

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Culture, Heritage & Libraries	02 July 2012
Subject: The Lord Mayor's State Coach, the Semi-State Coaches, the Dress Chariots, The State Harness and City Marshal's Saddlery - Background Information	Public
Report of: The City Surveyor (CS.230/12)	For Information

Summary

This report is a briefing document on the subject of the horse drawn carriages that are used in the Lord Mayor's Show, which are still owned by the City of London and are your Committee's responsibility.

The City of London Corporation owns six horse drawn carriages and the Lord Mayor's State Coach; these are primarily made available for use in the Lord Mayor's Show. The six carriages date from the turn of the 19th Century and were produced for the Lord Mayors and Sheriffs of the day. They comprise two Semi-State Coaches and four Dress Chariots. The State Coach was produced upon the initiative of the Lord Mayor elect, Sir Charles Asgill, and delivered 255 years ago in September 1757.

All but two of the Chariots are used annually in the Lord Mayor's Show and the Pageantmaster has recently indicated that they will still be needed, in the foreseeable future.

All the City's carriages remain in a usable condition; however, it is some 60 years since major attention has been given to their care and due to their use and historic significance they are in need of conservation/restoration. They have been the subject of a Capital Project which because of the financial climate, has been stalled and will be reported upon to your Committee in due course.

The City Marshal's Saddlery and the State Harness are associated equipment also used during the Lord Mayor's Show.

Recommendation

- Members note the contents of this Report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Lord Mayor's State Coach, made in 1757, is used by the Lord Mayor on the occasion of a Coronation and once a year for the Lord Mayor's Show. In order for this ancient ceremony to continue in its current form the Coach must be routinely maintained and made available.
2. The only other great State Coaches in the UK are the Queen's Gold Coach, made for George III in 1762 and the Speaker's State Coach, which was originally made for William III in 1698.
3. Since 1976 the Lord Mayor's Coach has been exhibited at the Museum of London and every October/November it is wheeled out of the City Gallery to take the leading role in the Lord Mayor's Show.
4. In addition to the State Coach are the two Semi-State Coaches, the four Dress Chariots, the State Harness and the City Marshal's Saddlery. These items are housed in the Park Street Coach House.

The State Coach

5. The Lord Mayor's State Coach is of the type called a Berlin which was developed by Phillippe Cheisa, a Frenchman of Italian extraction who worked in Berlin. Berlin coaches had the reputation of being safer and more stable than other carriages built to date and, although not fast, they were considerably more comfortable. It is designed in a trapezoid shape and decorated in the Rococo style.
6. The body of the coach is not supported by springs, but suspended upon four thick black leather braces fastened with large gilt brass buckles of elaborate design, each bearing the City arms.
7. The framework of the carriage is finely carved and gilded throughout. The roof is painted red and ornamented with eight gilt vases. The centre vase was formerly occupied by a group of four boys supporting baskets of fruit and flowers, the truncated base of which still remains.
8. The State Coach was designed by the architect Sir Robert Taylor upon the initiative of his patron, the Lord Mayor elect, Sir Charles Asgill. It was officially commissioned on the 4 April 1757 and delivered on the 26 September 1757 by Joseph Berry of Holborn (a former Master of the Worshipful Company of Coachbuilders), at a cost of £1,065. It was used in the Lord Mayor's Procession for the first time on the 9 November 1757. The painting of the panels is attributed (although this is not proven) to Giovanni Battista Cipriani, a Florentine who was renowned for painting the most expensive coaches of the time. A few years later he was involved with the production of the Royal Gold State Coach. The original heraldic

devices are said to be the work of Charles Cotton, a founder member of the Royal Academy and coach painter to George III.

