

Chair's Announcements

Farewell to Donald Thwaites and Dorothy Mitchell

A moment of sadness now as we have recently said farewell to Brigadier Donald Thwaites and former Councillor Dorothy Mitchell.

Donald's distinguished career as Brigadier was evidenced by his hard work and dedication to the Royal British Legion. His elevation to the role of County President was testament to the esteem in which he was held. Many of you will know Donald as a regular guest at our Act of Remembrance services. A lovely man who will be very much missed.

Councillor Dorothy Mitchell served the people of Cobham for an amazing 38 years as their councillor and was a County Councillor for eight years until 2009. Dorothy was a tenacious and dedicated public servant and really made a tremendous difference in many people's lives.

Please let us all take a moment to remember Donald and Dorothy.

Honours Awards

- I want to begin by celebrating our 22 Surrey residents who have received awards in the Queen's Birthday Honours last month – as noted on page 37 of the main agenda.
- I also particularly wanted to pay tribute to our very own Steve Owen-Hughes, our Director of Community Protection and Emergencies, and Charlotte Kneer, CEO of Reigate & Banstead Women's Aid, both of whom have been made Deputy Lieutenants.
 - Steve, together with his team, has been utterly phenomenal in Surrey's effort to halt the spread of Covid-19 in our county.
 - Charlotte has undertaken really fantastic and crucial work to help and protect Surrey abuse survivors and who, with our beloved late Dave Hill, opened a brand new refuge within a matter of weeks in order to protect families who were very much in need during this dreadful pandemic.
- Furthermore, the Chief Constable of Surrey Police, Gavin Stephens, and the Chief Officer of Surrey Special Constabulary, Ken Iredale, have both been recognised.
- Gavin Stephens, who has been at Surrey for 24 of his 27 years in policing, was awarded a Queen's Police Medal (QPM) in recognition of his distinguished service and lasting contribution to Neighbourhood Policing.
- Chief Officer of Surrey Special Constabulary, Ken Iredale, also received recognition by being awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM) for his work on the response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

- In addition, 5 Surrey Groups were awarded the **Queens Award for Voluntary Service 2021**

* Dorking Museum and Heritage Centre
 * Mid Surrey Community Fridges
 *Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum

* Emerge Advocacy CIO
 * SERV, Surrey & South London

Many, many congratulations to you both and to all our Surrey heroes. You have certainly done Surrey proud.

Young Mayor of Surrey

- Many of you were able to join us virtually – of course! - a couple of weeks ago for the election of the new Young Mayor of Surrey.
- She faced extremely strong competition but I am delighted that Natalie Winfield was duly elected. I am also thrilled that Tallulah Buxton has accepted the position as Deputy Mayor.
- I have every confidence that they will both do a magnificent job, carrying on the sterling groundwork laid by the exceptional outgoing Young Mayor, Jacob Wrenn. I will be inviting the new Young Mayor to our next council meeting, to give you an opportunity to get to know her.

Flag Raisings

- As you arrived this morning you perhaps saw the three recently installed flagpoles at the entrance of Woodhatch Place. The past month has seen three flag raisings here at Woodhatch.
- June was Pride month and I was delighted to raise the rainbow flag in recognition of our LGBTQ+ community; on Friday 16 July the Pride on the Road 2021 bus is scheduled to visit Surrey County Council's headquarters, Woodhatch Place between 3-4pm.
- The end of the month saw Armed Forces Week in which we paid tribute to our phenomenal servicemen and women, past and present, who do so much for our county and country.
- Last week, on 5 July was the first of annual, national event which celebrates our extraordinary NHS, Social Workers and Frontline Workers to whom – particularly over this past year – we owe the most enormous debt of gratitude.

New beginnings

- I am pleased to report that, in spite of the restrictions, my Chair work has got off to a flying start. I have met with people from the voluntary sector, thanking retiring staff, and working with Members.
- I met Nina Wadia, East Enders Actress and leading campaigner from the Binti Period Campaign and have a diary full of meetings and events to play my part as your Chair and ambassador for Surrey County Council.
- Unfortunately, following being pinged by Track and Trace, I had to self-isolate for five days and therefore was unable to attend the Judiciary Service at Guildford Cathedral lead by the High Sheriff. Our Vice-Chair, Saj Hussain, attended in my place so SCC was still represented at this prestigious event.
- Post 19 July, we all hope to see a general easing of COVID19 restrictions, and my office will be open to Members or virtually by email, phone or digital platform so please get in touch to tell me how you are getting on in your divisions and work.

Take a break

- Now, we are quickly moving towards the summer recess and I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you all for your tremendous work and to wish you all a very happy and relaxing break. What a year it has been – and we are only half-way through! Please do take some time over the recess to recover and recuperate from the past few months. Be with your families and friends and take time out for yourselves.
- I must however say an enormous ‘thank you’ to the Democratic Services Officers and Facilities Team for arranging today’s meeting – I know it has not been easy for you but you have all certainly made it easy for us and we are all extremely grateful. Thank you.

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