

## **Richard Romain**

### **Service and Achievements 1982 – 2014**

Councillor Richard Romain was first elected in May 1982 as Councillor for the Stanmore South Ward, which he represented for the first 4 years. He was re-elected in May 1986 for the Canons Ward, which he has represented continuously until the present time. Councillor Romain was Leader of the Conservative Group from 1994 to 1996. In recognition of his completion in May 2007 of twenty-five years of public service to Harrow, a resolution was engrossed on vellum and publicly presented to Councillor Romain by the Mayor, at the Annual Council Meeting in May 2007.

Between 1982 and 2007, Councillor Romain served on various Council Committees, including the Education Committee and the Development Control Committee. However, his particular interest was with environmental issues, giving rise to extended service on the General Purposes Services Committee and subsequently the Environment Services Committee. In that time he variously held the offices of Chair of the Environment Services Committee, Vice-Chair of the General Purposes Services Committee and Chair of the Traffic and Transport Sub-Committee. He was the Chairman of the Anne Frank Committee, from 1988 to 1989, and was successful in bringing the Anne Frank Exhibition to Harrow in 1989. Councillor Romain first served on the Policy and Resources Committee in 1988/9, commencing a period of continuous service over the next ten years on that Committee in its various strategic guises, and additionally on the Resources Committee when this operated as a separate entity. When these arrangements were overtaken by the restructuring under the Local Government Act 2000, Councillor Romain served as a member of the first Cabinet between 2000 and 2003. Councillor Romain also served on the Audit Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Romain represented the Council on numerous outside bodies including 12 years on the West London Waste Authority, serving as Chairman from 1991 to 1996, Brent and Harrow Trading Standards Service, the London Home and Water Safety Council and Age Concern Greater London.

Since achieving 25 years service, Councillor Romain primarily occupied himself with individual and ward case-work. In terms of Council Committees, he had continuous membership on Governance, Audit and Risk Management Committee (GARM) and Pension Fund Committee (formerly Pension Fund Advisory Panel) and involved himself with both general affairs and matters of specific interest and sought transparency. He was Chair of both Committees for the 2013/14 municipal year. In relation to GARM, Councillor Romain developed a detailed knowledge of the external auditor role and a fondness for the workings of the Council's Internal Audit Department.

In terms of the Pension Fund Committee, Councillor Romain was actively involved in the investment strategy, particularly in relation to the difficult, illiquid and fragile period of the financial melt-down of 2008/2009. He actively scrutinised external fund managers and sought to ensure that the Council received value for money and accountability. Latterly, he was a prime mover for a rebalancing of the Pension Fund asset allocation and "pushed" for new external fund managers to be appointed to invest pension fund monies.

As Chair of both Committees, Councillor Romain sought to use his knowledge and diplomacy so that all who are involved felt that they had a meaningful input into each meeting.

Councillor Romain was an active participant at Full Council meetings and his input was considered with respect and attention.

