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## **Mansion House and Mayoralty Advisory Group**

**7 July 2010**

Report of the Head of Civic, Democratic & Legal Services

### **Promoting and Raising the Profile of the Mayoralty and Mansion House in York**

#### **Summary**

1. This report sets out some new arrangements in place and proposes some specific ways to raise the profile locally, nationally and, ultimately, internationally of the Mayoralty and the Mansion House.

#### **Background**

2. At its last meeting in April 2010, the Advisory Group specifically looked at civic role profiles and the constitutional roles for the civic party. It defined and agreed some changes to the constitutional roles and specifically included a formal role for the Deputy Lord Mayor. Those changes will be considered by the Executive on 6 July and by Council on 15 July 2010. In addition, the Group identified some changes to the working roles set out in the new Civic Guide, which gives guidance on the day to day aspects of the various roles.
3. As a result of modernizing the defined roles of the civic party, the Group then decided to look at what steps could be taken to ensure:
  - The profile of the Mayoralty in York is improved and maintained;
  - The Mansion House is adequately promoted as both the Home of the Lord Mayor and as a premier venue in York in its own right;
  - Contacts and networks established by successive Lord Mayors and Civic Parties, whether at a local, national or international level, are maintained for the future benefit of the economic, cultural or educational development of the city.

## Analysis

### Raising the Profile of the Mayoralty

#### 4. What is happening now.....

The profile of the Lord Mayoralty in York is once again starting to improve, due to a combination of factors:

The **Promoting York Group** was successful in bringing to the Councils and public attention the need to create this Advisory Group to formally look at issues related to the Mayoralty in York.

Crucially, at the same time, work has been taking place over the last year or so to build up an **annual civic calendar**, comprising events/activities which roll forward year on year to establish a footprint of duties for successive Lord Mayors to undertake and expand upon.

A productive working relationship had been established with the former Chief Executive of 'YorkEngland', to promote the profile of the Lord Mayor and the Mansion House to the business community. As a part of this work, **Lord Mayors Business Breakfasts** were revamped during 2009/10, resulting in wider interest in and use of the Mansion House and the guest list being refreshed and broadened, including new businesses enabling engaging with the role of the Lord Mayor.

The **Chief Executive** has signalled her commitment to the mayoralty and the traditions of the office and will **meet regularly with the Leader and the Lord Mayor** to keep civic profile high on the agenda and to help develop a fixed understanding of the two roles.

The Democratic Services Manager is **meeting monthly with Marketing and Communications** to identify positive press features on the mayoralty and on the Mansion House. Significant or appropriate civic events will be included in the weekly press scanner produced by Marketing & Communications. For instance, all the forthcoming 'At Homes' will now be identified in that scanner as a matter of course, for Marketing & Communications to highlight.

Marketing & Communications are helping to create more user friendly **information on the Councils website** regarding the mayoralty and civic engagements. Hopefully, this will help the public and press alike become more familiar with a busy Lord Mayor and Civic Party at work promoting York.

#### 5. What more could be done .....

Although, many measures, as exemplified above, are now being put in place

to provide Lord Mayors and Civic Parties with a platform to 'promote', naturally and ultimately some of the success of the role is down to the impact of the style and achievements of each successive Lord Mayor and Civic Party. The work of this Group and the responsibility of officers is to ensure a 'template' exists as a basic platform for each new Lord Mayor and Civic Party.

6. In terms of adding individual innovation, at the request of the current Lord Mayor, work is underway on a **briefing note/bulletin setting out current and forthcoming cultural and economic activity in York**. Visit York are comfortable with Lord Mayors using such a document for distribution at specific civic events. It could become another simple tool for highlighting key developments in York, with the Lord Mayor being an instrument in this process.
7. The work started with 'York England' could continue with the Councils Economic Development Team, in terms of identifying appropriate opportunities for the Lord Mayor to interface with the business community and promote local businesses in York.
8. The Democratic Services Manager is due to meet with Gillian Cruddas, Visit York, to discuss how Lord Mayors can contribute actively to promoting tourism in York, as appropriate.

## **Promoting the Mansion House as the Home of the Lord Mayor and as a Premier Venue in the City**

### **What is happening now.....**

9. A new **brochure** has been commissioned for the Mansion House, specifically promoting it as the home of the Lord Mayor and as a corporate business and cultural venue, as well as a venue for other events. Historically this is fitting too, since the Mansion House was originally designed for entertainment and public business.
10. A website for the Mansion House is virtually complete and will be an essential tool in promoting the Mansion House, as a premier venue in the centre of York.
11. The new brochure and website will be officially launched by the Lord Mayor at an evening to be organised.
12. The relationship previously reported to the Group with YAT (York Archaeological Trust) continues to thrive and helps to promote the Mansion House as a cultural venue and raise general awareness to the public, in a variety of spheres.

13. **What more could be done .....**

Promoting and developing the Mansion House in the future is a key feature of the Business & Development Plan (an outline of which the Advisory Group has already seen). The Business/Development Plan will come back to the Group in October and it will contain more detail about future plans to maintain and promote development of the Mansion House.

