



CITY OF ELY COUNCIL
SESSIONS HOUSE
LYNN ROAD
ELY
CAMBS CB7 4EG

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING & MAYOR MAKING
HELD AT 7.00 PM ON MONDAY, 13TH JULY 2020

PRESENT:

The Mayor, Cllr M Rouse
Cllr C Phillips
Cllr E Every
Cllr C Whelan
Cllr M Downey
17 members of the public

Cllr S Austen
Cllr A Arnold
Cllr S Bellow
Cllr A Whelan

Cllr I Lindsay
Cllr D Warman
Cllr R Morgan
Cllr K Wilkins

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending this first ever, virtual Annual Council Meeting, which was also being streamed live on Spotted in Ely. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic all Councillors would be observing the Government's guidelines and social distancing, so the format of the evening would be slightly different to normal. The Mayor asked the Clerk to take a register of Councillors present.

The Mayor changed the agenda so item 1 would be taken immediately before item 5.

1. Election of the Chairman who shall thereupon, in accordance with the Local Government

Act of 1972, become the Right Worshipful the Mayor of the City of Ely for the ensuing year 2020/2021

Cllr R Morgan proposed Councillor S Austen to the position of The Right Worshipful the Mayor of the City of Ely. He said this was the 47th Annual Council Meeting and Mayor Making ceremony since the re-organisation of Local Government and when Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II granted the Council, City status in 1974.

It gave him great pleasure to propose Cllr Sue Austen as the Right Worshipful Mayor of the City of Ely for 2020-21.

Cllr Austen has lived in Ely for over 50 years. She has represented the community at the highest levels in Local Government. She is a former County Councillor and for the past 13 years has served as a District Councillor, latterly as Council Deputy Chairman. Cllr Austen, as a City Councillor, has served as Chair of the CIL Working Group – the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Devotees of car racing will have noticed that both Cllr Austen and himself hold the names of famous car manufacturers. In 1930 the Earl of March, driving an Austin Seven, won the British Racing Drivers Club 500-mile Brooklands Race at a speed of 83.4 mph. However, earlier that year Gwenda Stewart had set the record of 100.65 mph racing at Montlhery, south of Paris, in a 741cc Morgan three-wheeler.

He was confident Cllr Austen will finish the race set before her and he commended this proposal to his fellow councillors.

.....
THE MAYOR
27TH JULY 2019

1. Election of the Chairman who shall thereupon, in accordance with the Local Government Act of 1972, become the Right Worshipful the Mayor of the City of Ely for the ensuing year 2020/2021 continued

Cllr Rouse seconded Cllr Morgan's proposal. There being no other nominations, Councillors unanimously approved the election of Cllr Austen to be Chairman and Mayor of the City of Ely.

Cllr Rouse and Cllr Austen left the room and entered the robing room. Cllr Austen was invested with the robes and the Chain of Office. The Town Crier undertook a cry for the new Mayor and Cllr Austen and Cllr Rouse re-entered the room.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr E Carlsson Browne and Cllr R Denness.

3. Out Going Mayor's Report for 2019/2020

Cllr Rouse said it had been a great honour to serve as Mayor for the last two years and the Mayoress and himself wished to thank everyone for the support and hospitality shown to them on so many occasions.

The last three months or so, of course, have been difficult and not at all how they were expecting to end their term of office, but at least they had a lovely community supper at the end of February and an unexpected celebration of his 80th Birthday, a couple of weeks ahead of the actual date. At a small gathering to mark his actual birthday he was delighted to have received a surprise Community Star Award from Spotted in Ely and it takes pride of place on his bookcase.

This May marked his fiftieth year as a City Councillor, starting with four years on the old Ely Urban District Council. Having first held the office of Mayor from 1976-77, he had no ambition to serve again. He had just been diagnosed with heart failure and was scaling down his involvement with Local Government, but colleagues on the City Council convinced him and he was so pleased that he continued. Serving others is the best way to put aside your own concerns. The last two years have been the most rewarding of that fifty years and it has been a huge pleasure that he has been able to share them with his daughters, first Cassie and then with Lauren as his Mayoresses. Serving as Mayor again has proved to him, if he had any doubts, that Ely is a strong and welcoming community, stronger and more diverse than at any time in our history.

The past year had seen them fulfil some 250 engagements, big and small from the wonderful Aquafest, the exuberance of Pride Day, the Potato Race, grand concerts and services in the Cathedral, the lovely Civic Service in St Mary's Church with Kathryn Rowland's dementia choir, events with the City of Ely Military Band, the therapy dogs, the Christmas lights and switch on, the fun of the pantomime, so many enjoyable occasions, none more so than the community supper at the end of February. So many lovely little things like the rock Amy painted for him with him as the Mayor on it and going to Re-Imagine and finding an amazing doll, that Ely hero, Ruth had made of him as Mayor. He really hoped no one had bought it and was sticking pins in it, although that might explain the pain in his knee. All memories he will cherish, even after having spent so many weeks under lockdown.

