

## **Cllr Stephen Alambritis, Leader of the Council, London Borough of Merton, Moves the Citation and Vote of Thanks at the Annual Council Meeting of Wednesday 23 May 2018 in Honour of Councillor Marsie Skeete, Mayor of Merton 2017-2018**

At the time of her election as Mayor last year, Councillor Skeete had completed just three years as a councillor.

From her time as our first citizen and Mayor this past year one would have thought she had been a councillor for more than three years.

Before beginning a life in active politics, Councillor Skeete volunteered with Mitcham and Morden Labour Party and with the Guyana UK Social Development Association.

Councillor Skeete, was born in Guyana where she obtained a degree in education.

She has dedicated her career to the rehabilitation and education of offenders within the prison service.

Coming from a family of teachers, she is passionate about improving the lives of individuals and society.

Madam Mayor,

It is therefore no wonder that both her charities involve the development of the total self.

Although both charities provide support for people with different needs, their contribution to the community is greatly appreciated.

Merton Mencap is a local charity that supports both people with a learning disability as well as their family and carers.

The Commonsides Community Development Trust works to improve the lives and environment of people living in Merton..

A number of fund-raising events hosted by Councillor Skeete have taken place at top Indian restaurant, Chak89, which hosted the Mayor's Guyana Night and Charity Ball.

South Thames College hosted the Mayor's Christmas Dinner,

A 'Winter Warmer' concert in conjunction with Merton Music Foundation was held at St Mark's Church of England Academy.

Ambience in Wimbledon was the venue for a Mediterranean Night.

I was told about this particular fundraiser that the restaurant prepared the Greek Salad earlier.

By the time the Mayor's guests arrived it was a Feta Compli.

More Seriously, Tooting and Mitcham Football Club hosted the Mayor's Commonwealth Day Big Lunch and with the Minister and former Merton Councillor, Tariq Ahmad, also there.

Passionate about raising awareness of the issues facing people with mental health, Councillor Skeete's Silver Sunday hosted an afternoon tea.

This was was a celebration of older people aimed at nurturing an atmosphere for them to meet other like-minded people.

During Local Democracy week Councillor Skeete hosted local schools at the civic centre and through various fun activities students learnt about how local political systems work and the importance of democracy and short speeches!

The Mayor was also honoured to represent the people of Merton at several civic engagements, to pay tribute to those who lost their lives or were injured since the First World War.

The Mayor also attended memorial events that remembered victims of the holocaust and honoured the men and women who make up the Armed Forces in the community.

During her year Councillor Skeete hosted over 18 receptions primarily to personally thank groups and persons for their work and support.

This included a reception to appreciate staff of Merton Council who volunteered and supported rest centres at both Grenfell and Camden after the tragic fire.

The Mayor's workload and achievements over her mayoral year would not have been possible without the dedication and hard work of her Deputy Mayor, Councillor Judy Saunders.

Between the Mayor and her Deputy, they have attended over 300 engagements and many planned meetings in addition to the official engagements.

The Mayor was ably and lovingly supported by her daughter Arexa, grandson Kahyjel, Mr and Mrs Mingo, family and friends

With whose support she has been able to achieve a lovely year with some excellent events and perform her duties serving the residents of Merton.

But now Madam Mayor enough from me , Because

We now need to resolve unanimously:

that the council places on record its sincere thanks and appreciation to Councillor Marsie Skeete, for the dedicated manner in which she has served as Mayor of the London Borough of Merton for the year 2017-2018.

I beg so to Move