



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	Provision of Services to the High Sheriff
Date:	17 th June, 2011
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (ext 6314)
Contact Officer:	

1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The appointment of a person to undertake the duties of the High Sheriff for Belfast is a matter for the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the term of office runs for a calendar year. The Council is asked to nominate persons whom it considers to be suitable for such appointment and this normally takes place in October or November each year.</p> <p>The current High Sheriff is former Councillor Ian Adamson. Mr Adamson failed to be re-elected to the Council at the elections in May. However, he retains the position of High Sheriff until the end of 2011.</p>

	Key Issues
	<p><u>Role of High Sheriff</u></p> <p>For many years, the tradition in the Council has been that both the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff have deputised for the Lord Mayor in respect of Civic engagements. This has been necessary due to the high number of invitations which are received by the Civic Dignitaries each year.</p> <p>It would not, however, be appropriate for the current High Sheriff to undertake any of these Civic duties given that he was not re-elected as a Councillor in May. The current High Sheriff would continue to undertake the duties of that office until the end of the year, including participation in Royal visits.</p>

	<p><u>Charitable Events</u></p> <p>The Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff are both entitled to nominate up to four charitable events which they will support during their year in office and support for these events is provided by the staff in the Lord Mayor's office. The current High Sheriff had nominated events in connection with War on Want, the Somme Association, the George Best Foundation and the Old Belmont School Preservation Trust. The staff in the Lord Mayor's Office have been working with the High Sheriff in the planning for these events and it would seem to be entirely reasonable to allow this support to continue for the remainder of the year, despite the fact that Mr Adamson was not returned at the elections as a Councillor.</p> <p><u>High Sheriff's Allowances</u></p> <p>As Members will be aware, the High Sheriff position receives a small personal allowance and entertainments allowance each year. For the current year the allowances are £6,250 and £735 respectively.</p> <p>It is deemed to be appropriate to continue to pay the personal allowance up to the end of the year and to continue to provide the small budget for the provision of hospitality.</p>
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3	Resource Implications
	A budget has already been set aside for the allowances this year so there is no additional cost associated with the recommendations.

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
	None.

5	Recommendations
	<p>The Committee is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree that the current High Sheriff will not be used to cover Civic engagements for the remainder of his year in office but rather will focus on the duties of the High Sheriff position. • Agree that office support can continue to be provided for the current High Sheriff in relation to his charitable events for the remainder of the year. • Agree to continue to pay the allowances to the High Sheriff for the remainder of his year in office.

6	Decision Tracking
	<p>Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager 5th July, 2011</p>

