



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

No Direct Ward Relevance

6 November 2008

ROLE OF THE MAYOR TASK AND FINISH GROUP DRAFT FINAL REPORT

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this draft report is to inform the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the final recommendations that have been made by the Role of the Mayor Task and Finish Group.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** that

- a) a picture of the current Mayor is placed in a prominent position within the Town Hall;
- b) resources are made available for small receptions and semi informal engagements;
- c) the Council contacts representatives from the business sector in the town, informing them that it is possible for senior personal within their business to be received by the Mayor;
- d) a display cabinet is installed in the reception area in the Town Hall in which small items from Redditch's history are displayed;
- e) the Mayoral induction booklet is updated and developed;
- f) the Mayor's Parlour be improved; and
- g) the content of the Mayoral web pages be developed and expanded.

3. Objectives of the Review

The Role of the Mayor Task and Finish Group was established in July 2008. The Group consisted of four Members: Councillor Chalk who chaired the Group; Councillor Boyd Carpenter; Councillor Enderby; and Councillor Hunt. Three out of the four Members had in the recent past undertaken the role of the Mayor.

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The objectives of the Review as stated in the original scoping document were as follows:

1. To enhance the persona of the Mayor and develop the role to improve the impression of the town as a whole. This could include investigating:
 - a) methods to raise the profile of the Mayor in Redditch and across the County;
 - b) the briefing provided for new Mayors when they take on the role and what this briefing should contain; and
 - c) the possibility of displaying portraits of previous Mayors and the current Mayor in the Town Hall.
2. To examine ways of aiding the Mayor when they are hosting an event or entertaining guests by:
 - a) seeking clarity about the entertainment budget for the Mayor;
 - b) investigating what measures should be put in place to aid the Mayor when he / she is entertaining guests.
3. To look at methods of using the Mayoralty to celebrate the history of Redditch and increase civic pride by:
 - a) investigating the possibility of creating a 'show piece' of Redditch history within the Town Hall that could be used by the Mayor when entertaining.

4. **Methods and Activities**

In order to understand the Council's current approach to the role of the Mayor, the Group interviewed the Member Services Officer. The Group also decided to interview past Mayors from other local authorities in Worcestershire. This helped to see how other authorities regarded the Mayoralty and how they utilised the role. A list of participants is included in Appendix A.

5. **Recommendations – further details**

Each recommendation is listed below (in bold) with further information detailing any context, further instructions for implementation and an indication of the costs that might be involved.

- a) **A picture of the current Mayor is placed in a prominent position within the Town Hall.**

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When the Mayor retires from office, this picture should then be moved to the wall of the reception area in the Civic Suite. By displaying pictures of the current and past Mayors, the profile of the Mayor will be raised and may contribute to greater awareness of our Mayoral history. The Group agreed that the costs incurred in implementing this recommendation would be officer time and the cost of picture frames.

b) Resources are made available for small receptions and semi-formal engagements.

It is recommended that when the Mayor receives representatives from the voluntary or business sector, refreshments and officer assistance should be made available for these meetings. This is one way to say thank you to those who help the people of the town. It is envisaged that the costs incurred by implementing this recommendation would include officer time on an ad-hoc basis to serve refreshments and any additional refreshment costs.

c) The Council contacts representatives from the business sector across the town, informing them that it is possible for senior personal within their business to be received by the Mayor.

This should help to promote the town within the business sector and possibly help to encourage greater investment in the town. To develop further links with the business sector in the town, the Group have suggested that early on in their tenure, the Mayor identifies a number of local businesses that they would make contact with during the year.

d) A display cabinet is installed in the reception area in the Town Hall in which small items from Redditch's history are displayed.

The Group would like to recommend that methods of achieving this should be investigated further. Displaying a selection of historic items in a prominent position in the Town Hall will help to inspire pride in the town. The Group envisage that this recommendation will incur costs for Officer time and materials to construct the display cabinet.

e) The Mayoral induction booklet is updated and developed.

There is potentially extra information that could be included within the booklet that could highlight the requirements and responsibilities of the role of the Mayor. A section outlining the requirements for the positions needs to be included in the booklet

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which clearly sets out the requirements of any potential candidates availability and ability to undertake mayoral duties.

f) The Mayor's Parlour should be improved.

The Group recommends that access to the balcony from the Parlour is made available. In order to improve the decoration in the Parlour, the Group would like to recommend that the displays in the cases and on the walls are refreshed on a regular basis.

g) The content of the Mayoral web pages be developed and expanded.

The Group would like to increase the selection of pages included on the Council's internet pages about the Mayor. In addition to the Mayor's Diary, the Group would like to see pages that include: information regarding the history of the Mayor in Redditch; a page providing brief details of the history of the town and with possible links to other internet sites that provide similar information; a diary of events that includes comments from the Mayor about recent events and engagements that he has attended; and photographs from events and engagements. It was perceived that the only cost for this activity would be that of officer time.

6. Conclusion

The Group believes that the Task and Finish Group recommendations outline steps to raise awareness of the Mayor in the town and also suggests ways in which the Mayor can be used to promote the town to the local business community and residents.

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LIST OF EXPERT WITNESSES

Interviewees:

Trish Buckley – Redditch Borough Council, Member Services Office
Mayor's Secretary

Heather Hayes – Redditch Borough Council, Registration Services
Officer

Councillor Val Wood – ex Mayor of Pershore

Councillor Richard Morris – ex Mayor of Droitwich

Andrew Powell – Editor of the Redditch Standard

Other contributions from:

Councillor Stephen Inman – ex Mayor of Worcestershire

Lorraine Pitt – Officer from Droitwich Spa Town Council

Alec Benwell – Officer from Tamworth Borough Council