He is a great believer in tradition and creating memories for people. Although Ely has only had a Mayor for fewer than fifty years, he believed the Mayor can play a huge part in representing structure, order, stability, especially for children in what sometimes seems a bewildering society. One of the nicest things is when parents have brought their children to talk to him, have their photos taken or whatever. In years to come they probably will not remember which Mayor it was but only that they met the Mayor and somehow, he or she represented a community that was ordered, safe to grow up in and to have pride in.

.....
THE MAYOR
27TH JULY 2019

3. Out Going Mayor's Report for 2019/2020 continued

He thanked Spotted in Ely and Mark for arranging this live streaming. He thanked his Mayoress again (with a virtual bunch of flowers) and said that Lauren and himself leave office in the hope that they have upheld the office of Mayor in the best tradition of so their predecessors and wished Cllr Austen a very successful year.

4. Vote of Thanks to the Retiring Mayor

Cllr A Whelan said she that just over a year ago, she found herself doing something that surprised her: She proposed Cllr Mike Rouse as Mayor of Ely. Mike and herself have often sat on opposite sides of the debate, but there has always been one area that she has been able to count on his support and that was over matters of Equality, Diversity, and most importantly of all, inclusion.

Mike is the longest serving Councillor, having first been elected in 1974 and taking his first term as Mayor in 1976-77, so he brought a wealth of experience to the role. There is no question that Mike was the right person to take his second consecutive year in office.

During the discussions with Mike when she was asking him to stand, it became clear that he wanted to see change at the Council; change not for the sake of change but to recognise how the parish has grown and the work of the Council had grown significantly.

The role of Mayor is not just about attending civic and community events, but it was also chairing and attending nearly all the meetings that the Council had and being the First Citizen of Ely: a very significant amount of work for anyone.

At his very first meeting of the year, Mike ensured that the appropriate reviews were started that are culminating in changes to the structure of the Council for the coming year.

Of course, Mike has overseen dramatic change that none of us could have foreseen and it has been rewarding working alongside him as the Council prepared for the COVID-19 changes to the operation of the Council.

She thanked his Mayoress and daughter Miss Lauren Rouse, who had attended many events with him during the year, highlighting the agenda of health and well-being through sport.

She was sure that everyone present would join with her in thanking Mike for the hard work he has put into the role, for his leadership and guidance, but most of all his vision to persuade the Council to reform.

5. Reading and Signing of the Declaration of Office and Swearing the Oath of Allegiance by the Right Worshipful the Mayor of the City of Ely

Cllr Austen read and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. She then swore the Oath of Allegiance.

6. Statement of Acceptance of Office by the Newly Elected the Right Worshipful Mayor of the City of Ely

The newly elected Mayor said it was a great honour to be chosen as the Mayor. She was fully aware of the responsibilities and duties that are attached to this role and she thanked Members for electing her and trusting her to do the job.

She is passionate about Ely and our community and looked forward to meeting the people of the Parish and raising the profile of the City Council.

In these exceptional times, she felt it was unlikely that she would be able to fulfil civic duties for a while, but if anyone was having social distancing events and would like her to attend, they only had to ask.

Sadly, she was unable to make any charitable objectives at this time, as obviously she could not organise any fund-raising events at the moment.

.....
THE MAYOR
27TH JULY 2019

3. Out Going Mayor's Report for 2019/2020 continued

Coming out of this coronavirus pandemic and adjusting to new ways of living, working and socialising, while rebuilding the business life of the City is going to be a huge challenge and the incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor will have his full support. One of the most pleasing things in Ely is that the Mayor transcends party politics, with all its petty points scoring and can just concentrate on doing what is best for the City.

Lauren and himself thank everyone for their support during the past year, particularly the Revd Mike Banyard for being his Chaplain and Marianne Pickering for keeping his diary and correspondence and Tracey Coulson, the Clerk and Sarah Jay, the Deputy Clerk for all their hard work to keep him in order. Thanks also to Richard Delahaye and the Estates Team, Anna Bennet and the team at Oliver Cromwell House and Lola Howell and all at the Maltings. He was pleased that this civic year he had introduced a Councillors and staff Christmas get together. He also thanked the Town Crier, Mrs Avril Hayter-Smith and her Bell Keeper, her husband, Graham.

He had raised some money for his charity this year, thanks to a splendid donation from KD Theatre and the community supper. These small cheques were his way of recognising just some of the remarkable people he had met:

The City of Ely Military Band – He loves the City's Band, we all do and they had to cancel their spring concert and other events, so he wanted to try and help them with that shortfall in income by giving them £1,000.

