

Report of the Assistant Director, Legal & Governance

Portfolio of the Executive Member for Economic Development and
Community Engagement

Lord Mayoralty 2019/20

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to ask the Executive to consider the points system for the annual nomination of the Lord Mayor for the City of York Council and confirm that the Group with the most points under that system should be invited to appoint the Lord Mayor for the coming municipal year, 2019/2020.

Recommendations

2. Members are asked to
 - (i) consider and review the existing accumulated points system as set out in paragraphs 3-9 below; and to
 - (ii) invite the Conservative Group to nominate the Lord Mayor for 2019/2020, in line with the accumulated points system as revised or not.

Reason: To ensure that the Council adopts an appropriate method by to nominate Lord Mayors for office.

Background

2. Members will be aware that the system for nominating the Lord Mayor is based on an accumulation of points determined by the number of seats held by each particular group on the Council. The party having the largest cumulative total of points on Lord Mayor's Day each year is invited to nominate the Lord Mayor for the following year. A party loses 47 points when nominating the Lord

Mayor. It should be noted that currently a nominee for Lord Mayor requires at least five years' service as a City of York Councillor.

Current Points System

3. Under the system, a party which loses all its seats on the City Council may have any accumulated points frozen until seats are once again gained by that party on the Council.
4. Under the current points system, the number of points accumulated by each party is as follows:

PARTY	POINTS ACCUMULATED AT AGM – MAY 2017	LOSS FOR LM	POINTS ACCUMULATED AT AGM – MAY 2018
Labour	-1		$-1+15 = 14$
Lib Dem	42	-47	$42 - 47 + 12 = 7$
Green	-11		$-11+4 = -7$
Conservatives	36		$36 + 12 = 48$
Independent (Cllr Warters)	7		$7 + 1 = 8$
Independent (Cllr Hayes)	3		$3 + 1 = 4$
*York Independents	0		$0+2$

***Note:** As at the May Annual Meeting in 2018, the York Independent Group had been formed with 2 Members and as such qualified for 2 points at that meeting. However, the new Socialist Independent Group had not been formed by the time of that Annual Meeting and therefore do not qualify for points accumulation at this time.

5. The above table shows that the Conservative Group with a total of **48** points will qualify for the Lord Mayoralty in 2019/2020, under the existing points system.
6. Traditionally, the Outgoing Lord Mayor assumes the mantle of Deputy Lord Mayor the following year to enable an experienced Member to chair meetings of Full Council, should the then Lord Mayor be absent for any Council meetings during their year.

Otherwise the role of Deputy Lord Mayor is very minimal, given that the civic standing of York requires it to have a Sherriff who works alongside and shares duties with the Lord Mayor during their year of office.

Proposed Changes

7. Given that the next local elections will be held in May 2019 prior to the start of the next Civic Year, Members may wish to consider a slight change to the current points system by which Groups nominate to the office of Lord Mayor;
8. The current system is equitable in terms of its distribution of allocation of the office of Lord Mayor across the larger Groups. However, it does stipulate that Members should actually have served 5 years as an elected Member before they can be nominated by their Group for the office. In an election year, this rules out automatically all those Members who have served 4 years and been re-elected for a second full term but who have not actually served for 5 full years;
9. It is suggested that the Executive may wish to review the points system now and alter it slightly in order to enable Members who have served 4 years and are then re-elected for a further 4 years in May 2019 to be eligible for nomination as Lord Mayor for 2019/20;

Consultation

10. The political groups are aware that this is the process usually applied to select the mayoralty for the year ahead. Whilst there would not normally be a need for further consultation with Groups at this stage, all Groups have been consulted on the suggested change set out in paragraphs 7-9 above. Responses received indicate that 1 group would support such a change, 2 would not and 2 have yet to respond at the time of publication.

Options

11. The options available for consideration are to:
 - (i) invite the Conservative Group to nominate the Lord Mayor for the Municipal Year 2019/2020 based on the existing accumulated points system, set out in paragraphs 3-6 above; or

- (ii) Invite the Conservative Group to nominate the Lord Mayor for the Municipal Year 2019/20 based on revising the accumulated points system set out in paragraphs 7-9 above; or
- (iii) Propose alternative changes to the points system which might change the way Groups make nominations to the office of Lord Mayor more fundamentally

Analysis

12. The nomination of a Lord Mayor is an annual event which is undertaken by way of a points system to ensure a fair and robust outcome. This system has been in place for some considerable time and has operated successfully in terms of rotating the role and honour of becoming Lord Mayor on a cross party basis. It is for Members to consider whether a change at this time to the current system would be beneficial.

Council Plan 2015-2019

13. The appointment of the Lord Mayor in York is a fundamental part of the city's continuing historic traditions. The role of Lord Mayor is firmly enshrined in the Council's Constitution, as an ambassador for the city and its cultural and economic ambitions. As such, the appointee will promote the Council's priorities in general but specifically will have the opportunity to promote a 'prosperous city for all'.

Implications

14. There are no specific direct implications in relation to financial, human resource, legal or equalities arising from the recommendations in this report, which is concerned with the process for and invitation to nominate for the appointment of a Lord Mayor.

Risk Management

15. Failure to appoint a Lord Mayor in the second most traditional city outside of London could have a significant impact on the Council's reputation in terms of maintaining its civic heritage. It is important that an equitable and robust system is applied to the nomination process.

Contact Details

Author:	Chief Officer Responsible for the report:		
Dawn Steel Head of Civic & Democratic Services <i>Tel No. 01904 551030</i>	Andrew Docherty Assistant Director, Legal & Governance		
	Report Approved	√	Date 15 November 2018
Wards Affected: All			√
For further information please contact the authors of the report			

Background Papers/Annexes: None