



Coventry City Council

Council Meeting

22 March 2011

Booklet 1

Recommendations

INDEX TO MINUTES

Standards Committee, 3rd March 2011

Cabinet Member (Corporate and Neighbourhood Services), 10th
March, 2011

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

3rd March, 2011

Members Present:- City Council Members

Councillor R. Lakha
Councillor K. Mulhall

Independent Members

D. Jackson
A. Patel
Professor B. Ray

Parish Councillors

B. Shakespeare

Employees Present:- H. Abraham (Assistant Director (Democratic Services))
C. Forde (Council Solicitor/Assistant Director (Legal Services))
J. McLellan (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)

Apologies:- G. Allen
D. Delieu
C. Edden
J. Willetts

RECOMMENDATIONS

29. Procedure for the Appointment of the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services and the Director of Finance and Legal Services, which detailed a proposed addition to Part 2.5 of the Constitution.

The appointment of the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor was made each year at the Council's Annual General Meeting. There was no formal procedure within the current Constitution for the selection of the Councillor to hold this office. Selection was currently based on custom and practice of agreement between political groups. In recent years the office had alternated between Councillors within Conservative and Labour political groups.

It was proposed the office of Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor be offered by the Leader of the Council to the Councillor who had the longest service. If that Councillor declines the post then it would be offered to the next person in order of seniority. Any Councillor who declined the offer may in subsequent years take up the offer.

The Committee discussed at length the proposal and wanted to draw to the attention of Cabinet and Council that whilst they supported the proposal they were

concerned that there was no flexibility in the system. They felt that this should be considered further by the Constitution Working Group.

RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet and the City Council approve the following addition to Part 2.5 of the Constitution:-

2.5.1.1 The office of Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor will be offered by the Leader of the Council to the Councillor who has the longest service and has not previously held the office. If that Councillor declines the offer, then it is offered to the next person in order of length of service. Any Councillor who declines the offer may take up the offer in subsequent years.

**Standards Committee
Cabinet
Council**

**3rd March, 2011
15th March, 2011
22nd March, 2011**

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member (Policy, Leadership and Governance) - Councillor Mutton

Director Approving Submission of the report:

(Director of Customer and Workforce Services and Director of Finance and Legal Services)

Ward(s) affected:

City wide

Title:

Procedure for the Appointment of the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

The selection of the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor is currently made on the basis of an agreement reached in 1994 between the then Leaders and Deputy Leaders of the Labour and Conservative Groups. This agreement does not currently form part of the Constitution.

Recommendations:

The Standards Committee is asked to

i) recommend to Council the proposed addition to Part 2.5 of the Constitution as detailed in paragraph 2.2. .

Cabinet to:

i) consider the report and note any recommendations from Standards Committee and make recommendations to Council.

Council to:

i) approve the recommendation from the Standards Committee and Cabinet with immediate effect.

List of Appendices included:

None

Other useful background papers:

City Council's Constitution

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it, or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

Standards Committee, Cabinet and Council

Will this report go to Council?

Yes 22 March 2011.

Report title:

Procedure for the Appointment of the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor

1. Context (or background)

1.1 The appointment of Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor is made each year at the Council's Annual General Meeting. There is no formal procedure within the current Constitution for the selection of the councillor to hold this office. Selection is currently based on custom and practice of agreement between political groups. In recent years the office has alternated between Councillors within Conservative and Labour political groups.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

2.1 It is proposed that the office of Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor be offered by the Leader of the Council to the Councillor who has the longest service. If that Councillor declines the post then it is offered to the next person in order of seniority. Any Councillor who declines the offer may in subsequent years take up the offer.

2.2 The following section would be added to the Constitution, Part 2.5, Article 5:

Article 5 – The Lord Mayor

2.5.1.1 The office of Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor will be offered by the Leader of the Council to the Councillor who has the longest service and has not previously held the office. If that Councillor declines the offer, then it is offered to the next person in order of length of service. Any Councillor who declines the offer may take up the offer in subsequent years.

2.3 The Standards Committee are asked to consider this proposed addition to Part 2.5 of the Constitution and to recommend to Council that it be approved with immediate effect.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 Consultation on the revised proposed appointment process has taken place with both Group leaders.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

4.1 To be implemented with immediate effect.

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services

Financial implications

5.1 There are no financial implications.

Legal implications

5.2 There are no legal implications.

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / LAA (or Coventry SCS)?

