



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2016/2017

I would like to congratulate Sutton Coldfield on its new town council, created thanks to the overwhelming support of local people. As we oversee the biggest transfer of powers from Whitehall to town halls in a generation, I wish Sutton Coldfield Town Council and new town councillors in Sutton Coldfield success.”

**The then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, the Rt. Hon Greg Clark MP**

FOUNDED IN OUR PAST. WORKING FOR OUR FUTURE...

## THE MAYORS REPORT

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**Cllr Mrs Charlotte Hodivala**  
Town Mayor

In 2015, the electorate of Royal Sutton Coldfield were asked whether they wished to be governed by an independent Town council. Almost 70% of the respondents said they did and the rest is history! On 1st March 2016, the then Lord Mayor of Birmingham, the late Councillor Raymond Hassall, presented the Sutton Coldfield civic regalia, mayoral chains and mace to the new town council. The first parish elections to the town council were held on 5th May 2016.

It has been an honour to represent Royal Sutton Coldfield as Town Mayor at a wide range of functions over the last year. Some were major civic events such as the Remembrance service and the Mayor-Making ceremony. Other events have been in support of local businesses, the hospital, care homes, charities such as St Giles Hospice and Sutton Municipal, schools, the Fire Service, Sutton Community Games, Scouts and local churches. I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting residents of all ages who are actively involved in a wide range of activities across the town.

I launched the Mayor's Challenge last October as a way to introduce young children to the democratic process. Thirty primary and junior schools agreed to take part in my "Pick it up and pass it on" Challenge. The first part of the challenge involved children agreeing to pick up and dispose of one piece of litter each day. The second part was to carry out one good deed each day, as their "pass it on" act. Children were then asked to submit two ideas for improvements within our town. A Junior Council session was held in March where pupils worked with Councillors to collate ideas and shape their best three ideas into motions. It was a fantastic afternoon which produced ideas from a trim trail, colourful planting, a 'buddy bench' and a desire to help the Homeless by sign posting the available help.

The inaugural Royal Sutton Coldfield Community Awards scheme was created to shine a light on outstanding people and their achievements. Most of them will be amazed when they are nominated, but that's often the case with truly inspiring people. We will be looking to recognise a Teacher of the Year, a Young Person of the Year, four Good Citizens (one for each ward), a Local Business and a Local Leader. A panel of Councillors will judge all nominations and results will be announced at an Awards Evening on Thursday 11th May 2017, to which all shortlisted nominees will be invited.

I am Chairman of the Town Council as well as the Mayor, which means I preside over its Full Council meetings and am an important link between councillors and the paid officers of the Council. This is our first year and I am proud of our achievements. You can learn more about what we have been doing in the Committee reports below. I would like to thank all the Councillors and staff for their hard work and support.



“It is never too early to teach our children about democracy, civic engagement and social responsibility. Many children and young people are full of ideas about how their neighbourhoods, towns and schools can improve – and I am delighted that the Mayor’s Challenge will encourage children to get involved for the benefit of everyone in Royal Sutton Coldfield”

**The Prime Minister The Rt Hon Theresa May**

## OUR VISION FOR THE TOWN

## ‘FOUNDED IN OUR PAST, WORKING FOR OUR FUTURE’

Residents have given the Town Council a clear mandate to progress an ambitious programme of improvements for the town.

The Council has therefore committed, as far as possible, to deliver a projected plan of works known as the Six Pillars which will make a difference to, and improve, Royal Sutton Coldfield. These Six Pillars are:

- Cleaner and Greener
- Safer Sutton Coldfield
- Proud to be Royal Sutton Coldfield
- Healthier and Happier
- Bright Future
- Summer in Sutton Coldfield

As far as possible each of the activities or projects within the plan will be worked up into individual deliverable work streams under the direction of the various committee with the expectation that work will commence as soon as possible thereafter. The plans in respect of each work stream will then be brought back to the Town Council as they are ready to be signed off for implementation.

