Honorary Recorder
31st October, 2007

Report of Head of Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To obtain the approval of the City Council for the appointment of His Honour Judge Phillip Sycamore as the Honorary Recorder of Lancaster, at Annual Council in May 2008.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATION

That His Honour Judge Phillip Sycamore be appointed Honorary Recorder of Lancaster at the Annual Meeting of the City Council in May 2008.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 As part of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the City in 1987, the City of Lancaster appointed His Honour Judge Sir Sanderson Temple MBE QC as the first Honorary Recorder of Lancaster.

1.2 Following Judge Temple’s death in 2000, the Council then appointed Judge Anthony Proctor as his replacement. Judge Proctor resigned the position in 2005 and the Council has been actively seeking a replacement since that time.

2.0 Proposal Details

2.1 His Honour Judge Phillip Sycamore is a Circuit Judge who sits at the Lancaster Courts on a rota basis with five other judges.

2.2 Judge Sycamore, although residing outside the district, maintains close contacts with the City, especially in his role as a Governor at Lancaster Royal Grammar School. He is keen to further enhance his connections with the City by becoming the Honorary Recorder, and has indicated that he is happy to take up the position should the Council agree to his appointment.

2.3 If the appointment of Judge Sycamore is approved by the Council, his Court commitments would remain his priority and his Honorary commitments to the City would fit around these, which is the usual practice. The Honorary Recorder usually attends Annual Council (by invitation of the Mayor), Mayor’s Sunday (where they take a part in the Service) and usually attend the Shield Hanging Ceremony at the
invitation of the incoming High Sheriff each year. There may be other events to which the Honorary Recorder is invited but it would be a personal decision to attend.

3.0 Details of Consultation

3.1 On identifying a willing candidate for the position of Honorary Recorder, it is usual practice to then seek the approval of the Lord Chancellor prior to a local authority making a formal appointment.

3.2 On seeking the approval of the Lord Chancellor, the City Council has been advised by the Presiding Judge of the Northern Circuit, The Honourable Mr Justice David Clarke, that this is no longer necessary and the way is clear for the City Council to proceed with the appointment of His Honour Judge Sycamore if it is still minded to do so.

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

4.1 Option 1 – That the City Council agree to the appointment of His Honour Judge Phillip Sycamore as Honorary Recorder of Lancaster at the Annual Council Meeting in May 2008.

4.2 Option 2 – That the City Council decline to agree to the appointment of His Honour Judge Phillip Sycamore and identify an alternative candidate for the position.

4.3 Option 3 – That the City Council declines to appoint an Honorary Recorder at this time and that the post remains vacant.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Although a relatively new position in the history of this City, it would seem appropriate to appoint a person to the position of Honorary Recorder who has a connection to the City and who has a keen wish to see this new tradition for the City maintained. Judge Sycamore meets these criteria and has the willingness to demonstrate his commitment to the City of Lancaster by taking this post if agreed by the City Council.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT
(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

His Honour Judge Phillip Sycamore has been advised that as this is an Honorary position, no expenses for his attendance at events will be paid. The cost of his attendance at established Civic Events can be met from within existing budgets.

SECTION 151 OFFICER’S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.
**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The necessary procedures under the Court Act 1971 have been followed in securing approval to the appointment of His Honour Judge Phillip Sycamore as Honorary Recorder of Lancaster.

**MONITORING OFFICER’S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter from Judge Sycamore dated 4/6/07</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter from the Royal Courts of Justice dated 29/6/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter from The Hon Mr Justice David Clarke dated 04/10/07</td>
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**Contact Officer:** Lisa Jackson  
**Telephone:** 01524 582070  
**E-mail:** ljackson@lancaster.gov.uk  
**Ref:**