

Mayor's Report – June Council

Charter Place Redevelopment

The Department of Communities and Local Government has confirmed the Compulsory Purchase Order for the Charter Place redevelopment. This is a long-awaited transformation of our town centre, and I know our residents and businesses are looking forward to a more family friendly town centre offering more jobs and greater prosperity for the town.

Charter Place is one of Watford's key regeneration sites and will create 500 construction jobs and 1125 direct new jobs in retail, catering and leisure.

Big Events

Following the success of this year's Big Summer Sounds music festival, the Big Events programme is continuing through the summer. Our Big Events are one of the ways that Watford Council is making our town centre a family friendly space for everyone to share.

The Big Festival started on 20th June and provides a mix of shows from international and local talent. Events are mostly free and take place in The Parade, Watford. There's an event for everyone, from outdoor film screenings, music and dance to food and fashion. You can pick up a programme from libraries, schools and venues, or look online for more details. Anyone who thought last year's galleon sailing down the High Street was fun will love the parade!

Anti-Social Behaviour Update

At the end of the last financial year ASB showed an upturn in recorded incidents for the first time in 6 years. The anomaly against the trend was caused by just two repeat incidents of neighbour disputes that in one case saw a resident make some 150 spurious calls. This single resident became a statistical reporting hot spot with more incidents than most wards record in a year.

Once those cases were dealt with in April ASB began falling again so that the upturn has nearly been cancelled out.

Taking all sources of reporting into account this means that Watford is still 40% below reported levels of ASB it was some six years ago.

The job now is to maintain that success.

Croxley Rail Link / Metropolitan Line Extension to Watford

The Croxley Rail Link is currently in the process of transferring from Hertfordshire County Council to TfL/London Underground. This is due to be completed by 31st July. The project will then take on TfL branding and be re-named the Metropolitan Line Extension to Watford – which is both good news for the project and good news for Watford.

Nominations open for Audentior Award

Every day in Watford, people are changing the lives of others and performing amazing feats for themselves and the town. Nominations are now open to celebrate these outstanding individuals, groups and businesses.

Now in their twelfth year, these civic awards recognise hard work, dedication and personal achievement. Watford has countless people who regularly do wonderful things for the community – be it as a carer, a volunteer, business person or neighbour. These people speak volumes for Watford and have really put the town on the map.

This year there is a special emphasis on the achievements of disabled people and those who work to support disabled people, as well as sporting achievement.

Out and About

I continue to visit schools and community groups throughout the borough. I was particularly pleased to spend a morning with Knutsford School to answer questions about what Councils and Elected Mayors do.

It was an honour to open the DEBRA charity shop which supports those with the inherited skin disorder Epidermolysis bullosa.

It's always a pleasure to see local charities and local businesses working together, and the growing relationship between Holiday Inn Watford Junction and the New Hope Trust is a real case in point. As well as providing practical support to New Hope, the Holiday Inn now sources some of its produce from New Hope's Community Market Garden – as I got to see myself at a special celebratory lunch. Congratulations to all involved.

I was also pleased to attend Oxhey Village Environment Group's Big Breakfast; Lanchester Free School's Big Lunch and the Fullerian's Beer Festival. Council will be interested to hear that I am also doing a sponsored Fast in aid of Watford

Muslim Youth Centre Project, and you can sponsor me at <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/dorothysramadanfast>