

Committee:	Date:
Gresham Committee (City Side)	15 May 2020
Subject: Gresham College Council Appointments	Public
Report of: Town Clerk	For Decision
Report author: Greg Moore	

Summary

This report asks Members to consider the appointment of representatives on the Gresham College Council.

The Gresham Committee is responsible for appointing up to four Directors to serve on the Council of Gresham College. Appointments are made for four-year terms. Two of these appointments are not due to expire this year; however, the remaining two of these Directorships are now coming to an end. One is the Directorship currently held by Mr John Scott, who is eligible for reappointment. The other is held by Deputy Tom Hoffman, who has now served the maximum permitted term on the College Council. Consequently, the Committee is now asked to consider appointments in accordance with the requirements of the College's Articles.

Recommendation

Members are asked to consider the appointment of representatives onto the Gresham College Council.

Main Report

Gresham College Council – Appointments

1. The Gresham College Council meets approximately five times a year to approve financial matters relating to the academic programme that is proposed to it by the College's Academic Board.
2. The Mercers' and the City Side can each appoint up to four Directors to the Council of the Gresham College for a four-year term. The Council itself can then also appoint further Directors.

Background

3. The Court of Common Council agreed that City Side appointments to the College Council should be Members of the Court. Although they do not necessarily need to be members of the Committee, this has previously been the case.
4. At its November 2018 meeting, the Gresham Committee (City Side) agreed to prevent potential conflicts of interest for Members serving on both the College Council and the Gresham Working Party (who were negotiating funding

arrangements for the College). A division should, therefore, ideally be made with Members only serving on either the Gresham Working Party or the Gresham College Council. However, it is perhaps pertinent to note that, with the funding arrangements now approved, there is likely to be little activity for the Working Party in the coming period and the scope of potential conflict is reduced accordingly.

5. The membership of the Working Party, for reference, is:
 - Simon Duckworth (Chair)
 - Sheriff Christopher Hayward
 - Deputy Edward Lord
 - Alderman Ian Luder
6. It was agreed further that all Gresham Committee (City Side) Members were eligible to serve on the College’s appointment and interview panels.

Current Position

7. The below table sets out the current College appointments:

		Appointed	Term length	End dates
John	Scott	2016	4 years	2020
Giles	Shilson	2014 2018	4 years served 4 years	2016 2022
Tom	Hoffman	2009 2012 2016 2017 2018 2019	3 years served 4 years served 1 year served 1 year served 1 year extension served 1 year extension served	2012 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020
Nicholas	Bensted-Smith	2017	4 years Remainder of term 2 years	2021

8. The revised Articles provide that each Director, including all serving at the date of adoption of the Articles (i.e. 31 August 2004) shall be appointed for a term of four years (“first term”), and can then be re-appointed for a further four years at the discretion of the Mercers’ or the City Side, as the case may be, subject only to where a Director reaches the age of 75 years, he or she can only complete their term of office if approved by the Gresham College Council on an annual basis.
9. A recent amendment to Article 32 of the Articles of Association also allows that, in exceptional circumstances, the term of office of a Director may be extended beyond the requisite period, subject to the agreement of Council and for a maximum of two years and to be reviewed annually. This extension was employed in respect of Deputy Hoffman’s tenure and he has now reached the end of this additional period.
10. As Council members may serve a maximum term of eight years:
 - Nicholas Bensted-Smith’s current term continues until 2021;

- Deputy Dr Giles Shilson's current term continues until 2022;
- John Scott's term current term now expires, but he is eligible for a second four-year term until 2024; and
- Deputy Tom Hoffman has now completed the maximum number of years of service. In accordance with the decision made at the College Council's EGM of April 2018, Deputy Hoffman was eligible to serve another two years at the College's discretion. These have also now been completed and a replacement may be appointed.

Consideration

11. Notwithstanding the decision of the Court of Common Council to roll forward appointments for the coming year, the situation with regard to the College Council (and, indeed, several other outside bodies) is distinct. The College is a sovereign body established as a Company Limited by Guarantee and, as such, appointments must conform to the requirements of the Articles of Association.
12. The Committee could decide not to make appointments in the room of the two expiring terms; however, this would clearly not be in the best interest of the College (and, indeed, would be significantly to its detriment). The College Council has two Committees on which a City Corporation's representative is required (Finance and Nominations) and a lack of appointment could lead to quoracy concerns, as well as a gap in respect of contributions at meeting which would benefit informed decision-making.
13. It would also not be in the best interests of the City to fail to appoint. Not only would the burden of activity on current Members increase, but the City would lose valuable strength of connection to a significant cultural and educational asset, at a time of increased importance and investment.
14. It is, therefore, suggested that John Scott be reappointed for a second four-year term. This is in keeping with the Court of Common Council's decision to maintain the status quo in respect of appointments where possible and also provides welcome continuity to the College at this time of great upheaval and change. Mr Scott has confirmed that he would be pleased to continue to serve.
15. It is also suggested that the Committee determines to appoint a successor to Deputy Tom Hoffman.
16. In coming to a determination, it is worth noting that it is a convention that the Chairman of the Gresham Committee (City Side) serves on the College Council as the Vice-Chair of the College. In the normal course of events, a changeover of Chairmanship would have occurred this year and the new Chairman would have been expected to take up a position on the College Council, to facilitate their appointment as Vice-Chair.
17. With regard to the decision of the Court of Common Council to roll forward appointments for the coming year, the situation for the Gresham Committee (City

Side) is that there will not be an election of Chairman or an election of Deputy Chairman for the time being and the incumbent Chairman will continue to serve as College Vice-Chair.

18. Consequently, and notwithstanding the fact that there will not be an election of Chairman or an election of Deputy Chairman at this meeting, Members may nevertheless wish to consider whether it might be desirable to nominate the current Deputy Chairman, Sheriff Christopher Hayward, to fill the vacancy on the College Council in the room of Deputy Tom Hoffman. This would be on the basis that, were he to be elected Chairman in due course next year (and subject to that election), he would be expected to act as Vice-Chair of College Council immediately on appointment.

Conclusion

19. The appointment of Members to the Gresham College Council is entirely a matter for Members of this Committee to consider. With two vacancies arising, Members are asked to consider whether and whom they would wish to appoint to these vacancies. Some considerations to help inform Members' decisions are set out in the report above.

Appendices

None.

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