

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

30 SEPTEMBER 2020

**REPORT OF THE COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE HELD ON 25 AUGUST 2020**

**REQUEST TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF NOMINATIVE TRUSTEE
POSITIONS FROM CUTBUSH AND CORRALL CHARITY (INCORPORATING
THE QUESTED ARMSHOUSE CHARITY)**

Issue for Decision

Democratic Services received a request from the Cutbush and Corral Charity (Incorporating the Qusted Almshouse Charity) to reduce the number of Council appointed Nominative Trustees from four to two.

As outlined within the Council's constitution, the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee is able to appoint Members to a vacant position (Rule 2.2.3) for any Outside Body assigned to it. However, the authority to exercise any other function rests with Full Council (Part 2, Rule 2.1 (1) (21)).

Recommendation Made

That the request from the Cutbush and Corral Charity (Incorporating the Qusted Almshouse Charity) to reduce the number of Council appointed Nominative Trustees from four to two be approved.

Reasons for Recommendation

The appointment of Council representatives to the Cutbush and Corral Charity (Incorporating the Qusted Almshouse Charity), hereafter known as the Charity, falls under the remit of the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee, as decided during the 7 March 2018 Council meeting. The Committee is responsible for appointing a total of four Nominative Trustees, as outlined in the Charity's Scheme. The person appointed may be but need not be a Member of the Council.

The Charity has requested that the number of Nominative Trustee positions be reduced from four to two, due to the difficulties experienced in obtaining nominations from Members with the desired experience and skillset. This includes experience in IT, Marketing, Public Relations, Listed Building Development, Renovation and Repair, Investment Advice, Housing Management, Funding and Accounting within the Social Housing Sector and general experience in the 'not for profit' sector. This had led to vacancies remaining unfilled for long periods.

An individual who is not a Member of the Council can be appointed to the position of a Nominative Trustee but the Charity has expressed concern that this leads to a complex and time-consuming procedure, as opposed to being able to

appoint a co-opted Trustee. Co-opted Trustees are appointed by the Trustees at a special meeting convened specifically for that purpose.

As six Trustees must be in attendance to achieve a Quorum, vacant Nominative Trustee positions have increased the pressure on Co-opted Trustees for the Charity to conduct its business.

In May 2019 the Democratic Services were informed that the Charity was considering reducing the number of Nominative Trustee positions and this was confirmed in July 2020, when the Trustees agreed at a meeting held on 16 July 2020:

'To reduce the number of Nominative Trustees from four to two (following consultation with and approval from Maidstone Borough Council)'.

The delay in acting upon the request is in part due to staff changes, staff shortages and adjustments in working practice and staff redeployment due to the Coronavirus pandemic. It was agreed at the 1 July 2020 Democracy and General Purposes Committee meeting that the administration of Outside Bodies would remain a low operational priority. However, given the age of the request and reasons stated above, it is considered that a recommendation to Council to approve the reduction would better enable the Charity to exercise its functions.

Reducing the number of Nominative Trustees will minimally reduce the workload of the Democratic Services team as fewer positions will need to be advertised in the future.

Alternatives Considered and Why Not Recommended

The Committee could have decided not to recommend a reduction in the number of Nominative Trustee positions to Full Council, but considered that a recommendation to Council to approve the reduction would better enable the Charity to exercise its functions.

Background Documents

Scheme for the Regulation of the Cutbush and Corral Charity (Incorporating the Quested Almshouse Charity)

Appendices

None