9. Extensive repairs were undertaken in 1777 and at regular intervals, though by 1812 the coach was considered to be in such a poor condition that thought was given to producing a new State Coach. However, the estimated cost of £5,250 for a replacement coach was considered prohibitive and so substantial repairs were undertaken to the present coach. It is thought that the current State harness dates from 1833 and during the 19th Century regular repairs to the coach took place. It is noted that it was regilded in 1812 and 1868 and that the upholstery was replaced in 1812, 1821, 1869 and 1897. By 1905, again due to decay, the coach needed more thorough repair including regilding. The centre electric interior light was installed in 1939 and from 1939 to 1945 the coach was kept in safe storage in Newbury.
10. In 1951 brakes were fitted to the rear wheels and in 1952 all the paint and gilding, with the exception of the Cipriani panels, was completely stripped. All timber parts were treated with preservative and many portions of the carved and ornamental work replaced. The undercarriage was thoroughly examined and the rear superstructure reconstructed and strengthened. The massive solid leather braces on which the body is slung were replaced with new cased leather ones. The Cipriani panels were cleaned and restored and the whole coach completely repainted, gilded and varnished. The interior was re-upholstered with electric strip lighting installed and a new hammer cloth provided for the coachman's seat. The work was carried out by Offord & Sons at a cost of £5,779 (which equates to about £115,000 today). In 1967 and 1976 the front wheels were overhauled and in 1970 the rear wheels.
11. The coach is 22ft long, 8ft wide and 11ft high and in a 1970 memorandum is recorded as being weighed on the 8 November 1967 on the Public Weighbridge at 2 tons 16 cwt. Since WWII it has been drawn by three pairs of shire horses, initially provided by Whitbread's then subsequently by Young's and now by Waldburg Shires, when its full length becomes some 65ft.
12. The coach was formerly kept at the City's Green Yard, off Whitecross Street but was moved to Whitbread's premises in 1961 when the Barbican Redevelopment was started and then to the Museum of London on the 26 November 1976.
13. In the beginning the coach was provided and cared for by the Aldermen, however, on the 24 July 1777 the Court of Common Council resolved that in future a State Coach should be provided for the Lord Mayor at the City's expense. Originally a State Coach Committee was formed to take responsibility for the coach but it was soon entrusted to the City of

London's General Purposes Committee. In 1982 its maintenance responsibility was transferred to the City Lands & Bridge House Estates Committee and in 2011 to your Committee.

14. The Lord Mayor's State Coach is the oldest ceremonial vehicle in regular use in the world; it is also unique in that it is both a working object and a museum artefact. Despite that it remains in a useable condition, however, as it is in excess of 60 years since any major attention has been given there is a need for repairs and conservation/restoration, which will be the subject of a separate report to your Committee.

Lord Mayor's State Coach – Equipment and Uniforms

15. Most of the equipment associated with the State Coach is either for assisting in the handling of the vehicle or for its display at the Museum of London or in the temporary coach house at Guildhall.
16. The 'kit' needed when using the State Coach includes the liveried uniforms worn by the coach driver and the postilion (the rider on the nearside leading horse). The other State Coach attendants wear uniforms consisting mainly of equestrian clothing. In addition to the clothing part of the uniforms, there are eight whips; six are used by the walking grooms, one by the postilion and one by the coach driver.

The Six Semi-State Carriages

17. The six carriages comprise of the following (in brackets are noted their use in the Lord Mayor's Show):-

No 1	Green Semi-State Coach (carries the out-going Lord Mayor and Chaplain)	Previously thought to have been built by Offord & Sons for Sir Polydore de Keyser for his Mayoralty in 1887 but now thought to have been built by McNaught & Co for Sir John Voce Moore during his Mayoralty in 1898.
No 2	Maroon Semi-State Coach (carries the Chief Commoner and the Secondary)	Built by Peters & Son for Sir Marcus Samuel for his Mayoralty in 1902.
No 3	Maroon Chariot (not currently used)	Built by Hooper & Co.

No 4	Green Chariot (not currently used)	Previously thought to have been built by Thrupp & Maberly but possibly built by Hooper & Co.
No 5	Blue Chariot (carries the Lay Sheriff)	Built by Hooper & Co
No 6	Green Chariot (carries the Aldermanic Sheriff)	Built by Thrupp & Maberly

18. The four carriages (1, 2, 5, & 6) used regularly each year are all in similar condition. They were previously repainted and re-upholstered during the late 1950's/early 1960's. The work, generally, was carried out to a high standard and the retrimming is very typical of the 1950's. The linings of all the carriages have widespread wear and tear and water damage. The two carriages that are not used underwent exterior attention in the 1980s so as to be available for standby.
19. It is considered that all the carriages are important historic models of fine English coach building and represent wonderful examples of the type of carriages seen in the City during the late 19th century.

The City Marshal's Saddlery

20. The City Marshal's Saddlery consists of the ceremonial kit used on the horse ridden by the Marshal in the Lord Mayor's Show and at other ceremonial events, for example, when challenging troops before their right to march through the City of London.
21. The provision of the horse, normally provided by the Household Division, is the responsibility of the City Marshal.