**For further information on this and all our other activities please visit our web site**  
**<http://www.suttoncoldfieldtowncouncil.gov.uk>**

## AMENITIES, LEISURE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

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In its very early days, the Council set up a Community Fund of just over £100,000 in 2016/17 to be allocated across the four wards in the town. We wanted to be able to support some of the many excellent bodies who work so hard in making our town a better place to live. I am delighted that in our first year been able to allocate a total of £88,000 to support the following groups:

- Friends of Hill Hook Nature Reserve
- St James Hill
- Birmingham Trees for Life
- The Gap
- Home Start Birmingham
- New Hall Valley Country Park
- Carers United
- Agamemnon Explorer Sea Scouts
- Sutton Coldfield Scouts East District
- Wylde Green Neighbourhood Forum
- HeretoHelpTogether
- YMCA
- Sutton Coldfield Arts Trail
- Our Place Community Hub
- Sutton Coldfield Choirs
- Special Olympics
- Friends of Jones Wood
- Sutton Coldfield Adventure Unit
- Eco Sutton
- Boldmere Futures Partnership
- Compass Support Falcon Lodge

### FALCON LODGE – HELPING PEOPLE TO THRIVE COMMUNITY GRANT

Compass Support made a successful application to the Town Council for a grant of £10,000 towards total project costs of £35,000. Consultations show that local people are concerned about the lack of opportunities for children to be active, insufficient support for families, a lack of local safe venues and concerns about crime, unemployment and health. Compass Support will use the grant funding to consult the wider community on activities that will help people thrive, developing an activities plan to reflect priorities and deliver that plan. There are clear outputs in place to measure the success of the project.

We know that litter is a major concern to you all and I am delighted that we were able to support the ‘Spring Clean Campaign’ which ran in March. Many volunteers were involved and it was good to welcome so many youngsters.

We were able to make some improvements to the Christmas Lights display in 2016 and have allocated additional resources to ensure an improved display this Christmas. We have also increased the budget for floral displays across the town and we will be working with the Neighbourhood forums and Birmingham City Councils to design the displays for this summer. We are committed to entering Britain in Bloom in 2018 and have got a great team together to deliver some exciting new ideas.

We have been able to make funding available to support specific groups within our community including young people and those with dementia, disability & autism. We are working with Community Heartbeat Trust to install defibrillators in Trinity and Vesey Wards.

Rectory Park is owned by Birmingham City Council but we have been able to set aside funding which will be used to improve the park. We are committed to providing improved play opportunities throughout the town. We have taken advice Birmingham City Council on the need for a full feasibility study on the proposed location, in terms of the proximity to residential areas, the topography of the site, health & safety etc. We also need to be aware of the on- going inspection and maintenance costs over the lifetime of the equipment but I am confident we can deliver a playground of which we can all be proud. I would like to thank the Councillors who serve on this Committee for all their hard work over the year.

**Cllr Derek Griffin**  
Committee Chairman

## SUPPORT FOR THOSE WITH AUTISM

The Council ran a Survey Monkey throughout March with Autism West Midlands to establish what sort of service people would like. AWM will be making recommendations to the Council who have allocated £10,000 to support residents with autism.

## WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

The Council has been working on building relationships with young people by engaging with youth outreach organisations. We have promoted youth centres and have worked with GAP, an organisation for children with additional needs. We are planning a youth engagement conference for the summer, an exciting event which will bring together young people from a wide range of backgrounds.

## THE TOWN HALL - CASE STUDY

Our Town Hall was built in 1865. Sadly it has been allowed to fall into disrepair. The Town Council has been seeking assurances from Birmingham City Council that this iconic building should be handed back to the local community in an appropriate condition. We have asked for a building survey so that we can establish the cost of bringing the building up to an acceptable level. The survey will also look at ways to make our Town Hall a more relevant and effective amenity for residents. The Town Council is working with Sutton Coldfield Arts and Recreational Trust with a view to setting up a Trust to take on the running of the building. This will open up access to grant funding which would enable us to bring the building to a state that is fit for the 21st century.

## PLANNING & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE REPORT

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The Planning Committee's main duty is to carry out the Council's function as a statutory consultee on planning matters. In the last year, we have looked at more than 800 applications. Many of these are for extensions to existing buildings, or for a change of use. Some are more substantial including small new developments.