**Maintaining Networks and Contacts**

14. **What is happening now.....**

Successive Lord Mayors and Civic Parties have undertaken international visits in recent years, including maintaining the traditional twinning associations with Munster and Dijon. There is a feeling, however, that some foreign visits have taken place and no corporate effort has been made to establish ambassadorial links beneficial to the city. A selection of some more high profile civic events which have taken place in recent years are set out below:

<b>Lord Mayor</b>	<b>Visit/Guests</b>
Councillor Galvin (2009/10)	Visits to Munster & Beijing, China; Visited Chinese consulate in Manchester; hosted a visit by a delegation from Fanteakwa
Councillor Brian Watson (2008/9)	Visited Damascus, Syria
Councillor Janet Hopton (2006/7)	<p>Hosted visits from the Bulgarian and Lithuanian Ambassadors, the Mayor of Brooklyn, and the Chief Executive of an Australian business setting up its European Headquarters on the Science Park;</p> <p>The Dijon/York Association and the Munster Association were received at receptions in the Mansion House</p> <p>Visited Munster for the preliminary weekend of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations, December 1st, 2006 Self funded (and part funded by Dijon) visit to Dijon.</p>

Councillor Janet Looker (2004/5)	As part of City's community link visited the Fanteakwa district in Ghana (but paid for personally); Hosted a Chinese delegation; went to Munster
Councillor David Horton (2002/3)	Welcomed delegations to Mansion House from Munster, Dijon and Ghana. Visited Munster Visited the Lord Mayor of London at his Mansion House. Visited Wombwell for disabled games

Quite often, Lord Mayors or Civic Parties undertake these visits on the proviso that they are externally funded and therefore they usually go accompanied only by a Civic Support Officer, who is responsible for the security of any regalia. This means that, in terms of promoting what York does on these occasions, the Lord Mayor, in effect, is the sole representative of the Council. This, of course, is largely driven by the budgetary situation, a comparatively small budget being annually available for civic hospitality and functions (£17k).

15. **What more could be done .....**

It is suggested that the potential for the following be explored:

**Twice yearly civic newsletter** – emailed to all key contacts setting out what's happening in the York civic year;

**Promotional Material** –

(a) Lord Mayors could be provided with a brief 'bulletin', setting out new developments and cultural activity in York for providing to guests and hosts. As mentioned earlier in this report. Arrangements for this are currently being investigated;

(b) Leaflet – Democratic Services produces 3 other public leaflets on:

- The Councils decision making process
- Getting involved in decision making
- About being a Councillor

The Democratic Services Manager is currently working with the Monitoring Officer to review what currently exists and it might be possible to produce a public leaflet also relating to the civic function (or to incorporate reference to the mayoralty and why it exists in an existing publication). An example of a leaflet currently produced by Bromley, Kent will be tabled at the meeting.

**Key Contacts Database?** A systematic process could be introduced for retaining and updating key civic contacts established year on year, so that, for instance, these can meticulously be included on Christmas card distributions and invitations extended to events where possible etc.

**Return Visits/Invites** – although, this is currently more problematic due to the restricted budgetary situation, but, were this situation to improve, it would be possible for Lord Mayors to host return exchange visits from international and national ‘luminaries’. Alternatively, such invitations would need to be offered in the knowledge that, most likely, other existing calendar civic activities would have to be displaced.

## 16. **Consultation**

Marketing and Communications have been consulted on the most feasible ways of improving press profile for the mayoralty but consultation on the wider issues raised within this report, is more appropriately with this Advisory Group.

## 17. **Options**

This Advisory Group is being consulted on its views relating to some of the initiatives now taking place and some of those proposed, with a view to taking forward raising the profile of the Mayoralty and the Mansion House. The Group can, of course, suggest other options for consideration.

## 18. **Corporate Strategy**

The Lord Mayor and potentially, too, the Civic Party, has an instrumental part to play in promoting the ambitions of the Council’s Corporate Strategy, as ambassadors for the City and Council.

Specifically, the Lord Mayor offers support to the cultural life in the city, to promoting inclusivity and to supporting a thriving business economy, acting as an ambassador for the city in supporting new business and opportunities.

Promoting the Mansion House as the traditional home of the Lord Mayor and a premier venue in York, fits with many elements of the Corporate Strategy from raising cultural awareness to contributing to developing York

as a Thriving City.

## 19. Implications

There are no known significant human resource, equalities, legal or other implications directly associated with the recommendations in this report. Clearly, the budget available to support the Lord Mayor's civic hospitality will always affect the way in which hospitality can be used to promote the Mayoralty.

## 20. Risk Management

If no specific efforts are made to improve the way the Council currently promotes both the Mansion House and the Mayoralty, then there is a danger that the great civic traditions of the city will be regarded publicly with less significance.

## 21. Recommendations

The Advisory Group is asked to note the steps already being taken to improve promotion and profile of the Mayoralty and Mansion House and to consider what, if any, further steps it would like officers to pursue.

Reason: To ensure that the great traditions of the Mayoralty and Mansion House are maintained

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### Specialist Implications Officer(s)

None

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

**Background Papers:** None