

Councillor Francis Guidera

Mayoral Speech

Firstly I need to thank everybody for elevating me to this truly honourable position of Mayor of Crawley. A fair few things have been said already. I agree with Councillor Lamb, yes we do disagree on some things. We have often talked about it and it's about how we get there that we differ. But the goals of making lives better for people, they are the goals that we generally share as Councillors, and that's what every Councillor regardless of their party should come into this for.

I'm humbled to have been made Mayor of Crawley. I was born here in 1975 at Crawley hospital. I am really proud of my home town. I plan to spend my time as Mayor promoting Crawley during this very difficult economic time. I plan to promote Manor Royal as the premier business district in the country. I plan to do whatever I can to promote Gatwick airport and obviously all of that is to try and support and promote jobs during what we all know is a tremendously difficult time for everybody.

I would like to thank my wife Andrea for being such a fabulous and supportive person. My role as Tilgate Councillor has taken a lot of energy out of me and I tend to wonder sometimes will I run out. But I keep going and I'm really proud to have Councillor Mwagale supporting me, obviously newly elected, and Councillor Crow is also very supportive. I do want to mention as part of my speech Councillor Charles Jeffery Petts who sadly passed away a year ago today and today is also my father's 75th birthday so today is a day of very mixed emotions but I am extremely proud and honoured to be taking on this role.

My mayoral charity this year, which will hopefully please former Mayor Raj Sharma, is Manor Green School and College. My two twin step sons attended that school and before they moved back to the USA to live with their father, one of the things they said was, and coming from two lads with special educational needs I found quite profound, was it would be lovely if we could build a Manor Green in Georgia. That was the regard they held the school in and they loved their time there. We are so lucky to have a school like Manor Green in Crawley. I understand from what I've been told that there are so many children out of area desperate to get a place there because it is so brilliant. I look forward to working hard and helping to fund raise. And obviously I understand that Covid has created issues with the ability to fund raise and Councillor Sharma is more than welcome to join me in trying boost those 'coffers'.

Beyond that once again I am truly honoured, thank you so much everybody.