We still have to present the Freedom of the City to our Army and Air Cadets, and the Council will do that as soon as it is safe to do so, but he had promised John Donoghue and the outstanding Air Cadets some help with their fund raising for equipment and it is only fair to make a similar donation to the Army Cadets.

He also wanted to support individual talent and he was delighted to be able to give small grants to a wonderful young harp player, Rosie Scott, who has been offered a place at the Guildhall Junior Conservatoire of Music – to help her fulfil her ambitions and to a young artist who is working so hard to establish herself, Ruby Crystal Williams, a small gift for her to buy materials or spend however she wished.

He also wished to help Ian McKendrick, who does so much for the community, to replace his broken MacBook.

Therapy Dogs, he could not leave out his favourite, so there was a donation to help them with the work they do.

A reminder that there is still the Council's grants scheme, the Mayor's Charity is separate, so he encouraged organisations to apply this summer.

He thanked everyone who had said or written kind things about his two terms as Mayor. The frustrating things about politics is you never achieve all the things you might hope to and he was conscious of unfinished business, but in the end, we can only do the best we can, as all Mayors have to do in their own way.

One item of that unfinished business the Council had hoped to do at this year's Mayor Making, had it been the normal public event, was to implement the resolution of the Council from earlier in this civic year, which had been confidential up until now, and that was to grant the Honorary Freedom of the City to two former councillors. It was not just for their work as Councillors, although both served as Mayor more than once, but for all they had done and continue to do in the community, with charities and organisations. It was his pleasure and honour to announce publicly, that it is the wish of the Council to confer Honorary Freedoms of the City on Mrs Sheila Friend-Smith and Mr Richard Hobbs. Both have given and continue to give outstanding service to the community and he was sure that everyone would join him in congratulating them and he looked forward to an occasion when the Council will be able to make a public presentation to them both.

.....
THE MAYOR
27TH JULY 2019

6. Statement of Acceptance of Office by the Newly Elected the Right Worshipful Mayor of the City of Ely continued

She was delighted that Councillor Arnie Arnold has agreed to be her Consort and Father Paul Andrews her Chaplain.

The Consort, Cllr Arnie Arnold was presented with the Chain of Office.

The Mayor, asked her Chaplain to lead the Council in prayer for the upcoming year. Father Andrews did so.

7. Election of the Vice-Chairman who shall become the Deputy Mayor of the City of Ely

Cllr Austen proposed Cllr Richard Morgan as the Vice-Chairman and Deputy Mayor for the City of Ely. It gave her great pleasure to propose Cllr. Richard Morgan for Deputy Mayor. He is a hard-working Councillor, with a great interest in the Parish. She was sure that he will be a great asset to the Council and she will enjoy working with him. Cllr Phillips seconded this proposal. He said he would like to second the nomination of Cllr Richard Morgan for the post of Deputy Mayor. He had not known Cllr Morgan for long but had already come to value him both as a colleague and a friend. He believed that he possessed the sort of qualities that will enable him to move Ely forward during his term of office - he has energy, drive and integrity (always a good combination) and a clear vision of the role this Council should play in the government of this City. He looked forward to working with him and had no hesitation in commending him to Councillors.

There being no other nominations and by unanimous agreement, Cllr Morgan was duly elected as Vice-Chairman and Deputy Mayor. He read and signed the Declaration of Office and was presented with the Chain of Office.

Cllr Morgan said he was proud and grateful for the honour that councillors had given him by electing him as the Deputy Mayor for the City of Ely.

It was indeed an honour to represent the City and he was fully aware of the responsibilities and duties involved with this role.

He said he would do everything he could to support the Mayor during the coming year. He looked forward to building on the firm foundations laid through the sustained efforts of the past 12 months. The Council faces a challenging, but exciting future. He would do his best to represent the aspirations of all his fellow councillors, whilst promoting sustainable growth and development in the City of Ely, so that it remains such a wonderful place to live and bring up children.

Cllr Morgan then presented his Deputy Mayoress, Mrs Jane Morgan, with the Beckett Brooch.

8. Committees and representatives to other organisations

Appointments as detailed separately, were proposed by Cllr Rouse and seconded by Cllr Arnold and were unanimously approved.

9. Authorisation of Signatories

Signatories as detailed below, were proposed by Cllr Every and seconded by Cllr Wilkins and were unanimously approved.

Barclays Bank account – any two of the Mayor, Cllr R Morgan and Cllr Every.

Cambridge Building Society accounts – any two of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Cllr Lindsay and Cllr Every.

Due to the enforced social distancing caused by the Coronavirus, this meeting took place by video communication, accessed by the Zoom meetings facility.

.....
THE MAYOR
27TH JULY 2019

