

Lord Mayor Selection and Advisory Committee

Friday 27 September 2024

PRESENT:

Councillor Dann, in the Chair.

Councillors Aspinall, Mrs Beer, Lugger, Murphy and Penberthy.

Apologies for absence: Councillor Poyser.

Also in attendance: Councillor Tina Tuohy, Hannah Chandler-Whiting (Democratic Advisor), Glenda Favor-Ankersen (Head of Electoral Services), Maddie Halifax (CEX/Electoral Services Practice Manager) and Ross Jago (Head of Governance, Performance and Risk).

The meeting started at 10.04 am and finished at 11.11 am.

Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

1. **To note the appointment of Chair**

The Committee noted that Councillor Sue Dann would be the Chair of the Lord Mayor Selection and Advisory Committee for the 2024/25 municipal year.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

3. **Minutes**

The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2024 as an accurate record.

4. **Civic Review** (Verbal Report)

The Committee:

- a) All agreed the importance of the role and the civic function of the Lord Mayor within the city, but acknowledged there was a need to modernise the role and its protocols.

Ross Jago (Head of Governance, Performance and Risk) explained:

- b) The meeting had been called as officers had been asked to bring Councillors together to discuss the office and role of the Lord Mayor and a civic review;

- c) This meeting would serve as a discussion and scoping session for a civic review.

Glenda Favor-Ankersen (Head of Electoral Services) added:

- d) Civic Protocol had not been reviewed;
- e) There was a need for a protocol specific to Plymouth, but also more up-to-date;
- f) An update protocol would also help officers to have clearer instruction on process and how to support the Lord Mayor;
- g) Some elements were immovable because they were determined within National Association of Civic Officers (NACO) guidance, but some regional and local elements could be changed;
- h) The Lord Mayoral budget had been cut significantly in recent years, and sometimes costs were covered by other areas within the department;
- i) It was important to look at the protocol in conjunction with the budget and ensure that as much as possible could still be carried out by the Lord Mayor;
- j) There were only 32 Lord Mayor offices in the country;
- k) Officers sought a logical compromise on which everyone could agree.

The following topics were then discussed:

- l) The protocol had not been reviewed and this needed to occur;
- m) There was a need to understand where the Lord Mayor's Office crossed over with other areas of the Council's work, such as the events team;
- n) Councillors needed to understand best practice from other Councils;
- o) Issues of equality needed to be addressed during the review, such as outfits required, associated costs, and remove gender specific terms;
- p) Suggestion that businesses that requested the Lord Mayor's presence at an event could make a contribution, where appropriate;
- q) Following a review, a refreshed Civic Protocol would be submitted to Council for approval;
- r) It was important to get the views of past Lord Mayors, from Councillors such as those in the room;
- s) Any Councillor should be able to be Lord Mayor;

- t) Changes needed to be made to adapt to a lower budget;
- u) People who meet the Lord Mayor tend to want to see the chains and the Macebearer, and the Lord Mayors have struggled with the chains without the support of the Macebearer, and this needed to be taken into consideration;
- v) Travel for the Lord Mayor needed to be considered as not all Lord Mayors could drive;
- w) There was a need to ensure the new protocol was flexible, but also set a tone and guidance for Lord Mayors;
- x) The way the Macebearers hours were worked could be looked into;
- y) Not all events required a full outfit, chains and a macebearer, but important to note that some did;
- z) Difficulties experienced when the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor were out at the same time for different events;
- aa) It was important to make more officers in the Council aware of the Lord Mayor and their role;
- bb) A role profile could be developed for the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor for the purposes of the IRP (Independent Remuneration Panel);
- cc) Something needed to be developed for consorts to give them more of an idea of what they would be doing in the role;
- dd) Councillors needed information on benchmarking exercises, budget, existing protocols and suggestions for improvement, a Civic Calendar and relevant sections of the constitution.

Councillor Tina Tuohy (Lord Mayor) had been invited to the meeting by the Chair to contribute as the Lord Mayor for 2024/25 and added:

- ee) An induction for new Lord Mayor's would be beneficial;
- ff) There had been a great deal of confusion, so a clearer Civic Protocol was welcomed;
- gg) It was important to the people the Lord Mayor visited that they attended with the chains, which often required a Macebearer too.

The Committee agreed to meet as a Task and Finish Group to discuss a new Civic Protocol.

