

Supplementary Information

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL
COUNCIL
7 December 2016

Dear Councillor

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the next meeting of the Council to be held on 7 December 2016, the following supplementary information that was unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No Item

6 Mayor's Report

1 - 4

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Mayor's Report to Havant Borough Council - 7th December 2016

The 6 weeks since I wrote my last report have been overshadowed by the sudden death on November 10th of Cllr Colin Mackey, who typified all that is good in local politics. He was, above all, a hard worker for his community, who with his gentle and diplomatic ways won friends at all levels and enabled him to achieve much not only in his career but also for his community. Standing out among my engagements in these last 6 weeks, was the morning we planted trees on the new community space of Hampshire Farm Meadows, Emsworth. Tears were shed, as we remembered him and his work on this project, with some too choked to speak. Our thoughts will be with his family on December 6th. Our best tribute to him is to try to emulate his commitment to his community.

It has been a privilege in these last few weeks to attend the third celebration of a centenarian's birthday since I took office. Marion still lives independently in a bungalow on Hayling Island, with the loving concern of friends and neighbours to support her. After a whole day of welcoming lots of them to her home, she was still smiling and enjoying every moment of her special day by the time Michael and I were able to visit her in the late afternoon. She, too, had served others in founding a local branch of Headway following her daughter's disabling head injuries in a motor-bike accident. We both hope we are as lively and compos mentis as she is, should we reach that milestone.

Following a relatively quiet summer, these last 6 weeks have only seen 4 days completely free of mayoral duties, with 48 formal and 3 informal engagements as well as 16 meetings, totalling over 150 hours out of our home. But I have been enjoying every moment, visiting schools, churches, as well as supporting the huge numbers of volunteers including those who help with the RBL's Poppy Appeal. In the short time I collected at the entrance to the Meridian Centre, I must have raised at least £40, with much generosity. I especially enjoyed seeing the young people of Hayling helping with the collections. Our Remembrance Sunday services were attended by hundreds of residents - every year it seems to grow, and my thanks are due to everyone who helped, from the clergy and cadets to the depot staff, to see that everything ran smoothly. Deputy Lieutenant, David Frere-Cook, and his wife, Chrissie, were welcomed after the service at St Faith's Church, to the Ex-servicemen's Club in Havant, and I am delighted that they will be joining the group of over 30 journeying to the battlefields of the Somme next April.

The Mayor is often asked to attend AGMs or meetings of voluntary organisations across the Borough, and I am impressed by the commitment of so many residents to helping others. At a meeting in the Beacon recently, a group who were trying to work out the best way to help homeless people in our community, praised the work of our housing officers. I also met those trying to support families of young people on the autistic spectrum, and heard from Bryan, a young man only recently diagnosed as having Asperger's syndrome, who spoke movingly of what it was like to grow up knowing he was different, but still with abilities. It was also good to be at the launch of 'Driving Miss Daisy' who operate a personalised taxi service for elderly people at the moment on Hayling and in parts of Havant and Emsworth – which is helping to take people out shopping and to social events when they would

otherwise be isolated at home. We were also impressed by the Methodist Home, Wellesley Court, right on the edge of our Borough in Waterlooville, which has finally been opened, and the neighbouring care home of Wellington Vale, both of which provide a high standard of support for our elderly folk. Rather lower down the age scale, it was good to share the 1st birthday celebration of the Berewood Women's Institute, and to have fun learning the 'Lindy Hop' with them.

Moving even further down the ages, it has been a time to encourage first steps in democracy in some of the schools electing their school councils, meeting young people in Bosmere and Mill Rythe Schools. We have also being amazed by the wide talents of our secondary school pupils at the Warblington school prizegiving and meeting Nuala, a rising star in trampolining, when she was presented with a Hampshire sports award in Winchester.

I also helped launch the Tesco token scheme, which awards substantial sums of money from the purchase of plastic bags to various 'green' schemes (even though usage of plastic bags has dropped by 85%) - among the first to benefit with grants of either £12000, £10,000 or £8,000 will be Park Families' nursery in Sharps Copse School, and Trosnant School, both planning garden projects in their grounds. Last week, I was amazed at the fun way our teams from the Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service, RNLI, Neighbourhood Quality, SDAS and the police presented various scenarios to demonstrate to our Year 6 schoolchildren the need to be better citizens at Fort Purbrook last week. It was also great to see the youngsters from Havant and further afield (one team even flew in from Jersey) in the Havant Rugby Club's mini-tournament, all out having fun with their teams on a bitterly cold Sunday – with enormous effort put in by parents and volunteers to support and encourage their participation in sport.

There has been lots of fun, too, with our first ever Trafalgar night dinner in Horndean, some amazing musicals from the young people (Dr Seussical) and the seniors (Lend me a Tenor) of the Hayling Music Society, as well as the disturbing HIADS performance of Frankenstein. Why bother going to the West End, when we have such talent right here? We are looking forward, too, to the second Havant Passion Play in August, 2017, which has just been launched. Opening the exhibition of the Havant Camera Club was a reminder not only of the beauty around us, but also just what wonderful effects can be achieved with a camera!

Beyond the Borough boundaries, it was our privilege to attend the reunification of the 16th Regiment of the Royal Artillery on Thorney Island. On a bitterly cold and wet day, the soldiers paraded with a military band, and then waited for the arrival of the Master Gunner to inspect them, who unfortunately had been held up by traffic, and arrived 30 minutes behind schedule. The men and women on parade were amazing, remaining stoically in their ranks, demonstrating how lucky we are to have such people ready to risk their lives in our defence.

Fireworks, of course, with lots of 'oohs and aahs' are part of the approaching winter season, and St Thomas More's School had a superb display, preceded by exciting entertainment, in celebration of their 50th anniversary, while our own team provided a colourful and spectacular display on Stockheath Common.

Now we are welcoming the Christmas lights, with lovely Christmas trees, again provided by our Borough, in Leigh Park Shopping Centre and in Emsworth. Our Deputy Mayor, Cllr Elaine Shimbart attended the light switch on at Waterlooville and I will shortly be attending the late night community event and switch on the lights at Hayling! Children have been singing beautifully, and watching their eyes sparkle with anticipation as they wait to visit Father Christmas in the several grottos put on by our hardworking teams of volunteers in different venues, we can feel hope once again touch us, as we prepare to welcome the birth of the Light of the World.

We still have some fun to come before Christmas Day, and I hope to see many of you at the Christmas Coffee Morning on December 14th, the Carols in St Faiths on December 18th and at the Charity Ball on Hayling Island on December 22nd. May you all have a blessed Christmas and New Year.

Shalom!

Faith Ponsonby
28/11/16

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