ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE MEMBER CHAMPION FOR ARMED FORCES 2018/19

Raising the flag at the Town Hall for Armed Forces Day, 2018

Armed Forces Day Parade

Hundreds of Havering residents turned out to show their support as the Borough marked national Armed Forces Day on Saturday 30 June 2018.

Among those marching were serving troops, veterans and cadets as well as service families, led by the Royal British Legion Band and Corps of Drums Romford.

I joined the Mayor on the saluting Dias for the veterans march past and later that morning I accompanied the Mayor as he inspected the old warriors outside the Town Hall and felt very humble in the presence of these men and women.
Armed Forces Covenant

During the period covered by the report (from May 2018 – May 2019), 3 ex-service personnel were housed under the Armed Forces Covenant. Currently there are 8 ex-service personnel on the housing register waiting for a property. They have all been awarded the Community Contribution (CC1) priority in line with the Housing Allocation policy. This is a high priority in recognition of the contribution that they have made to the community through their service

Armistice Day Parade and Service

I was asked, and was delighted to comply with the Mayor’s request to lay a wreath at the Harold Hill memorial. The Armistice Day remembrance had added poignancy this year, as it coincided with the centenary of the end of World War 1. Of course we had to remind people of the centenary of the Royal Air Force too which was founded on April the 1st 1918.

From the memorial, we adjourned to Saint George’s Church to offer prayers for the souls of our war dead of two world wars and numerous campaigns on three continents.

Services and parades took place across the Borough to remember those who lost their lives and to honour their sacrifices.
First World War Centenary Events

The Council supported a campaign called “There but Not There” that featured large six foot high silhouettes of a British soldier from the First World War placed at various sites across the UK to remind people of the enormous sacrifice made by servicemen and women during the conflict.

“Tommy” by the war memorial in Coronation Gardens, Romford

The "Tommy" silhouette appeared at a number of locations across the Borough with a plaque placed alongside the silhouette explaining the campaign.

In an innovative approach sponsored by Everyone Active, the Borough’s Bereavement Services asked schools and youth organisations to produce their own versions of the “Tommy” silhouettes.

Along with Councillor Viddy Persaud, Councillor Dilip Patel, Mayor of Havering and Roger Walsh, a Royal Artillery veteran, I was invited to judge the designs.

The chosen winners were Daniel Azeez, Toby Clarke and Samuel Chima, from Immanuel School in Romford who received a one-month fitness pass to use at Sapphire Ice and Leisure, Romford.
The centenary events culminated in a national tribute on the evening of Sunday 11 November 2018, when over 1,000 beacons were lit across the UK to symbolize “The Battle’s Over”.

Havering’s contribution to the event took place on the green in front of St John the Evangelist Church, in Havering-atte-Bower. The Romford Drum and Trumpet Corps opened the event, and the Mayor of Havering, Councillor Dilip Patel, lit the beacon at 7pm.

Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association

The SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association) Romford Veterans Club in Romford welcomed lonely veterans to French’s Cafe, North Street, Hornchurch, on Christmas Day 2018.

The club was set up by volunteers from SSAFA’s London North East Branch in 2016 and aims to provide military veterans, as well as widows and widowers of veterans, with a place to relax and socialise, every Wednesday lunchtime at The Royal British Legion in Hornchurch.

Councillor Denis O’Flynn