We share residents' concerns about the loss of our precious green belt. One of our priorities going forward will be the preparation of a Neighbourhood or Community Plan which will ensure that any new development is as sympathetic as possible. But where there is new development there is also pressure on services and we need to ensure that improvements to the infrastructure are in place before large scale development takes place.

The Committee has heard about parking problems at schools and the various traffic calming measures that might be introduced. We are pleased to have been able to provide funding for School Keep Clear Campaign. The initial request for support came from six schools in Vesey but because of the success of the campaign we agreed to role the programme out to include 25 schools in the town.

Following a 5-year programme the worst roads in the town have been repaired. We have talked to Birmingham City Council about getting overgrown vegetation cut back; the replanting of the missing tree on the parade and improvements to signage. Flashing lights are to be installed at the junction of Wylde Green Road & Eastview Junction and there will be a traffic calming scheme at Holland Road. We have been working with residents to find ways of reducing speeding at Irnham Road.

My thanks go to members of the Committee and to its Clerk for all their hard work.

**Cllr David Allan**

Committee Chairman

### SOCIAL INCLUSION

The Council is working to develop a Social Inclusion Model which will engage with satellite centres and share best practice. We are establishing a Volunteers Register for the Council website which will list all the volunteer agencies in Sutton Coldfield and sign posting for help and assistance. We are also working to promote work experience for adults with additional needs linking into the very well established SCTC Disability strategy and the work of the Disability User Group.

Planned events for 2017 include "All Together for our Future" event float at Birmingham Gay Pride; the launch of the Social Inclusion Model; a Young Carers day in the late Summer and a Social Inclusion Workshop for all local voluntary agencies in Sutton Coldfield in October.

Royal Sutton Town Council presents **CBSO City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra**

## Concerts in the Park

A spectacular weekend of classical and popular music in Sutton Park, with local food and family-friendly fun!

**SATURDAY 1ST JULY, 4-9PM**  
 Evening concert featuring the 70-piece City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra  
 Featuring classical and film favourites, plus licensed bars and local street food  
 Tickets: Adults £10, Concessions £5, Family Ticket £25

**SUNDAY 2ND JULY, 11AM-3PM**  
 Beasts and Bugs Family Musical Fun Day!  
 Featuring the CBSO's mini orchestra, entertainers, local musicians, community groups and activities for all the family  
 Tickets Free!

**Book via Sutton Coldfield Town Hall**  
 in person - call 0121 296 9543 - online at [www.townhallsuttoncoldfield.co.uk](http://www.townhallsuttoncoldfield.co.uk)



## SUMMER IN SUTTON: CONCERT IN THE PARK

This is an exciting a two-day event to be staged in Sutton Park on 1st & 2nd July 2017. On Saturday 1st July, the Town Council will present an open-air concert headlined by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO). Sunday 2nd July will be a 'beasts and bugs' themed family fun day, featuring a CBSO mini-orchestra, local performers, arts & crafts and nature activities. The Town Council has commissioned a professional, specialist event management company to manage, market and produce the two-day event.

## ROYAL SUTTON COLDFIELD LIBRARY

The library service is funded by Birmingham City Council. When our library was threatened with closure the Town Council took the initiative to find a sustainable long term solution working alongside a local community group – the Library Lobby. Councillors have had several meetings with Birmingham City Councillors with the aim of finding a deliverable answer to the problem. We have identified money in our budget which can be used to support the library but we need to be assured that any solution has real tangible longevity.

## FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE REPORT

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The Finance & General Purposes Committee oversees the Council's finances and resources.

One of the main tasks of this Committee is to draw up the budget and monitor expenditure against that budget. The budget for 2016/17 was set in the early days of the Council. Our priority in our first year has been to establish the functions and administrative structure of the Town Council. But we have also developed an ambitious programme of projects under our Six Pillars Plan. Some of these only begin to incur expenditure in 2017/18 and money which was allocated in 2016/17 budget but not spent will be carried forward into 2017/18.

The Council also needs to build up a reserve which we can use to fund the key strategies identified in our emerging strategic plan. The F&GP Committee is responsible for ensuring that the Council invests its reserves in a responsible manner so as to secure the maximum return without risking public money.