Current Service

22. Waldburg Shires, based in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, are contracted by the Remembrancer's Department to provide the team of six shire horses and attendants needed for pulling the State Coach.
23. The State Coach is serviced and maintained by Croford Coachbuilders, who are specialists in coach repairs and wheelwrighting. In addition this company provides a coach movement service, which is needed whenever the State Coach has to be moved without horses.
24. The State Harness and City Marshal's Saddlery is serviced and maintained by Catrien Coppens, who is a Master Saddler employed part time at the Royal Mews. Ms Coppens is also in attendance at the Show to assist in the

harnessing of the shire horses and to provide an emergency breakdown service for the State Harness and the harnesses used by the Royal Mews.

25. The two Semi-State carriages and two of the chariots that are currently used every November in The Lord Mayor's Show are collected from the Park Street Coach House by staff from the Royal Mews prior to the Show. Once the coaches are at the mews, they are prepared for use by our coachbuilders. For the Show the Royal Mews provides on a 'grace and favour' basis, horses and operational and support personnel.
26. The Pageantmaster has recently confirmed that the four carriages and the Lord Mayor's State Coach will continue to be needed for the Lord Mayor's Show.
27. The City Surveyor's Department provides the following, in connection with the management of the Lord Mayor's State Coach and the other coaches in the form of a specialist service:-
 - i) Liaison with the Pageantmaster, Police, Royal Mews and others.
 - ii) Monitoring, inspection, testing, repair, maintenance, preparation and operational use of the Corporation's ceremonial coach equipment.
 - iii) Monitoring, repair, maintenance and use of the permanent coach-house at Park Street and the temporary coach-house at Guildhall.
 - iv) Assist with the rehearsals and the Lord Mayor's Show.
28. Traditionally, pageants such as the Lord Mayor's Show, were organized/project managed by architects. It is because the City Architect's role has been taken over by the City Surveyor, is why this specialist service is currently provided by the City Surveyor's Department.

Guildhall Yard and the Temporary Coach House

29. Although the Museum of London is very accommodating when our specialist contractors need access to the State Coach, it cannot provide the physical environment needed for assembling all the coach's equipment and for the 'putting to' of the horses; hence the reason why Guildhall Yard and the temporary coach house are used every year for getting the coach ready for the dress rehearsal and for the Lord Mayor's Show.
30. The glass walled temporary coach house, first used in 2004, is widely regarded as an excellent advert for the Lord Mayor's Show. The coming of the State Coach to Guildhall and its display in the coach house attracts considerable attention from members of the public and the press.

Capital Project

31. As it is some 60 years since major attention has been given to the care of the City's carriages, a Capital Project was initiated to research into and identify what repairs were needed. To help finance these conservation and

repair works, it was decided that the two unused chariots should be disposed of. Unfortunately, the financial climate has resulted in a considerable lack of interest in these two coaches, so much so that the project was no longer sufficiently financed.

32. At its meeting on 23 March 2010, the Finance Committee was presented with a progress report on the poor offers being made for the two chariots. It was decided that the project should be deferred, except for some essential and advisable repairs.
33. The essential and advisable repairs, estimated at £80,000, not including staff costs, have been completed on the State Coach, while the repairs to the other carriages will be carried out during 2012–13 and 2013–14.
34. A review of the remaining works needed to the retained carriages will be undertaken, the results of which will be reported to your Committee in due course.

Community Strategy & Other Significant Implications

35. All the City's carriages are considered to be important examples of fine English coach building. In particular the Lord Mayor's State Coach is unique and has a high profile on the world stage. As such the owning and maintenance of such carriages fits in with the City's strategy to provide a culturally rich, skilled and learning City.

Consultees

36. The Pageantmaster, the Remembrancer, the Chamberlain and the Director of Culture, Heritage and Libraries have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

Conclusion

37. The City is fortunate to own some of the finest carriages in the country which form part of the nation's heritage. It would not be possible to replace them like for like from the open market.
38. The Lord Mayor's State Coach is an internationally renowned and unique carriage which is the centrepiece of the City's premier annual event, the Lord Mayor's Show. It holds a special place in the country's heritage and unusually, is required to be a utility vehicle during the parade whilst it is also an irreplaceable work of art. Although well-built and having proven to be resilient over the years, it is a complex object, constructed from a variety of materials, all needing specialist maintenance and treatment.

Background Papers:-

Report to City Lands & Bridge House Estates Committee dated July 2005

Report to City Lands & Bridge House Estates Committee dated July 2006

Report to City Lands & Bridge House Estates Committee dated March 2010

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