

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Civic Sub-Committee**
held on Tuesday, 3rd August, 2010 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor J P Findlow (Chairman)

Councillors R Cartlidge, A Kolker, A Moran, D Topping and J Crockatt (for Cllr Whiteley)

Apologies

Councillors S Jones, W Livesley and P Whiteley

Officers

Paul Jones, Democratic Services Team Manager
Paul Mountford, Democratic Services

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors J P Findlow, A Moran and J Crockatt declared personal, non-prejudicial interests in relation to the item on Honorary Aldermen and Freemen.

2 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Democratic Services Team Manager informed the Sub-Committee that advice would shortly be issued to Members on the points of clarification raised at the previous meeting in relation to Honorary Aldermen and Freemen.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9th February 2010 be approved as a correct record.

4 HONORARY ALDERMEN AND FREEMEN

The Sub-Committee considered proposals relating to the Honorary Aldermen and Freemen of Cheshire East Council who were admitted

under the Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional Arrangements) (No2) Regulations 2008.

The Sub-Committee had previously considered a report on matters relating to the Honorary Aldermen and Freeman of Cheshire East Council who had been admitted from the demised authorities. A provisional list of Honorary Aldermen and Freeman, who had been admitted by the demised authorities, had been circulated at the previous meeting together with a list of rights and privileges that had been extended to them. The Civic Sub-Committee had resolved that the Democratic Services Manager write to all Members of the Council with a view to confirming the accuracy of the list of Honorary Aldermen and Freeman and to consult with all Members of the Council on what rights and privileges should be granted by Cheshire East Council.

Cheshire East Council now needed to consider its own arrangements. A draft Scheme had been drafted for Members' consideration which dealt with:

- the criteria for the appointment of Honorary Alderman and Freeman;
- the rights and duties to be conferred on Honorary Alderman and Freeman;
- the order of proceedings for the ceremony for their admission; and
- arrangements for their attendance at meetings and events and notification of events.

RESOLVED

That the draft scheme relating to the appointment, rights and privileges of Honorary Aldermen and Freeman as set out at Appendix 5 to the report be approved and recommended to the Constitution Committee subject to the following:

1. for the purposes of the scheme, the term 'eminent service' shall mean a minimum of 12 years' service, whether consecutive or otherwise;
2. the rights and privileges previously afforded to County Honorary Aldermen as set out in Appendix 4 shall be conferred on newly-appointed Honorary Aldermen in Cheshire East and incorporated into the scheme accordingly, subject to the following amendments:
 - a. parking passes shall be provided for Westfields and Macclesfield Town Hall
 - b. a life pass to Tatton Park and its facilities shall be granted to an Honorary Alderman and one guest
3. the rights and privileges conferred on Honorary Aldermen under this Scheme shall also apply to newly-appointed Honorary Freeman; and

4. where the title of Honorary Freeman has been conferred on a body or organisation, an appropriate representative of that body shall be invited to attend any relevant functions.

5 FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH - 1ST BATTALION MERCIAN REGIMENT (CHESHIRE)

The Sub-Committee considered proposed arrangements for the granting of the Freedom of the Borough to the 1st Battalion Mercian Regiment (Cheshire).

Members considered two options on the form of ceremony. Representatives of the Regiment could be present at the special meeting of Council and the Council deal with the Freedom of the Borough in one event. Alternatively the Council may wish to pass the resolution and defer the presentation of the scroll and gift and signing of the Roll to form part of one of the homecoming parade marches.

The suggested wording for the resolution to be considered at the Special meeting of Council was as follows:

“That pursuant to the powers contained in the Local Government Act 1972, the Council grant Freedom of Entry to the Borough to the 1st Battalion Mercian Regiment (Cheshire), and admit the Regiment to the Roll of Honorary Freemen of the Borough, in recognition of the long and close association between the Cheshire East Borough and the Regiment and confer upon the Regiment the right, privilege and honour of marching through the streets of Cheshire East on ceremonial occasions, with swords drawn, bayonets fixed, drums beating, bands playing and colours flying.”

The Democratic Services Manager and the Head of Communications had been in contact with the Regimental Secretary to keep him informed of progress. The Regimental Secretary was co-ordinating a number of homecoming parades across the North West on behalf of the Officer Commanding the Rear Operations Group. Three provisional dates had been identified for Cheshire East.

RESOLVED

That the Constitution Committee be recommended to agree that

- (1) the Freedom of the Borough be granted to the 1st Battalion Mercian Regiment (Cheshire) and a special meeting of Council be convened for that purpose;
- (2) the suggested wording for the resolution at the Special Council meeting be approved;

- (3) in conjunction with the Officer Commanding the Rear Operations Group and the Assistant Regimental Secretary, the Officers agree the final, detailed arrangements for at least two, and possibly three, homecoming parades to be held in Macclesfield, Crewe and possibly in Congleton during the second week of November 2010 on dates to be confirmed; and
- (4) the Mayors of Town Councils in Cheshire East be invited to attend the relevant homecoming parade for their area.

6 FLAG FLYING POLICY

Members were asked to consider proposals for a flag flying policy for civic buildings in Cheshire East.

Cheshire East Council had not yet adopted a Flag Flying Policy. The Cheshire East flag was flown permanently from a variety of Cheshire East buildings. In the last year, the Leader and the Chief Executive had agreed on an ad hoc basis that flags be flown as follows from the three main administrative buildings:

Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II (Union flag)
St George's Day (English National Flag)
Official celebration of Her Majesty's birthday (Union flag)
Armed Forces Week (Armed Forces flag)
Remembrance Day (Union Flag at half mast)

The Council had also flown the English National Flag during the English Football team's participation in the World Cup, and the Polish flag at half mast outside the Municipal Building Crewe as a mark of respect following the Polish air disaster (12 April). The Cheshire East flag had also been flown at half mast following the death of Councillors.

The Department of Culture Media and Sport encouraged local authorities to fly the Union and English National Flags on a regular basis.

Members considered a proposed Flag Flying Policy for Cheshire East Council as appended to the report. This covered those occasions on which it would be appropriate to fly different flags from the Council's public buildings, in particular the Union Flag, English National Flag, Cheshire East Borough Flag, Armed Forces Flag and the national flags of overseas visitors. The manner of flying the flag in particular circumstances was also dealt with. Members agreed that the Union Flag should also be flown at half mast in the event of the death of a soldier from the 1st Battalion of the Mercian Regiment whilst on active service.

RESOLVED

That the proposed Flag Flying Policy in respect of civic buildings in Cheshire East be recommended to the Constitution Committee for approval.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 10.55 am

Councillor J P Findlow (Chairman)