

APPENDIX A

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WELLINGBOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM

23 March 2021

Report of the Executive Director/Head of Paid Service

MAYORAL CHAINS OF OFFICE, INSIGNIA AND OTHER ARTEFACTS

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to determine the future of the Borough Council of Wellingborough's; and its predecessor authorities; Mayoral chains of office, insignia and other artefacts.

2 Executive Summary

All possessions currently the property of the Borough Council of Wellingborough will automatically vest in North Northamptonshire Council with effect from 1 April 2021. This report sets out this Council's view of which of the possessions noted above should be gifted or transferred to other bodies, post vesting day and sets out custodian arrangements for those possessions until the time of gift or transfer.

3 Appendices

There are none.

<p>4 That the Council RESOLVES to petition North Northamptonshire Council to accept and agree the Borough Council of Wellingborough's wishes in respect of the Mayoral chains of office, insignia and artefacts as set out in this report and to work with the 'liaison officer' to deliver those wishes.</p>
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5 Background

5.1 The Borough Council of Wellingborough has its own set of Mayoral chains comprising chains of the Mayor and Mayoress and Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress and badges of office. The Council in addition, has possession of the predecessor Wellingborough Urban District Council and the Wellingborough Rural District Councils' chains, badges and insignia.

5.2 Whilst all Borough Council of Wellingborough assets and property will automatically vest in North Northamptonshire Council from 1 April 2021, it is intended to set out this Council's wishes with respect to locally important and historical heritage items through transfer to Wellingborough Town Council or loans to other relevant organisations. Had Wellingborough Town Council been in existence with newly elected Town Councillors and a permanent Town Clerk, much of the content of this report would have been dealt with earlier through

discussion between the Borough Council of Wellingborough and Wellingborough Town Council.

- 5.3 A small working group comprising the Deputy Leader, Councillor Partridge-Underwood, Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Scarborough, Councillor Carr, the Council's lead adviser on Heritage, and one other administration member, Councillor Harrington and opposition party member, Councillor Emerson, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, have considered these matters and proposes the areas set out below.

6 Discussion

- 6.1 Subject to Wellingborough Town Council determining to appoint a Town Council Chairman or Town Mayor, the current Borough Council of Wellingborough Mayor's chain of office (chain only) be offered to Wellingborough Town Council. The former Wellingborough Urban District Council's badge of office would also be offered to Wellingborough Town Council for use, if appropriate, with the Borough Council of Wellingborough's Mayor's chain of office (which was originally used by the Wellingborough Urban District Council). The Borough Council of Wellingborough Mayor's badge of office will vest in North Northamptonshire Council.
- 6.2 Subject to Wellingborough Town Council appointing a Town Council Chairman or Town Mayor, the current Borough Council of Wellingborough Mayoress' chain of office and badge of office will be offered to Wellingborough Town Council.
- 6.3 Subject to Wellingborough Town Council determining to appoint a Town Mayor, the Borough Council of Wellingborough Mace will be offered to Wellingborough Town Council, on the proviso that the Borough Council of Wellingborough Coat of Arms on the crown, cannot be used in its current form.
- 6.4 Subject to Wellingborough Town Council determining to appoint a Town Mayor, the Mayoral Robes should be offered to Wellingborough Town Council.
- 6.5 The Borough Council of Wellingborough's Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress' chains and badges of office will be transferred to North Northamptonshire Council.
- 6.6 Subject to Wellingborough Town Council appointing a Town Council Chairman or Town Mayor, they will be offered the former Wellingborough Urban District Council's Chairman's Occasional chain and badge (also with neck ribbon), Chairman's Consort pin badge and Chairman's Consort occasional badge (with neck ribbon), Past Chairman's Lady's badge and the Chairman's Consort chain and badge.
- 6.7 The former Wellingborough Rural District Council (WRDC) Chairman's chain and badge and Chairman's Consort chain and badge will vest in North Northamptonshire Council.

