

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

May I welcome on your behalf those Honorary Aldermen who have graced us with their presence today: Honorary Alderman Keith Chapman, Phrynnette Dickens, Roger Kimber, Sharyn Wheale & Michael Woodhall.

Thank you for your support.

Members, you have received a list of the engagements your Vice Chairman and I have attended on your behalf, some of the highlights that I wish to mention are.

25 Year Long Service

It was a pleasure to host a reception at The Great Hall on 27 September to honour staff that have completed their 25 years of dedication and service for the benefit of the people of Hampshire.

Wear It Pink

On Friday 19 October I hosted a Wear It Pink tea party at Serle's House to raise awareness for Breast Cancer Now. The event was well supported, and I would like to place on record my thanks to everyone that donated monies to this worthy cause and I am pleased to say that we raised £400 for the charity.

Staff Act of Remembrance

This year's service was a particularly special event to commemorate the Centenary of the end of the First World War. It was a memorable and moving service. The Winchester Military Wives Choir, The Peter Symonds College Chamber Choir and Hampshire Music Service Brass Quartet all performed brilliant and I give my special thanks to them and all who participated in this Act of Remembrance.

Music through the Ages of WWI & WW2

I attended a wonderful Hampshire Music Service concert at the refurbished chapel at Queen Victoria Country Park on Saturday 10 November to celebrate music through the ages of WWI and WW2. The Gosport and Fareham Youth Band, Romsey Youth Choir and HMS Staff Jazz Band gave us a fantastic performance. This was the vision of Councillor Peter Edgar, which I am so pleased came to fruition.

Royal Visit by HRH The Countess of Wessex to open the restored Royal Victoria Chapel - 12 November

As you may be aware, our Countryside Service has undergone a £18.5 million transformation programme; ensuring our parks become self sustaining and thus preserving them for future generations to enjoy.

Following on from the successful launch of the new Visitor Centre at Lepe Country park, I was honoured to welcome HRH The Countess of Wessex, on 12 November to the formal opening of the Chapel at another of our beloved Country Parks – the Royal Victoria Country Park.

Following a £3.5 million conservation project, funded by Hampshire County Council and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, we are now able to highlight the hidden history of the park – and its importance in our national and local history to both local visitors, and those from further afield. The chapel, as I am sure you will agree, is one of Hampshire's jewels.

HRH was introduced to nearly all of the 130 invited guests – most of whom were volunteers involved with the project and then signed a scroll which has been deposited in a time capsule for future generations!

Launch of the Hampshire Interfaith Calendar

I was delighted to present awards and certificates to the winners and runners up at the Launch of the Hampshire Interfaith Calendar on 13 November in Ashburton Hall. All the entries were amazing and displayed around the Hall. I do believe calendars are still on sale and available from Members Secretariat if anyone wishes to purchase one.

Peace and Reconciliation Concert

I attended the Peace and Reconciliation Concert hosted by our Leader at Romsey Abbey on Saturday 17 November. The Hampshire County Youth Orchestra and the Choir from Giessen, Germany gave a spectacular and meaningful performance.

Staff Carol Concert

Our annual staff carol concert takes place on Thursday 13 December at the Great Hall. If you wish to attend, please contact my PA, Natalie, as quickly as possible. The event is free to all Members and Staff and is a well supported event. Tickets are strictly limited to one guest per member and available on a first come, first served basis.

Karen Murray

Lastly, I wish to place on record my thanks to Karen Murray for her dedication and service to the County Council over the last 41 years. Karen joined the Council in 1977, aged 17, as a trainee in Social Services.

She then moved to the Architects Departments followed by a spell in Surveyors.

Karen became the Director of Property, Business and Regulatory Services following Andrew Smith's appointment as Chief Executive.

In 2011 PBRS merged with Culture, Communities and Rural Affairs and became Culture, Communities and Business Services with Karen as Director.

Karen, we will miss you. Enjoy the well deserved break and next chapter in your life.