

COMMITTEE	Statutory Council Meeting
DATE	17 May 2017
REPORT TITLE	Miscellaneous Historical Council Appointments
REPORT NUMBER	CG/17/046
HEAD OF SERVICE	Fraser Bell
REPORT AUTHOR	Mark Masson

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-

The purpose of this report is to provide information on historical offices of the Council and to request that elected members make miscellaneous appointments.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Council is recommended to appoint members to the following historical offices:-

- (1) Master of Shore Works;
- (2) Master of Kirk and Bridge Works;
- (3) Master of Mortifications; and
- (4) Master of the Guild Brethren's Hospital.

3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 3.1 Originally officebearers of the Council were members of the Council delegated to carry out particular tasks on behalf of the community. Generally they had access to communal funds to carry out these tasks or were empowered to raise money for specific purposes, consequentially part of their responsibility was to furnish an annual account of their expenditure.
- 3.2 **The Master of Shore Works** – the officebearer upheld the harbour and its approaches and was empowered to levy a tax on cargo to pay for harbour works. His office was created in 1596 and his accounting responsibilities ceased in 1810, when the new body of Harbour Trustees took over the running of the Harbour. The office bearer remained however the Town's principal representative (after the Provost) on the Harbour Trustees and later the Harbour Commissioners.
- 3.3 **Master of Kirk and Bridge Works** – the officebearer was responsible for the upkeep of St Nicholas Kirk, for the Bridge of Don and from 1527 for the newly built Bridge of Dee.
- 3.4 **Master of Mortifications** – A Mortification was land that was given over to the Burgh of Aberdeen for charitable purposes and for the good of the Burgh. Aberdeen established the position of Master of Mortifications in 1632 following an influx of numerous donations attributed to Aberdeen's prosperity in the early 1630s. The Master of Mortifications was responsible for seeing that the land of money given over was used for its intended purpose. It is worth noting that on 22 December 1996, the

Guildry and Mortifications Funds Board (now named Guildry and Mortification Funds Committee) agreed that the Master of Mortifications be appointed as its Chairperson. This arrangement has continued to the present day.

- 3.5 **Master of Guild Brethren's Hospital** – Founded by the Town Council in 1607, using the property of the pre-Reformation Poores Hospital. The officebearer was responsible for administering its funds and the hospital, essentially an old people's home for impoverished members of the guildry with (at least to begin with) religious overtones. Increasingly the beneficiaries preferred to remain in more congenial surroundings outside the hospital, which was eventually sold in 1770. The hospital property lay within the triangle bound by Correction Wynd, St Nicholas Lane and the west side of the St Nicholas Centre. All the officebearers were responsible for keeping the accounts of their particular office until the mid-18th century, when in the interests of uniformity, it became the responsibility of the Town Clerk Depute and after 1812 of the City Chamberlain (who was also the Town Clerk Depute for most of the 19th century).

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

There are no risk implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. IMPACT SECTION

It has remained the custom to designate members of the Council to the four historical offices named above. There is no impact identified.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Information sheet produced by Archives Team.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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