

Full Council

25 April 2019

Subject:	Appointment of Honorary Recorder
Director/Head of Service:	Chief Executive
Decision Issues:	These matters are within the authority of the Council
Classification:	This report is open to the public.
CCC Ward(s):	All
Summary:	<i>This report seeks approval for the appointment of an Honorary Recorder following the resignation of Judge Norton.</i>
To Resolve:	That His Honour Judge Simon James be appointed as the Council's Honorary Recorder with immediate effect.
Next stage in process	Confirm the appointment.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Introduction and Background

1. Under local government legislation, a Council is entitled, but not obliged, to appoint an Honorary Recorder. Guidance from the Lord Chief Justice reads as follows:

'It has been the practice of most large City Councils to appoint the Resident Judge to be Honorary Recorder of the city during his tenure of the office, thereby continuing the link between the city and its criminal court which had existed throughout the history of the courts of Quarter Session which were abolished by that Act.'

'The appointment of an Honorary Recorder is made by the borough council concerned and does not require the approval of the Lord Chancellor or the Lord Chief Justice.'

'The councils of smaller cities and towns have adopted the practice of choosing a serving circuit judge for election as Honorary Recorder, particularly if that judge has strong local links and can be expected to involve himself or herself in civic affairs and events.'

2. The City Council's current Honorary Recorder, Her Honour Judge Heather Norton, has held the post since her appointment on 5 January 2017 but she has now tendered her resignation. Her appointment will cease at the point of the appointment of her successor.

3. The senior resident judge is His Honour Judge Simon James, and – in accordance with the guidance of the Lord Chief Justice – he would be the appropriate person to appoint as our next Honorary Recorder. I have consulted Judge James, and he has indicated that he would be happy to accept the appointment.
4. In January 2016 the Council agreed criteria for the post of Honorary Recorder. These read as follows:
 - A. To act as one of the escorts for the Lord Mayor at ceremonial civic events – particularly when the Council attends Cathedral services, at the annual meeting of Council, and at other ‘ceremonial’ Council meetings such as for the presentation of the award of the Freedom of the City.
 - B. To provide independent legal advice to the Lord Mayor and Chief Executive if and when required.
 - C. To assist the Lord Mayor or Chief Executive in any other activity relevant to the good name of the City, provided that such activity is entirely non-controversial politically, and having taken advice on that question from the Chief Executive.

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