- 6.8 Wellingborough Town Council could, if in receipt of the Wellingborough Urban District Council insignia as noted, apply to the Herald of Arms for permission to adopt/re-use the former Wellingborough Urban District Council Coat of Arms as this was created to depict the urban area of the town of Wellingborough and would be relevant to the newly formed town council. It was felt where appropriate that items that were linked with the town, or are historically linked together, should remain so (ie chains and badges of office). However some of the badges of office may not be able to be worn with the chains of office due to their insignia.
- 6.9 It should be noted that any insignia transferred to North Northamptonshire Council cannot be used by them although they will become their asset.
- 6.10 Should Wellingborough Town Council determine not to appoint a Town Mayor, all the items proposed to be offered on condition of a Town Mayor being appointed, would remain the property of North Northamptonshire Council, until such time as a Town Mayor could be appointed.
- 6.11 It is further proposed that the following items be offered to Wellingborough Town Council unconditionally:
- The Silver Flagon and base presented to the Northamptonshire Rifle Volunteers Corp by the Town of Wellingborough. This was originally presented by the townspeople of Wellingborough to the Wellingborough Corps of the Northamptonshire Rifle Volunteers in September 1877 to be competed for at their Annual Rifle Meeting. It was returned to the Borough of Wellingborough by The Royal Anglian Regiment to mark the granting of the Freedom of the Borough to the Regiment on 27 April 1985. Due to its historic link to Wellingborough it was considered prudent for this to be kept in the town;
 - Distinguished Visitors' Book (formerly belonging to Wellingborough Urban District Council and used by the Borough Council of Wellingborough);
 - All furniture and items currently located in the Mayor's Parlour and Members' Room at Swanspool House, but not paintings and pictures;
 - Seals of former Wellingborough Urban District Council;
 - Items currently on loan to Wellingborough Museum from the Borough Council of Wellingborough;
 - The Town Twinning Charters with Niort and Wittlich, together with any twinning awards, certificates and gifts relating to the twin towns or friendships with towns that have been established.
- 6.12 The Charters of Borough Council of Wellingborough, Wellingborough Urban District Council and Wellingborough Rural District Council, the Past Mayor's Roll of Honour Board, the Honorary Freemen Roll of Honour Board and The Royal Anglian Regiment framed plate will become the property of North Northamptonshire Council.

- 6.13 The furniture currently in the Council Chamber, some of which was inherited from the Wellingborough Urban District Council, together with the clock, gavel, Standards and Royal photographs, will be offered to Wellingborough Town Council, when no longer in use by North Northamptonshire Council. It is anticipated that furniture, paintings, Past Mayor's Roll of Honour Board, Honorary Freemen Roll of Honour Board and any other items vesting in North Northamptonshire Council, will remain in situ whilst the officers and members continue to work out of Wellingborough's premises.
- 6.14 All miscellaneous silverware/plate and commemorative items should be given to Wellingborough Town Council which could then in turn loan any such items to Wellingborough Museum for public display, if desired.
- 6.15 The current Mayoral gallery photographs in Swanspool House will remain in situ and vest in North Northamptonshire Council unless Wellingborough Town Council require the portraits. The gallery portraits should remain as a complete set. It is proposed to 'digitise' all the photographic portraits and place hard copies within an album to be deposited on loan with Northamptonshire Records Office, together with the Mayoral Album, Honorary Freemen Album and photographs of the Wellingborough Rural District Council and Northamptonshire County Council. This will enable continued public access to this information.
- 6.16 There are two other notable specific items as follows:
- A Silver Georgian Snuffbox presented to the Council by a former Borough Engineer in 1993 should be retained by North Northamptonshire Council;
 - A George Medal awarded in 1941 to Arthur John Rycroft should be deposited with the National Railway Museum in York. Mr Rycroft was a resident of Birmingham and received the award for action during the blitz on the railway in Birmingham.
- 6.17 The Borough Council of Wellingborough owns circa 100 pieces of artwork comprising paintings, pictures, prints, pottery and sculptures currently located throughout the Council's premises and those of Wellingborough Norse, Nene Valley Crematorium and Wrenn School. Whilst all these items will vest in North Northamptonshire, it is suggested that they be deposited with the Alfred East Art Gallery in Kettering for subsequent public display and occasional loan to Wellingborough Town Council or other interested organisations to enable continued public viewing in and around the County.
- 6.18 It is proposed, in view of the imminent transfer of all property to North Northamptonshire Council on the demise of the Borough Council of Wellingborough, that custodian arrangements be established to oversee the wishes of the Borough Council of Wellingborough as set out in this report, as far as is practically possible, in liaison with North Northamptonshire Council in putting this Council's wishes into practice. The Council's Senior Democratic Services Officer (Civic) will be the 'liaison officer'; seeking advice and support

from a custodian group comprising Councillor Carr as the Council's lead advisor on Heritage, Honorary Freeman Dholakia and Partridge-Underwood and Dean Smith (Independent Person for North Northamptonshire Council); in liaising with North Northamptonshire Council and delivering this Council's wishes.

7 Legal Powers

There are no legal implications.

8 Risk analysis, implications for resources and finance

- 8.1 The intent of this report is to seek to protect the local assets and heritage of Wellingborough as the transition to North Northamptonshire takes place. Without due consideration there is a risk that local important heritage may not be delivered in accordance with the Borough Council of Wellingborough's wishes.

9 Author and Contact Officer

Fiona Hubbard, Senior Democratic Services Officer (Civic);

10 Consultees

Shaun Darcy, Executive Director/Head of Paid Service;
Councillors Carr, Emerson, Harrington, Partridge-Underwood and Scarborough (Working Group).

11 Background Papers

There are none.