

Resignation from Downham Market Town Council

I was elected onto Downham Market Town Council in 1991. I joined the Council because I wanted to make a difference; to work as a Team with my fellow Town Councillors to help and support the Community of which I was a part. One of the reasons that I chose to put myself forward for election was because at that time there were only two women serving on a Council of 18. To me, there was something wrong with a population which was approximately 50% female having a Council where women were so under-represented. The 1991 election not only raised the numbers of Councillors on the Council to 20, but also increased the representation of women to 4. Over the years the numbers of women on the Council has further increased right the way up to 8, making the balance significantly more equal.

I like to think that over the years we, the Team of Downham Market Town Council, have worked together and made a significant and positive difference to the Town and Community.

Times, however, have changed, and it is my opinion that Local Government at Town and Parish level is no longer properly fit for purpose because current legislation does not permit us to deal appropriately with the mounting hostility and poor behaviour demonstrated by a significant number of Downham Market Town Councillors.

Over the last nine months as Mayor I have witnessed the resignation of the Town Clerk and eleven Town Councillors.

Our Council of twenty is now reduced to ten men.

Members of the Community no longer wish to be associated with the Town Council and those who had considered standing as Councillors for Downham Market no longer wish to be connected to the toxic and undemocratic attitudes demonstrated by the majority of the ten.

I have felt forced into a position where I have to resign from the Council, as local democracy has been overturned and I no longer feel comfortable working in an environment where the democratic working of local government is undermined.

Sadly, it is Downham Market that will suffer when local democracy is compromised.

I take this step with great sadness, I have been a member of Downham Market Town Council for many years, it has been a big part of my life. I have many fond memories of working with previous Councillors, helping to shape the future of our Community. I have witnessed and shared in the progression of a small Council which rented a meeting room from the Borough, to a Council with not just it's own Council Offices, but also other buildings and assets to manage for the good of the Community.

I have been both proud and humbled by the honour of representing the Council as Mayor on two occasions. However, I no longer feel that my voice will be heard and have very real fears that good governance and democracy will be compromised in future Council business.

Please therefore accept my resignation from Downham Market Town Council.
Effective from when I step down from chairing the Full Council Meeting on the 15th February, 2022.