

Committee(s): Policy and Resources Committee	Dated: 19 October 2023
Subject: Appointment of Honorary Water Bailiff	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3, 9
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N/A
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Remembrancer	For Decision
Report author: James Edwards, Senior Parliamentary Briefings Officer	

Summary

As part of his Mayoral theme "Connect to Prosper", the Lord Mayor Elect will be undertaking a number of initiatives relating to the River Thames, long the main connection between the City and the rest of the World. To support him in these initiatives in a ceremonial capacity the Lord Mayor Elect wishes to appoint an individual with strong maritime links to the position of Honorary Water Bailiff for his year in office. The Water Bailiff was an historic office of the Corporation with duties set out in 19th Century regulations which are still extant and your Committee is invited to agree that none of the provisions should apply to the appointment of a Water Bailiff in an honorary capacity.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to agree that the Lord Mayor may appoint an honorary Water Bailiff and that none of the extant provisions governing the now defunct office of Water Bailiff should apply in respect of such an appointment.

Main Report

1. From the 12th century until the passage of the Thames Conservancy Act in 1857, the City of London Corporation was responsible for the conservation of the River Thames from Staines in the west to Yantlet Creek in the east, including the control and regulation of fishing and, later, improvements to navigation.
2. While the responsibility for the Thames conservancy was officially vested in the Lord Mayor, from the 14th century he was given the power to appoint a sub conservator to assist in these duties.
3. From the role of sub conservator developed the post of Water Bailiff, which was essentially a law enforcement officer in respect of the river (policing fishing; seeking out nuisances; inspecting locks; removing sunk boats and barges;

collecting fines imposed by the Lord Mayor and supervising the sale of fish within the City etc). The postholder ranked as one of the Lord Mayor's esquires and was elected by the Court of Common Council. The Office became defunct when the Conservancy over the Thames was transferred to the Thames Conservancy by the 1857 Act. However, provisions governing the Office including regulations approved by the Court of Common Council in 1824 are still extant and also make provision for a salary to be paid and forbade the appointee from holding any other office or employment.

4. Given that the Thames has long been the gateway to the City and the City's gateway to the world, integral to London's prosperity and growth and transporting goods, people and ideas, the River will form the backdrop to a number of initiatives in the forthcoming mayoral year as part of the "Connect to Prosper" theme.
5. The Lord Mayor Elect would like to appoint an individual with strong maritime links to the position of Honorary Water Bailiff for his year of office to act as a figurehead and support his mayoral theme in respect of a number of initiatives taking place on the Thames. Current proposals include a visit to the London Stone in Staines-Upon-Thames in June 2024, Sheriffs Ahoy and an event supporting the Wetwheels Foundation a charity that gives sailing opportunities to people with disabilities on their fleet of specially adapted boats. Members are therefore asked to agree that that the Lord Mayor may appoint an honorary Water Bailiff and that none of the extant provisions governing the now defunct office of Water Bailiff should apply in respect of such an appointment.

James Edwards

Senior Parliamentary Briefings Officer

T: 0207 332 1202

E: james.edwards@cityoflondon.gov.uk