Not applicable.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

Not applicable.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

The person would be appointed in accordance with the Constitution and on the basis of seniority.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

Not required

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

Not required

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

Not required

Report author(s):

Name and job title:

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Directorate:

Customer and Workforce Services

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Other members				
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Legal: Andrew Burton	Solicitor	Finance and Legal	21-2-11	
Director: Bev Messinger	Director	Customer and Workforce	21-2-11	21-2-11

		Services		
Helen Abraham	Assistant Director	Customer and Workforce Services	21-2-11	22-2-11
Jenni Venn	Assistant Director	Chief Executive's Directorate	21-2-11	21-2-11
Members: Cllr Mutton	Leader		22-2-11	

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CABINET MEMBER
(CORPORATE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES)

10th March, 2011

Cabinet Member

Present: - Councillor Townshend

Shadow Cabinet

Member Present: - Councillor Sawdon

Other Members

Present:- Councillor McNicholas
Councillor Welsh

Employees Present: - J. Adams (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
J. Barlow (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
A. Burton (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
M. Davies (Community Services Directorate)
M. Kawooya (City Services and Development Directorate)
N. Mankoo (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)
J. McLellan (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
B. Messinger (Director of Customer and Workforce Services)
J. Newman (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
S. Roach (Community Services Directorate)
C. Townend (Chief Executive's Directorate)
M. Watson (Community Services Directorate)

Public Business

RECOMMENDATION

91. Appointment of Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services which detailed a proposal to appoint a new Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry following the forthcoming retirement of the current holder of the role, His Honour Judge Christopher Hodson.

With effect from 30th March, 2011, the current Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry, His Honour Judge Christopher Hodson, retires from this role as a result of his retirement as a Circuit Judge at Coventry Crown Court.

The position of Recorder had a long history and the position dates back to 1345 when the City of Coventry was granted a Royal Charter by King Edward III. During the mediaeval period, the duties of the Recorder were principally acting as general legal advisor to the City, having responsibility for keeping accurate records, and seeing that true judgements were made. It was not until 1882 that it became a requirement for a Recorder to be a qualified lawyer.

In 1971 the Courts Act brought about substantial changes to the Court system and abolished the Quarter Sessions. With the abolition of these Courts, the formal role of the Recorder ceased. The Act provided that all part-time Judges could be known as

Recorders, but these would have no affiliation to any particular geographical area by virtue of their appointment. As a result of concerns expressed over the loss of this historic role, the Government changed the proposed legislation so as to allow for the appointment of Honorary Recorders. Only a Circuit Judge or a Recorder was qualified to hold office as an Honorary Recorder.

The City Council appointed its first Honorary Recorder in August 1971 and there had been 6 holders of the post since that date. The post was mainly ceremonial in nature, but it did allow for the historic links between the City and the judiciary to be maintained. The Honorary Recorder supports the Lord Mayor by attending functions such as Holocaust Memorial Day, the Annual Meeting of the City Council, Freeman's Guild Annual Service, Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Sunday, Royal visits and invited to other city-wide events.

His Honour Judge Christopher Hodson was appointed to the post in 2007, but had had to relinquish it with effect from 30th March, 2011, as a result of his retiring from the Judicial Bench. Tributes were paid to Judge Hodson's distinguished service as Honorary Recorder at the Council meeting held on 15th February, 2011, and the contribution he had made to civic life.

The link between the Judiciary and the City was clearly an important one and one which should be maintained. It was, therefore, proposed that a new Honorary Recorder should be appointed. It was custom for the City Council to offer the position to a Circuit Judge or Recorder serving on the judicial circuit which served the City. As a result, an informal approach had been made to His Honour Judge Richard Griffith-Jones who was to become the Senior Circuit Judge in Coventry with effect from 7th March, 2011, and who would sit in the Crown Court in the City. His Honour Judge Griffith-Jones had indicated that he would be willing to accept the post of Honorary Recorder if it were to be offered to him.

RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the options and proposals contained in the report and matters referred to at the meeting, the Cabinet recommend that the City Council approve the appointment of His Honour Judge Richard Griffith-Jones as Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry with effect from 1st April, 2011.

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member (Corporate and Neighbourhood Services)
Councillor Townshend

10th March 2011

Council

22nd March 2011

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Customer and Workforce Services

Ward(s) affected:

None

Title:

Appointment of Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

To appoint a new Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry following the forthcoming retirement of the current holder of the role, His Honour Judge Christopher Hodson.

Recommendations:

For Cabinet Member (Corporate and Neighbourhood Services):

To recommend to the City Council that His Honour Judge Richard Griffith-Jones should be appointed as Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry.

