

Holt Town Council Meeting, 10.02.20

Dear Cllrs,

My apologies for not being with you this evening, but I am in Westminster. I have asked that our Mayor reads this out to you.

I have made the decision to carry on as a District Councillor and as such will continue to represent you. This I feel is an excellent idea, and not that unusual as Members of Parliament do not always immediately resign their County or District Council role on election and actually, it is quite useful for you and I.

It means I can keep fully abreast of local matters by retaining my seat. That is my number one priority to be aware of local matters. There is no better way of doing that than by being a District Councillor.

I am back in the constituency virtually every Friday if not Thursday, and we have significant amounts of the year on recess where I will be focusing my time locally. Not only do I intend to attend NNDC Full Council meetings once a month, but when possible I will be delighted to be at HTC meetings in my District capacity, however Georgie and I work very well together and needless to say will be attending when I am not.

I regularly keep in touch with our excellent clerk Gemma, as and when necessary.

Now to sadder news, which setting all politics aside is I hope respected. I am a Holt boy at heart, I grew up in the town, went to school in the town and worked for many years here. In 2009 I became a Town Councillor and have spent over a decade on the council, winning a few elections in that time!

I was proud to be your Mayor in 2015 - 2017 and proud of my record. As Mayor we delivered the Owl Trail, restored the town sign, started the maintenance team, won awards for Holt in Bloom, continued the NHP and kick started the project to find a new building for us, which was Nelson House. I was disappointed not to deliver the Cley Rd car park but that was out of my hands. Nevertheless, there were some good achievements which I am proud of.

As you know, I did it because I care enormously about my roots and wanted to make a difference in the town. I have loved helping countless individuals and I got involved in many many community projects, serving on the Holt Youth Centre and latterly raised thousands for charity as the Chairman of the 1940s group, as just two recent examples. It was never done for any recompense and it was never done with any eye on becoming your Member of Parliament. Some things emerge in life which you never expect, but that passion to do more on a wider stage and shape the Country we live in came from the acorn of sitting around the table at Holt Town Council.

Many have said how proud they are that a Holt boy did become your Member of Parliament, and I pay tribute to that in my Maiden speech, as did I pay tribute to my step father and Dad who never got to see me achieve this but inspired me to help others by getting involved in local politics.

I have made many friends, indeed some of you are close personal friends of Dad and have known me a long long time. It has been a privilege to have sat around the table with many people who have done so much for this town. It has also been an out and out privilege to get to know you all. Clearly with my new role, that of being a town councillor must now end. It is therefore with huge sadness that I must resign but thank you for all the great friendships. I've loved the 'cut and thrust of making things happen' and will see you all soon again.

Fond regards

Duncan or the Hon Duncan Baker MP as I am getting to terms with!