As a Committee we have set up the Council's Accounts package, registered to reclaim VAT and appointed internal and external auditors. Our internal auditor visited the Town Council in March and carried out an initial review. His findings were that the Council's financial procedures are robust and well ordered. There will be further internal and external reviews in the early summer and we will follow up any recommendations.

F&GP considers all Council policies. We made a good start this year with Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, a scheme of delegation, a Freedom of Information Model publication, scheme, a Communication policy and a Social Media policy.

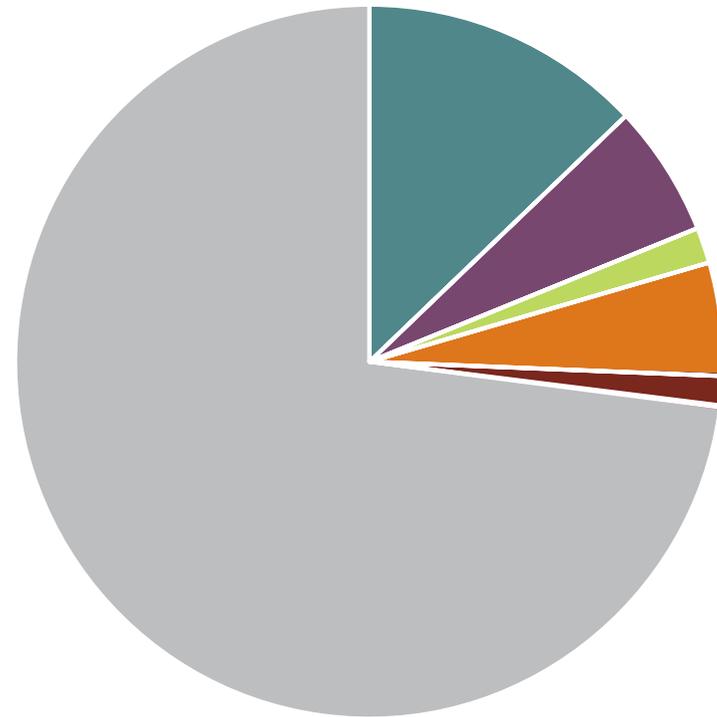
I would like to thank the members of the F&GP Committee for their hard work and support during the year.

**Cllr David Pears**  
Committee Chairman

## COUNCIL INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2016/17

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The Council's income in its first year came entirely from the precept and totalled £1,823,850. Just over a quarter of this was spent in the year as shown in the chart on the right. The reserve will be carried forward into 2017/18 to fund projects set out in our strategic plan.<sup>3</sup>



## YOUR TOWN COUNCILLORS

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Councillor	Ward	Committee
Leeford Allen	New Hall	Planning and Highways
Joanne Ellis	New Hall	Amenities Leisure and Community Services
Derrick Griffin	New Hall	Amenities Leisure and Community Services
Rachel Okello	New Hall	Finance and General Purposes
John Perks	New Hall	Planning and Highways
Terry Wood	New Hall	Finance and General Purposes
Claire Bennett	Trinity	Amenities Leisure and Community Services
Maria Hewett	Trinity	Amenities Leisure and Community Services
Charlotte Hodivala	Trinity	Finance and General Purposes
Ewan Mackey	Trinity	Planning and Highways
David Pairs	Trinity	Finance and General Purposes
Keith Ward	Trinity	Amenities Leisure and Community Services
Janet Cairns	Vesey	Amenities Leisure and Community Services
Paul Long	Vesey	Planning and Highways
Elizabeth Parry	Vesey	Finance and General Purposes

Councillor	Ward	Committee
Louise Passey	Vesey	Amenities Leisure and Community Services
Rob Pocock	Vesey	Finance and General Purposes
Manish Puri	Vesey	Planning and Highways
David Allan	Four Oaks	Planning and Highways
Clare Horrocks	Four Oaks	Planning and Highways
Christopher Ives	Four Oaks	Planning and Highways
Owen Jenkins	Four Oaks	Finance and General Purposes
Jane Mosson	Four Oaks	Amenities Leisure and Community Services

## TOWN COUNCIL STAFF

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