

BRIEFING NOTE

MOTION ON NOTICE – MAYORS FOR PEACE

Background

This Council notes there is a real need for Local Authorities to work together in solidarity to promote more peaceful and safer communities at the local and the global level. There remains over 13,000 nuclear weapons which have the explosive content to create 280,000 explosions of the size that destroyed the city of Hiroshima on 6th August 1945.

The Council also notes and welcomes the rapid development of the Mayors for Peace organisation, which campaigns for a more peaceful and nuclear weapons free world. It now has over 8000 member towns and cities from 166 countries representing over a billion people worldwide. 102 of those members are in the UK and Republic of Ireland and include cities like Manchester, London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Cardiff, Dublin and Belfast.

The main charter of Mayors for Peace calls for “*closer cooperation among towns and cities, strives to raise international public awareness regarding the need to abolish nuclear weapons and contributes to the realisation of genuine and lasting world peace by working to eliminate starvation and poverty, assist refugees fleeing local conflict, support human rights, protect the environment, and solve the other problems that threaten peaceful coexistence within the human family.*”

Action

The Council hereby resolves

- To join the Mayors for Peace organisation and consider the approval of a suggested voluntary donation of £120 for larger Councils to assist development of the UK and Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter and the international campaigning work of Mayors for Peace led by its International Secretariats in Hiroshima and Ypres.
- To consider, along with the Mayor, a permanent representative for the Council to attend up to twice yearly meetings of the UK & Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter.
- To engage with the European Chapter of Mayors for Peace as it develops.
- To consider holding on August 6th or 9th an annual commemorative peace ceremony to remember all innocent civilians killed in all conflicts over the past 75 years and / or an annual ceremony to commemorate International Peace Day on September 21st.

PROPOSER:

Proposed by Councillor Mandy Bannon

SECONDER:

Seconded by Councillors Kevin Frea, Jason Wood and Joyce Pritchard.

OFFICER BRIEFING NOTE

Further information about Mayors for Peace may be found on the website <http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/>

The site includes a promotional video explaining the organisation's outline, mission and structure. As set out in the motion, MfP supports nuclear disarmament.

The role of Mayor at Lancaster City Council is civic and ceremonial in nature, not decision-making. The Constitution states (Part 1, Summary and Explanation) that the role of the Mayor is "non-political". Clearly MfP has a political view about nuclear arms. Should the Council be minded to support this motion, then future Mayors must be committed to represent the City Council on this body, whatever their own personal political views.

The cost of £120 per annum as a voluntary donation to join Mayors for Peace is minimal and could be met within the existing Mayoral budget.

However, there are couple of things that Council is being asked to consider in the motion which would have more significant costs associated with them. These would include our Mayor and one other permanent representative of the Council, presumably a senior officer of the Council, attending up to two meetings per year outside the district; it is not clear whereabouts in the United Kingdom (or Ireland) those meetings may be held so it is not possible to predict what costs could be incurred and whether overnight stays could be involved. This would have to be met through the Mayor's budget, which will mean that there will be reduced funding available for other events which the Mayor may wish to hold during their year. The peace ceremonies referred to in the final bullet point would also have a cost, which again would be borne by the Mayor's budget. Unless the Mayor's budget is increased, the costs of any such commemorative events would have to be kept very low.

Staff Resources

The administrative resources to support this role would be covered by Democratic Support for the Mayoral, Civic and Ceremonial service. This amounts to 18.5 hours per week. The half-time post supports the Mayor, managing their diary, arranging their events and all Civic and Ceremonial functions including Annual Council and Remembrance Day. It is not envisaged that the work involved, even if all aspects were included in the resolution, would create an unmanageable workload. It may, depending on Council's decision regarding bullet point three, require one or two days' of Senior Officer time to attend meetings.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The s151 Officer has been consulted.

DEPUTY MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Deputy Monitoring Officer has drafted this briefing note in her role as Head of Democratic Services.
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