I have witnessed a number of these handovers and retrospectives. A common theme which Janice epitomises is that each Mayor brings something special to the role that is both unique to them and can surprise colleagues in all parts of the Chamber.

I knew something of Janice's background professionally, politically and personally but the ease she brought to chairing meetings was immediate and impressive. A light touch but authoritative and fair. The smooth flow of events, such as Silver Sunday, involving a high degree of organisation using volunteers was also a delight.

Janice managed to be ruthlessly efficient during her term, including the introduction of innovative ways to support her charities and get our wallets open. Her Charity Ball would, I am sure, have been a glittering affair. Maybe there will be another opportunity for that one day but, in the meantime Janice can glow in the afterglow of a successful Mayoralty ably supported by Andrew, Ed, Miranda and their families – who now deserve a good and well earned rest from a job well done.

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Review of Mayoral Year speech – 16 September 2020

Thank you, Madam Mayor

I was so privileged to be elected Mayor of Merton by you, my fellow Councillors! As first citizen of the Borough, I have had the most amazing and extraordinary year.

I already knew Merton was a great Borough to live in, but during my year as Mayor I encountered such generosity and care giving from so many charities and organisations. They offer so much support to the community across the borough it makes me so proud and I know I wouldn't live anywhere else.

It was such a great honour to greet Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 2nd and welcome her to the Borough on behalf of every resident. It was her first visit for 15 years to open the new houses at the Haig Housing Trust.

Fundraising for my two charities has been such an important part of my year and we raised a gross figure of around £100,000 for Faith in Action helping the homeless and Macmillan Cancer support. Due to the Covid-19 epidemic, of course my fundraising activities were abruptly cut short. My one regret is not being able to host the Charity Ball at the All England Lawn Tennis Club which would have been a splendid fundraising evening and a fitting end to my Mayoral year.

However, I may possibly hold the record for the longest continuous serving Mayor!

There were many amazing events, the Royal Box on the opening day of Wimbledon being just one highlight - thank you to the All England Club. Then there are the touching moments of generosity a little girl gave me a frozen pin badge at the Christmas Tree lighting in Mitcham, I was really touched as it was obviously precious to her.

A very big thank you is due to my Events committee and charities - in particular to Councillor Linda Kirby for all her help with the New Years' Day Parade and Councillor Edith Macaulay for the signed US Open memorabilia, sponsored swim and her help with gathering raffle prizes.

Thank you to all the Councillors who have supported me and to so many who made my year such a wonderful experience.

I also want to thank my Deputy Mayor Councillor Ed Foley and his wife Miranda who were the best deputies a Mayor could have asked for.

Our wonderful deputy lord lieutenant for Merton Clare Whelan has also been a great support to me throughout the year and I wish her well as she stands down from this role.

To the two wonderful people in the Mayors' Office, Carl and Sandra without whom I could not have carried out such a

professional and packed programme. I shall miss you - your support was invaluable - thank you so much. Also - to Steve and Mick, my relief drivers who also looked after me so well.

Finally, a huge thank you to my husband Councillor Andrew Howard who supported me every step of the way and my two children Ben and Bella who have undertaken consort duty on a number of occasions.

I know Councillor Sally Kenny will be a terrific Mayor and I will support her in any way I can.

Thank you all.