

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

Date: Wednesday, 17 May 2023

Title: Position of Town Crier

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk, Adam Clapton

Background

The position of Town Crier was established in 2019 by way of an ad-hoc competition at the annual Summer Carnival and later formalised as an official position under the umbrella of the town council in July 2020.

Prior to 2019, Witney had not previously had an official Town Crier as historically the Mayor/Chair of Witney Town Council, by nature of the role as civic figurehead of the town (and first citizen) fulfilled this purpose; they are elected to represent the residents of Witney and the Town Council at civic engagements in the town.

At the meeting held on 11 May 2022, the Council resolved to continue the arrangements in place for the position of Town Crier for a further municipal year and agreed it should be considered again following the election of a new administration (minute number 216 refers).

Current Situation

The current incumbent has been in the post since 2019 and in this time has supported the Town Council, Mayor and local businesses at community events across the town. A volunteer job description was created for the position (attached as **Appendix A**).

Members should consider the position of Town Crier, supported by the Town Council and whether a new volunteer recruitment process should take place, or whether the position and incumbent should be confirmed for a further period of time.

Expressions of support for the current incumbent to continue in the post have been received from The Shake Shop and Witney In Pink team.

Environmental Impact

There are no environmental implications pertaining from this report.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should consider any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Falling under the umbrella of the Council it would need to ensure that the Town Crier would conduct themselves appropriately and not bring the Council into disrepute, and not misuse their position for their own gains. Consideration should probably be given to DBS checking.

Financial Impact

- There is currently no fiscal impact relating to the position. The current incumbent purchased her own outfit and equipment.
- A recruitment process would incur a potential small outlay as well as officer resources.
- A DBS check would incur a small fee.
- Membership to the Guild of Town Criers would incur a small fee (approx. £40).

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report; and

1. Consider how to proceed with the position of Town Crier for 2023-24 and beyond.