

**Civic Insignia - Mayoral Chain of Office – authority to make additions and alterations to the Chain**

**Report by the Executive Head of Corporate and Cultural Services**

**1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 To consider a request by the Mayor to add a gold shield and associated fixing to the reverse of a scroll in the Chain of Office.

**2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Civic Regalia is collectively the 'the Crown, Sceptre, and the Cross, and other jewels and ornaments used at a Coronation' whilst the collective terms to describe the maces, badges and chains of office, swords etc is 'insignia' - which is the mark, sign or badge of office or honour; and the outward sign of the civic office held.
- 2.2 Full details of the Insignia including the Borough Chain of Office can be found on the Council's website.
- 2.3 The Chain itself is of 24 ct gold and consists of 15 symmetrical scrolls, each springing from a centre connected by double sets of links with the intermediate ones having monograms WTC (Worthing Town Council); wreathed in laurel, in enamel. There are 6 of these which have no shields of any type on the reverse. 4 scrolls have pin and clasp to the reverse to hold the Chain in place.
- 2.4 13 of the scrolls have enamelled shields to the front, these are grouped as:
- 5 shields are those of great owners of the district, and are included to indicate the history of the Borough up to the time of its incorporation. The Arms are those of the de Warrens; Howard, Dukes of Norfolk; Viscount Hampden; Earl de la Warr, the See of Canterbury and Thomas A 'Becket. These have no shields on the reverse.
- 8 shields consisting of 2 parts (a front and back) have been added over the scrolls of the original Chain of Office - the front is in enamel on gold with the monogram of the officeholder and date, the reverse in gold is inscribed with the personal details and date of the Mayor and the assay mark. 6 of these shields were added around 1900 whilst the other 2 were to commemorate Alderman Piggott (Mayor 1982/83) and Aldermen Mr and Mrs Lynn (Mayors in 1994/95 and 2000/1 respectively).
- 2.5 The remaining 2 scrolls are blank with no shields of any type but have the pin and clasp to secure the Chain onto clothing. 2 of the other scrolls with shields also have pin and clasp to anchor the Chain to clothing to the front and back, thus making a symmetrical design of scrolls with/without shields on the reverse.

- 2.6 The Civic Insignia are listed within the Council's Accounts as a Heritage Asset and are insured as such. A Civic head is able to use the Insignia during their term of office and could be considered as a temporary custodian during this time on behalf of the Council and the residents of the area.

### **3.0 Proposals**

- 3.1 The Mayor has arranged, at his own expense, the addition of a gold shield and associated works to the Borough Chain of Office. The works are unspecified but are likely to entail soldering and/or a fixing of the shield to the reverse of a current scroll.
- 3.2 The arrangements have been made direct with the Jewellers who maintain and value the Civic Insignia and will match the shields currently on the Chain. Officers were not involved in the arrangements.
- 3.3 The shield will be engraved with the Mayor's name and date.
- 3.4 The placement of the shield on a particular scroll has not been disclosed to officers.
- 3.5 Officers do not believe that it is appropriate to place a shield on the reverse of the 5 scrolls making up the historic families of the Borough.
- 3.6 Details of the alloy of the gold to be used have been checked, the shield will match the current shields, being of 18 ct gold; the current shields do not carry an assay mark and there is no proposal to have this shield so marked. It is felt appropriate that the Jewellers provide an authentication of the gold by letter or certification for insurance purposes and the Council's records.

### **4.0 Legal**

- 4.1 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 provides that every local authority is to have power to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve the objective of promoting or improving the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the area.
- 4.2 Under the 1972 Local Government Act, Section 249(6) expenditure is specifically allowed for artefacts relating to the Honorary Aldermen or Honorary Freeman. Section 137 is commonly used to argue that a local authority is allowed 'to incur expenditure which in their opinion is in the interests of their area or part of it or all or some of its inhabitants' and which is not authorised by any other enactment. Acquisition by local authorities of insignia is often by way of a benefactor and, under Section 139 of the same Act, local authorities are expressly empowered to accept 'any gift of property, real or personal, for the purchase of discharging any of their functions or for the benefit of the inhabitants of their area or of some part of it.....',

### **5.0 Financial implications**

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the proposals as the Mayor is personally financing this addition and alterations to the Chain of Office.
- 5.2 There may be an additional insurance premium at a future date when the chain is re-valued on the usual rolling programme of asset valuations.

5.3 Possible, but unlikely, there may be damage to the Council's asset, which is listed on the Council's Heritage Register.

## **6.0 Recommendation**

6.1 The Leader is asked to consider the Mayor's proposal for an additional shield to be added to the Borough Chain of Office and to determine the following;

- (i) whether the arrangements made by the Mayor are satisfactory given the information available;
- (ii) agree whether or not to grant permission to allow the Mayor to add to the Civic Insignia;
- (iii) if permission is given at (ii) above then the following conditions should apply:-
  - (a) that the work is carried out by the jeweller identified by the Mayor;
  - (b) the new shield is not added to the reverse of the 5 scrolls which identify the historic families connected to the Worthing area;
  - (c) the materials used in the shield (18 ct gold) is validated by some form of letter or certification from the Jewellers;
  - (d) the cost of the shield, its attachment to the Chain and any associated work is a personal matter fully financed by the Mayor;
  - (e) the engraving on the shield contains the Name of the Mayor and Year of office only, to the same style as those currently attached to the Chain
  - (f) the style of the shield matches those already on the Chain.

## **Local Government Act 1972**

### **Background Papers:**

Email from Councillor James 24 July 2012

Worthing Borough Council Website

Picture dated 1968 in Mayoral Parlour detailing the Chain of Office

Civic Ceremonial Fifth Edition by P Millward

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## **Schedule of Other Matters**

### **1.0 Council Priority**

1.1 No specific priority

### **2.0 Specific Action Plans**

2.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **3.0 Sustainability Issues**

3.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **4.0 Equality Issues**

4.1 This is a personal decision by the current Mayor, there is no requirement for the office holder to undertake arrangements for this purchase or arrange the work, and no requirement for any future Mayor to request the Council to use public funds to add to the Civic Insignia nor to personally add to the Insignia.

### **5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

5.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **6.0 Human Rights Issues**

6.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **7.0 Reputation**

7.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

### **8.0 Consultations**

8.1 The Council's insurance officer was consulted.

### **9.0 Risk Assessment**

9.1 There is a risk that alterations to the Civic Insignia will damage the asset and could lead to other repairs being required or exacerbate a weakness not identified. The work is being carried out by reputable jewellers who currently maintain the Council's Civic Insignia therefore any problems are mitigated.

### **10.0 Health & Safety Issues**

10.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

## **11.0 Procurement Strategy**

- 11.1 There are other providers of Civic Insignia or bespoke jewellery however as mentioned in 9.0 above, the work is being carried out by the Jewellers who currently maintain the Civic Insignia.

## **12.0 Partnership Working**

- 12.1 Matters considered and no issues identified.