

**ANNEX A**

**RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2008**

**REPORT BY THE TOWN MAYOR**

It is my great honour to present my first annual report as Mayor of Ringwood. It is however tinged very much with sadness.

Firstly we lost Cllr Malcolm Daly earlier this year when he passed away following a 12-month battle against illness. Malcolm was a very well respected member of the community, a great follower of all sports and in particular cricket and formula one racing and also a regular player of cricket in the town for over 45 years. Although he was only on the Council for a relatively short number of years, he made a significant contribution towards the debates on moving recreation provision forward within the town.

And then sadly following a five-year war against cancer Cllr Danny Cracknell – or Mr Ringwood to many – finally succumbed on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

I am very pleased to see his wife, Di and daughter Miranda here tonight. I am sure they are keeping an eye on us on behalf of Danny.

Danny was originally known as “the washing machine man”; the chap who went to houses in the town repairing their domestic appliances. But he also had an involvement in the community, the community which he held very dear following his evacuation from London in 1941. He was a founder of Ringwood Cheetahs in 1974 which provided an outlet for young peoples energy and in particular those who were not interested in conventional sports. The Cheetahs provided banger racing and many young people will I am sure be eternally grateful for the support, advice and direction Danny gave to them at that time. His achievements following his involvement with the Cheetahs, his election to the Town Council in 1987 and to the District Council in 1991 are well documented. He was a founder member of Ringwood Festival and carried out innumerable charitable activities not least the annual Christmas run to Southampton, Portsmouth, Plymouth and London to distribute goods and food to the homeless. Latterly Danny has reminded all of us of our responsibility to Ringwood and to safeguard the future for our young people. His favourite phrase and one that I hope we will all remember is that “we must listen to the young; they are 25% of our present and 100% of our future”.

Can we please all stand for a moment as a mark of respect for Malcolm and Danny.

We have also sadly said farewell to Lyn Wickens who has been the Personal Assistant to the Mayor and Town Clerk for the past 20 years. In many ways she was Danny’s right hand man in ensuring the success of the Ringwood Festival. Lyn’s successor Sue Godwin who is local person takes over Lyn’s role on 1<sup>st</sup> May. But Lyn, may I take this opportunity to thank you for the wonderful assistance you have given to Councillors and the people of Ringwood over the past 20 years.

It would be easy for me now to talk about the achievements of the Council. But later in the meeting you will be receiving reports of Committee Chairmen and I am not therefore going to steal any of their thunder. I expect they will cover all of the important services that we are providing and have tried to provide over the past 12 months. I am only going to speak on one initiative that we have started in the last year.

People talk about Councillors not being in touch with their community. We try very hard to be in touch and we speak to lots of people within the town and lots of people come and speak to us. However, there was one section of the community with whom we had little or no contact and that is the young people. The simple reason we had little contact is because all of our children have grown up and therefore we have, despite their

best efforts, lost touch to some extent with the young people. I am very proud therefore to be able to tell you that we believe that we are the first Council in the country to have invited young people to become Student Advisors and attend all of our meetings and give us their views on matters coming before the Council. The appointment of the students is dealt with entirely by Ringwood School and we have not sought to have any influence over who should or should not be appointed. We believe the initiative has been a great success. These young people are our future and they are the very people that Danny Cracknell kept telling us to listen to. A Protocol outlining their roles has been placed with the other papers for tonight's meeting. The brief that we gave them for tonight was simple. It was please come to the Annual Assembly and tell the public what it means to be a Student Advisor and what you believe has been achieved as a result of your involvement.

Thank you for listening, if you have any questions I will do my very best to answer them for you. If you have no questions I am now going to hand you over to the Student Advisors to give you their version on what it means to work with the Council.

Cllr Brian Terry  
Town Mayor