

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES GROUP

10 MARCH 2011

REPORT OF HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Report prepared by Neil Harris

1. HISTORY OF NAMES IN COUNCIL CHAMBER

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To consider a process for the addition of names to the top section of the walls in the Council Chamber and to receive the result of the research into the 3 specific names previously discussed by the group. In addition to also consider the matter of a Leader of the Council's board in the Town Hall.

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Democratic Services

1.2.1 That the Group considers whether it wishes to adopt a process for adding names to the walls in the Council Chamber.

1.2.2 That the Group considers whether it wishes to have a Leader of the Council's Board in the Town Hall and make a recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 I have previously reported on the inclusion of names on the top section of the walls in the chamber and it was agreed that Sir Gamaliel Dudley and Lord-General Thomas Fairfax should be included.

1.3.2 I have also previously attached a potted history of all the names in the Chamber (a copy of which is available on request) which had been compiled by Alison Cresswell, an archivist at the Centre for Kentish Studies. Following consideration of this potted history the group asked me to report back in detail on 3 outstanding names from its original list and to present criteria on how names could be determined for inclusion on the wall.

1.3.3 Attached to this report is the result of a detailed research into the outstanding names of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Edward Thomas

and Sir Amyas Stafford Northcote. You will see from the attached document that it was difficult to find much information on the last of the above names. However before considering the inclusion of these names on the wall a criteria needs to be agreed even if it is only that each name is considered on its merits.

1.3.4 Currently there are only nine spaces left in the chamber and once filled no further names can be included so any process introduced to add names must be stringent enough to ensure that some spaces are left for posterity but still allowing names to be added. Some suggested criteria could be:

- Had been a resident of Maidstone during their lifetime
- Prominent figure in the life of Maidstone
- Had made a significant civic contribution to Maidstone
- Significant contribution to the history of Maidstone
- A Maidstone figure who made a significant national contribution in any walk of life
- Had made a significant cultural contribution to Maidstone
- Had been dead for at least 50 years
- That at least 2 of the above criteria in addition to the last must have been achieved.

In addition each application would need to come before the group for final determination.

1.3.5 A preferred option could be to consider each application on its own merits and to perhaps only consider a possible inclusion only every 10 years.

1.3.6 Previously in connection with this item an idea for having a board on which could be displayed the Leaders of the Council has been considered. The group will first have to consider whether it wishes to have such a board and then where it wishes to site it. The cost of such a board and fixing it to the wall would be £450 and as there is no money for this in either this year or next year's budget a request will have to be made to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services for the release of these funds.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The group could decide not to take this matter on any further.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 There is no impact on corporate objectives

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 There are no risk management issues

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

1. Financial	x
2. Staffing	
3. Legal	
4. Equality Impact Needs Assessment	
5. Environmental/Sustainable Development	
6. Community Safety	
7. Human Rights Act	
8. Procurement	
9. Asset Management	

1.7.2 The small cost for adding names to the walls can be met from within existing resources. The matter of the cost of the Leader of the Council's board has been detailed in the body of the report.

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

1.8.2 Appendix A – Details relating to three names mentioned in the report

1.8.3 Background Documents

1.8.4 Correspondence from Alison Cresswell

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan?

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This is a Key Decision because:

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Wards/Parishes affected:

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