For Council:

To consider the recommendation of Cabinet Member (Corporate and Neighbourhood Services) that His Honour Judge Richard Griffith-Jones should be appointed as Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry with effect from 1st April 2011.

List of Appendices included:

None

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it, or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

Yes, meeting of the City Council on 22nd March 2011

Report title:

Appointment of Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry

1. Context (or background)

1.1 With effect from 30th March 2011 the current Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry, His Honour Judge Christopher Hodson, retires from this role as a result of his retirement as a Circuit Judge at Coventry Crown Court.

1.2 The position of Recorder has a long history and the position dates back to 1345 when the City of Coventry was granted a Royal Charter by King Edward III. During the mediaeval period, the duties of the Recorder were principally acting as general legal advisor to the City, having responsibility for keeping accurate records, and seeing that true judgements were made. It was not until 1882 that it became a requirement for a Recorder to be a qualified lawyer.

1.3 In 1971 the Courts Act brought about substantial changes to the Court system and abolished the Quarter Sessions. With the abolition of these Courts, the formal role of the Recorder ceased. The Act provided that all part-time Judges could be known as Recorders, but these would have no affiliation to any particular geographical area by virtue of their appointment. As a result of concerns expressed over the loss of this historic role, the Government changed the proposed legislation so as to allow for the appointment of Honorary Recorders. Only a Circuit Judge or a Recorder is qualified to hold office as an Honorary Recorder.

1.4 The City Council appointed its first Honorary Recorder in August 1971 and there have been 6 holders of the post since that date. The post is mainly ceremonial in nature, but it does allow for the historic links between the City and the judiciary to be maintained. The Honorary Recorder supports the Lord Mayor by attending functions such as Holocaust Memorial Day, the Annual Meeting of the City Council, Freeman's Guild Annual Service, Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Sunday, Royal visits and invited to other city-wide events.

1.5 His Honour Judge Christopher Hodson was appointed to the post in 2007, but has had to relinquish it with effect from 30th March 2011 as a result of his retiring from the Judicial Bench. Councillors will recall the tributes that were paid to Judge Hodson's distinguished service as Honorary Recorder at the Council meeting held on 15th February 2011 and the contribution he has made to civic life.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

2.1 The link between the Judiciary and the City is clearly an important one and one which should be maintained. It is, therefore, proposed that a new Honorary Recorder should be appointed. It is custom for the City Council to offer the position to a Circuit Judge or Recorder serving on the judicial circuit which serves the City. As a result, an informal approach has been made to His Honour Judge Richard Griffith-Jones who is to become the Senior Circuit Judge in Coventry with effect from 7th March 2011 and who will sit in the Crown Court in the City. His Honour Judge Griffith-Jones has indicated that he would be willing to accept the post of Honorary Recorder if it were to be offered to him.

2.2 The Cabinet Member and Council are, therefore, recommended to appoint His Honour Judge Griffith-Jones to the vacant post of Honorary Recorder with effect from 1st April 2011.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 No formal consultation has taken place on the basis that it is custom for the post of Honorary Recorder to be offered to the Senior Circuit Judge serving on the judicial circuit which serves the City.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 The current Honorary Recorder, His Honour Judge Christopher Hodson, retires on 30th March 2011 from the judiciary. Subject to the approval of the recommendation, His Honour Judge Richard Griffith-Jones would become his successor with immediate effect, taking over the role officially on 1st April 2011.

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services

5.1 Financial implications

There are no financial implications relating to this role. The post carries no remuneration as the duties are entirely honorary in nature.

5.2 Legal implications

The Lord Chief Justice's guidelines for the appointment of Honorary Recorders outlines the principle that the Resident Judge for the local Crown Court centre be elected as Honorary Recorder. Such a judge holds office as Resident Judge and (if so elected) as Honorary Recorder until his retirement from the post. His Honour Judge Richard Griffith-Jones QC as a Senior Circuit Judge has been appointed as the next Resident Judge for Warwickshire and Coventry with effect from 7th March 2011.

6. Other implications

None

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / LAA (or Coventry SCS)?

Other than to maintain the links between the City and the judiciary which creates a safe and secure environment for the city, the role of Honorary Recorder is ceremonial in nature and classified as an 'office of dignity' supporting the Lord Mayor and the City Council at functions and events hosted by the City Council.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

There is no risk associated with this appointment.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

None.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

There are no EIA implications.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None.

Report author(s):

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Helen Abraham	Asst Director (Democratic Services)	Customer & Workforce Services	28.01.11	16.02.11
Jon Venn	HR Manager	Customer & Workforce Services	15.02.11	15.02.11
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Appendices - None