

Appendices: 1



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

22nd March 2021

Agenda Status: Public

Directorate: Chief Executive

Report Title	Formal Transfer of Mayoralty and Muniments/Artefacts etc associated with the Mayoralty and History/Heritage along with associated matters relating to Offices of Dignity, The Honorary Recorder and an Agreement to Safeguard the Muniments etc being transferred.
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 To ask Full Council to formally agree the transfer of the Borough Council's Mayoralty and all muniments and artefacts associated with the Mayoralty and its long history and heritage to the Northampton Town Council on 1st April 2021.
- 1.2 In addition and connected with 1.1 above, to approve the final list of muniments and artefacts etc (see enclosed Appendix A) with the caveat that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Cross Party Working Group to approve any additional items to the said list prior to 1st April 2021.
- 1.3 That authority be given to the Chief Executive to enter into an appropriate agreement between Northampton Borough Council and the Northampton Town Council to ensure the future safekeeping of all the muniments/artefacts in the enclosed list marked Appendix A.
- 1.4 The Chief Executive be given delegated authority in connection with the Cross-Party Working Group to determine the continuing role of the Offices of Civic Dignity and the Roll of Honorary Freedoms and to also include any other matters in relation any such offices.
- 1.5 To continue to explore and assuming it can be legally enacted, agree the transfer of the Honorary Recorder role from the Borough Council to the Northampton Town Council, subject to any necessary discussions with the West

Northants Shadow Authority and from the 1st April 2021, West Northamptonshire Council, as to any involvement they may wish to have in the Honorary role.

2. Recommendations

That Full Council is asked to consider and approve the following recommendations:

- 2.1 The formal transfer of the Borough Mayoralty and all its associated duties and offices to the Northampton Town Council on 1st April 2021.
- 2.2 That all items in the enclosed list to this report marked Appendix A be transferred from the Borough Council to the Northampton Town Council with effect from 1st April, 2021 with the caveat that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive in consultation with members of the Cross Party Working Group to approve any additional items that may be discovered prior to 1st April, 2021.
- 2.3 That delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive to enter into an appropriate agreement between Northampton Borough Council and the Northampton Town Council to ensure the future safekeeping of all muniments/artefacts listed in the enclosed list to this report marked Appendix A.
- 2.4 The Chief Executive be given delegated authority in consultation with the Cross Party Working Group to determine the continuing role of the Offices of Civic Dignity and the Roll of Honorary Freedoms and any other matters relating to such offices and their functions with the intention that all such offices, civic relationships etc will be transferred to the Northampton Town Council on 1st April 2021
- 2.5 To continue to explore and assuming it can be legally enacted, agree the transfer on 1st April, 2021, or a reasonable date thereafter, of the Honorary Recorder role from Northampton Borough Council to the Northampton Town Council subject to all formal legal matters by statute being concluded, and any necessary discussions with the West Northamptonshire Council as to any involvement they may wish to have in the honorary role.

3. Issues and Choices

- 3.1 It seems appropriate at this last meeting of Full Council to formally agree that the Mayoralty and all its associated functions be transferred to the Northampton Town Council to be effective from 1st April, 2021. This has already been achieved by the Northampton Borough Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) No 1 (Northampton Parish Council) Order 2020 which under Clause 14 of that Order transferred the Mayoralty to the Northampton Town Council on 1st April, 2021. This is however an historic occasion and it is fitting that a formal transfer of the Mayoralty should be agreed in the context of its long history and future development and enhancement under the care of Northampton Town Council. It is understood that the Northampton Town Council are considering having a ceremony on 1st April 2021 to receive the handover of Northampton Borough Council's Mayoralty from the present holder of that distinguished office.

- 3.2 Council is also asked to approve the final list of muniments/artefacts (Appendix A) with the Chief Executive having appropriate delegated authority in consultation with the Cross Party Working Group to add any further items to the said list that come to light by the 1st April, 2021. Council should also note that the final list of transferred items includes the Mayoral car and its licence plate.
- 3.3 Concern has been expressed by a number of members of the Council as to the future safeguarding and security of the list of muniments/artefacts as named in the enclosed list (marked as Appendix A). In order to answer these concerns it is proposed to give the Chief Executive delegated powers to enter an agreement between the Borough Council and the Northampton Town Council to have such an agreement with clauses providing the appropriate safeguards for the future retention, preservation and security of all the items in the said list (Appendix A).
- 3.4 The last report to Council on the issue of the Honorary Recorder's position was on 23rd April, 2018 when the Council approved the appointment of HM Judge Mayo as the Honorary Recorder of Northampton Borough Council. Council should note that the Lord Chief Justice's Guidelines for the appointment of Honorary Recorder allows since the implementation of the Court's Act, 1971 for Council's in England and Wales to have power to appoint a Circuit Judge as a Honorary Recorder of the Borough Council concerned and thereby continue the important link between, in this case, Northampton and its criminal court, i.e. Crown Court. The office of Honorary Recorder is purely an honorary title and does not entail the postholder having any specific duties except to attend civic ceremonial events such as the Annual Council meeting and Remembrance Services. The recommendations for this item reflect that further discussions need to take place with various bodies to enable the transfer of the role to pass from the Borough Council to Northampton Town Council. This should also be done alongside and in consultation with the new West Northamptonshire Council.
- 3.5 It is proposed that the Chief Executive be given delegated powers in consultation with the Cross Party Working Group and the Northampton Town Council to determine the continuing role of the Office of Civic Dignity and the role of Honorary Freedoms to include the strong association with the Trustees of the Heredity Freemen of Northampton and any other such offices and organisations related to the Mayoralty. All these arrangements and functions as agreed will transfer to the Northampton Town Council on 1st April, 2021. In addition, the Chief Executive's delegated authority will embrace discussions on the future role of existing Alderwomen/Aldermen in both the West Northamptonshire Council and the Northampton Town Council. For members information, section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 only provides statutory power for a Principal Council i.e. Borough Council, Unitary or County Council to create future Alderwomen/Aldermen.

4. Implications (including financial)

- 4.1 The cost of the proposed agreement to safeguard the muniments/artefacts to be transferred to the Northampton Town Council will come out of the existing Community Governance Review budget and the cost is likely to be in the region of £3,000.

5. Resources and Risk

5.1 The financial costs are as stated in 4.1 above.

6. Legal

6.1 There are no legal issues at this stage except for the need to comply with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, 2007 and ancillary legislation and regulations.

7. Environmental Implications

7.1 None at this stage.

8. Other Implications

8.1 None at this stage.

9. Background Papers

9.1 Appendix A as enclosed

George Candler
Chief Executive