

HUNTINGDON TOWN COUNCIL**MAYOR'S ADVISORY PANEL**

A meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Panel was held at the Town Hall, Market Hill, Huntingdon, on Thursday 12th August 2010.

Present: Councillors S Akthar; C G Doyle; S M Mulcahy & J Sarabia.

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to elect Councillor S M Mulcahy as Chairman to the Sub Committee for the Local Government year.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B J Luckham.

3. **PUBLIC ADDRESS/ADDRESS FROM OTHER COUNCILLORS**

There was none.

It was suggested by a Member that the Mayor's Advisory Panel was not a Sub Committee, the business of which should be made publicly available. Members agreed, however, that the matters under consideration were such that public notification was in the best interest of local democracy. It was further agreed that there was no reason why the members of the Mayor's Advisory Panel should not meet informally, if necessary, to discuss any Mayoral matters which were not considered of interest to the public, but which might require input from existing and former Mayors.

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

5. **MINUTES**

Copies of the minutes of the meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Panel held on 9th December 2008 had been circulated, following their informal approval by the Chairman. It was therefore

RESOLVED that these were a correct record and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

6. **MAYORAL HANDBOOK**

Members were asked to review the adopted Mayoral Handbook and to make any recommendations for amendment. The Mayor referred to the publication "Civic Ceremonial", which was the source for much of the guidance in the Mayoral Handbook and a copy was available at the meeting.

The following amendments were discussed and proposed:

Invitations to the Mayor. Clause 4.1. There was some discussion about the statement that the Mayor was not obliged to ask the Deputy Mayor to attend, on receipt of an invitation which he or she intended to decline. It was suggested that there was little need for a Deputy Mayor if that was the case. In conclusion it was resolved to make no amendment to this clause.

Mayor's Chaplain. Clause 12.2 A Member expressed the view that the Mayor's Chaplain did not have to be a religious person, but that the role was to provide support . It was therefore proposed that the words "and/or moral support" should be added to the existing "offer spiritual guidance".

Allowance. Clause 3.5 Members considered that some financial support should be made available to the Deputy Mayor to meet reasonable expenses. The Town Clerk advised that mileage claims could be submitted by the Deputy Mayor in respect of engagements. It was agreed that this expenditure would be met by the Council's approved "Civic Purse" and that reference to this arrangement should be contained in the Handbook.

Members noted that this clause required inclusion in the contents list. The Mayor referred to Civic Ceremonial's guidance on allowances and there was a discussion about the need to declare receipt of the "Mayor's Purse" for tax purposes. It was therefore proposed that the Town Clerk should refer to Civic Ceremonial and include guidance in the handbook as appropriate.

Annual Events. Clause 13.1 The Mayor expressed the view that whilst it appeared that other local council's civic ceremonial dates were set in stone, Huntingdon's were not and it was therefore proposed that this clause should specify that ceremonies occurred on, for example, the first Sunday or second Wednesday of particular months. It was agreed that this should also apply to the Mayor's Annual Charity Ball.

Section 10. Robes and Badges. The Town Clerk was asked to refer to guidance and established practice on medal wearing and saluting on occasions involving a military presence and it was proposed that this should be included in the Handbook. (pages 186-187 of Civic Cermonial referred).

Written & Verbal Protocol. Clause 9.1 There was some discussion about use of the title "The Worshipful" , which was considered appropriate for Borough and District Mayors, but not Mayors of towns and parishes. It was suggested that Huntingdon's Mayoral Chain was originally the Borough Council chain and therefore if worn, the wearer should be addressed as "the Worshipful". It was therefore proposed that this should be investigated and clarified by the Town Clerk and the Handbook amended as appropriate.

It was proposed that reference should be made in the Handbook to Freedoms that had been granted to RAF Brampton & Wyton and to the Royal Anglian Regiment.

It was suggested that Past Mayor's should be asked to march in processions and proposed that this was a matter for the Council to consider.

Finally, it was proposed that the Handbook should contain reference to the Awards that Mayors could make, ie Freedom of the Town; the title of Honorary Aldermen; and Community Awards, with appropriate guidance added to the Handbook. It was therefore

RESOLVED to recommend the amendments as detailed in these minutes for Council's consideration in a revised Mayoral Handbook for eventual approval and adoption.

7. **REPAIRS TO CIVIC REGALIA**

Members had before them proposals & estimates for repair of the Mayor's Chain, Deputy Mayor's Chain, Mayoress's Chain and the Mace.

With regard to the Deputy Mayor's Chain of Office, repairs to the jewel and chain and the provision of a case were proposed at a cost of £145. It was therefore

RESOLVED to recommend that the repairs be carried out as suggested and that the Council also consider the purchase of a chain to prevent slipping, costing £40, which could be work around the back of the Deputy Mayor's neck.

Members discussed the need for repairs to the Mayoral Chain and agreed that repairs to the jewel costing £260 were necessary. It was therefore

RESOLVED to recommend that this work be carried out, but that the need for re-namelling the bottom, central link of the chain be reviewed in twelve months' time and that the cost of £585 be not incurred at this time.

With regard to the Mayoress's Chain of Office, polishing and rhodium plating at a cost of £265 were considered worthwhile and it was

RESOLVED to recommend that this work be carried out, but that proposals to supply a black velvet collar be not accepted, until alternative solutions to pin the chain had been investigated.

There was some discussion about the use of pins to secure this chain and the disappearance of ribboned brooches previously used for the purpose, which Members considered could be clarified by reference to former Mayoresses.

Members also discussed the fact that the regalia would not be available for three months during repair time and it was suggested that the months of July, August and September would be the best time, although replacements would be made available by the jewellers undertaking the repairs.

Finally, Members having been advised that the Mace could be dismantled, the crown repaired and the whole mace polished and hard gold plated at a cost of £1,975, it was

RESOLVED to recommend that this work be arranged as soon as possible, since the Mace's appearance would be greatly improved as a result.

CHAIRMAN