

**APPENDIX 1
(Minute 45)**

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Good evening everyone and welcome.

May I start my announcements by mentioning that the town hall turned blue last week? NHS Havering arranged for the building to be especially illuminated with blue lights to mark World Diabetes Day global event. The illumination is so impressive, we are going to light up the town hall in this way until Christmas.

On that light note I would like to congratulate everyone involved in the many festive events taking place across the borough.

The Christmas Lights Switch on at Romford Market Place was absolutely amazing. I cannot begin to tell you what it felt like to see the happy faces of the thousands of families that came along. It's so good to know that in these hard times we can provide some 'good cheer' as well as quality services to our residents.

Another excellent example of this is our Older Person's Christmas Party, which is taking place at the YMCA on 5 December. For many of our elderly residents it is their only opportunity to celebrate Christmas and I'm proud to say that we make sure that they can do it in style.

We really do have lots to celebrate in Havering. I recently celebrated Diwali, probably the most well-known of the Hindu festivals, at the City Pavilion, and the Havering Asian Social and Welfare Association in Elm Park. It was joyous.

It is events such as these, and the people who help to stage them, that help make Havering the unique, caring and cared for borough, it is.

A testament to this is the recent Ofsted report which declared our Children's Services department to be performing well.

Making the best use of tax-payers money is, as you know, part of our ambition to provide a better quality of life. I am pleased to tell you that an excellent example of this was highlighted by the Audit Commission. In a report, which appeared in a national newspaper, it said the Council in 2010-11 spent £40,000 on fraud detection, which helped save £300,000 and highlighted potential tenancy frauds, leading to the recovery of five properties.

My congratulations go to Rainham Library for winning the HAD Disability Awareness Award in the Public Office category. The local charity awards recognise good service which goes above and beyond the normal standard in recognising the difficulties that people with disabilities face in their day to day lives.

And speaking of quality, Fairkytes Arts Centre and our Health and Sports Development team has received Quest Awards – awarded for quality management in Sport and Leisure.

I am also delighted to tell you that Our Bikewise event, which was held in Hornchurch Country Park in March, won the London Cycle Event of the Year 2011 award from the London Campaign for Cycling.

We take road safety seriously and our young people do too, thanks to The Stay Alive show. The event, organised by our Road Safety team and supported by the emergency services, left our teenagers in no doubt about the consequences of reckless driving.

Before I close tonight may I take a moment to reflect on the Armistice Day Service of Remembrance. More than 1,000 residents joined with us at Coronation Gardens to remember those who fought for our freedom during the two World Wars, and those who have lost their lives in more recent conflicts. My prayers and thoughts go out to our brave servicemen and servicewomen serving in Afghanistan and their families.

And finally, may I wish everyone here, our staff and our residents a very happy Christmas and New Year.