



### For Immediate Release

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### **Borough Mayor leads tribute to our heroes on NHS Frontline Day**

The Mayor of Basingstoke and Deane Cllr Onnalee Cubitt led tributes to local NHS, social care and frontline workers in appreciation of Britain's COVID heroes in a special ceremony today (Monday 5 July).

Marking the first NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day, Cllr Onnalee Cubitt expressed her thanks for all the dedication and hard work shown throughout the pandemic at a flag-raising ceremony outside the Civic Offices in Basingstoke.

The distinctive NHS rainbow flag was raised by borough frontline worker Tony Ebdon, a crew member from the council's waste contractor Serco. The flag will be flown until sunset.

Dr Claire Thomas, Consultant Microbiologist and Director of Infection Prevention and Control during the first and second waves of the pandemic, gave a short speech focusing on the challenges faced and the frontline workers' spirit that shone through during the crisis.

The Mayor's Chaplain Reverend Canon Linda Scard led the prayers. The Mayor's Consort Hugo Cubitt and Deputy Mayor Cllr Paul Miller also attended. Cllr Miller represented the Armed Forces' communities as an Armed Forces Champion. Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Borough Development Ian Boll represented the borough council.

Guests attending the social distanced ceremony included Chief Registrar Dr Avneet Shahi, who led the junior doctors in Basingstoke; Children's Community Deputy Sister Becky Toms; General Manger at St Thomas Care Home Fatmata Cochrane; Community Champion at Tesco Julie Shepherd; and Niranjana and Veronika Rajah of Old Basing Village Shop as well as representatives from Hampshire Constabulary and Royal Mail.

Nationally, the NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day was celebrated with a series of fundraising events, including tea parties, in aid of NHS Charities Together, which supports 250 hospitals and their charitable trusts, and the National Care Association, representing 1.6million workers.

The Mayor Cllr Cubitt said: "It is a pleasure and an honour to mark the first NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day with this flag-raising ceremony, which demonstrates our appreciation of the COVID-19 heroes who worked so tirelessly and selflessly. On behalf of the borough I want to say a big thank you to the NHS staff, social care teams and frontline workers for all that they did throughout this pandemic, saving lives and keeping life going even in the lockdowns.

"This is a great way to recognise the dedication of key workers, care home employees, waste collection teams and supermarket staff. The occasion also celebrates the amazing community spirit in Basingstoke and Deane. The show of support in our towns and villages for those who were vulnerable and unable to leave their homes was incredible."

For more information on the Mayor visit [www.basingstoke.gov.uk/mayor](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/mayor) and find out more about the NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day at <https://www.nhsfrontlineday.org/>

**ENDS**

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