

Shadow Council

Title of Report:	Adoption of a Coat of Arms	
Report No:	COU/SA/19/003₁	
Report to and date/s:	Shadow Council – 16 January 2018	
Shadow Executive (Cabinet) Members:	<p>Councillor Ruth Bowman Tel: 01638 510896 Email: ruth.bowman@forest-heath.gov.uk</p>	<p>Councillor Carol Bull Tel: 01953 681513 Email: carol.bull@stedsbc.gov.uk</p>
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Purpose of report:	To seek the Shadow Council's approval to adopting a Coat of Arms and to request the College of Arms to transfer the West Suffolk County Council Coat of Arms to West Suffolk Council.	
Recommendation:	It is recommended that Shadow Council requests the College of Arms transfer the West Suffolk County Council arms, as stated in Paragraph 4.1, to West Suffolk Council.	
Key Decision:	<p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> No, it is not a Key Decision - ☒</p>	
Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposals within this report have been subject to consideration with the Future Governance Steering Group and discussion with the College of Arms 	
Alternative option(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other options are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To not adopt a Coat of Arms b) To adopt a new Coat of Arms <p>The implications of each option are set out in the report</p>	

Implications:			
Are there any financial implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> • The College of Arms have indicated that transfer of the Coat of Arms by Order would cost £1,400, with further costs (in the region of £500) to draw the Coat of Arms. This was incorporated into the budget for creation of the new Council	
Are there any staffing implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any ICT implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any legal and/or policy implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any equality implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
None			
Ward(s) affected:		All wards	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		None	
Documents attached:		Appendix A – Example Coats of Arms	

1. Purpose and Use of Coats of Arms

- 1.1 Most District, Borough and County Councils in England have Coats of Arms that have been granted to them by the College of Arms.
 - 1.1.1 Each Coat of Arms is unique to that Council. They are designed to specifically highlight features of that Council to represent the history, geography and traditions of the Council and its community and can only be used by the Council as a corporate body – they cannot be used by other organisations representing the Council's area.
 - 1.1.2 In the past, Councils used Coats of Arms on a wide range of documents such as letters and notices. In recent times, their use has declined in favour of modern logos, which are easier for the purpose of electronic communications, and instead the use of Arms is restricted to legal documentation (such as affixing the Council's seal onto contracts) or to civic documentation. In fact the current West Suffolk branding logo, which is widely recognised in our communities, has already been updated and prepared for use by the new Council.

2. What is the Coat of Arms?

- 2.1 The Coat of Arms is essentially a written description.
- 2.2 They are usually made up of various component parts. The Arms themselves, which are usually represented as a shield, and a Crest, which sits on top of the shield. A Coat of Arms may also have supporters, which are usually depicted as animals holding up the shield. In addition, the Arms may also have a badge, a smaller version which captures the key components and can be used instead of the full coat of arms.
- 2.3 Once the Arms have been agreed, then they are designed (drawn). At appendix A, we have included designs of the current Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Arms, the badge of St Edmundsbury, and known drawings of the former West Suffolk County Council Coat of Arms, to provide examples of how Arms can be drawn. Some Councils include mottos (see below) on their Coat of Arms when drawn.

3. Adoption of Coat of Arms

- 3.1 Only the College of Arms can administer the granting of a Coat of Arms, and the Grant has to receive approval of the Crown. To adopt a Coat of Arms, both the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Privy Council must first approve, and the overall process can take between 4 and 12 months to process.
- 3.2 The Council has 3 options:
 - 3.2.1 To not adopt a Coat of Arms. The Future Governance Steering Group are not recommending this option as they feel this offers the opportunity to respect and reflect the unique heritage and history of the West Suffolk Council area.

- 3.2.2 To adopt a new Coat of Arms for the Council. The Future Governance Steering Group raised concern regarding the costs of this approach, which, if the Arms had supporters, and a badge was also purchased, would amount to £17k.
- 3.2.3 To seek to transfer an existing Coat of Arms to the Council. Following the Local Government Reorganisation in 1974, the former West Suffolk County Council Coat of Arms fell out of use. Whilst the former County Council covered a wider area than the new West Suffolk District, the features of the Coat of Arms closely related to our area and had links to the current Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Coat of Arms. Given this, the Future Governance Steering Group consider that this option should be recommended to Council. The College of Arms has given their provisional support to this proposal and informed officers that this option would cost £1,400

4. West Suffolk County Council Coat of Arms

- 4.1 As above, the Coat of Arms is a description; the College of Arms has confirmed that the West Suffolk County Council Arms are described as:

Arms : Azure a Cross fleury between five Martlets Or on a Chief Sable between two Mitres Argent two Arrows in saltire also Argent enfiled with an ancient Crown Gold.

Crest : On a Wreath of the Colours in front of two Arrows in saltire proper a Castle with two domed towers flags flying thereon Or.

- 4.2 This may be more clearly articulated as:

Arms: An azure blue shield on which sits a cross with ornamental ends and five gold martlets (birds). On top of the shield is a bar, which has two silver mitres and a gold crown. Within the gold crown are two silver arrows, placed diagonally.

Crest: An azure blue and gold ribbon design around a helmet, and on top of the helmet, a gold castle with two towers flying flags. Behind the castle are two arrows, placed diagonally.

- 4.3 As above, two former depictions of the West Suffolk County Council Coat of Arms are included at Appendix A. We are continuing to trace the associated artworks associated with these, but if granted, it is likely that a new interpretation would need to be designed; the College of Arms has indicated this can be undertaken for approximately £500.

5. Motto

- 5.1 The Future Governance Steering Group has carefully considered the adoption of a Motto. The motto of West Suffolk County Council was an extract from the Magna Carta, given its close links to the area – “For King, Law and People”. Whilst this historic connection is important, some concern has been raised whether this should state “For Crown, Law and People” or the latin translation, which would originally have been in the Magna Carta.

- 5.2 The Group has recommended that further research and consideration be given to this topic before any decision is made on whether to adopt a motto.

6. Chains of Office

- 6.1 If recommended by the Council, the new Coat of Arms can only be used once permission has been granted "in principle" by MHCLG. As such, it is unlikely that the Arms could be used on the Chains of Office at the first AGM.
- 6.2 Officers are working with the Portfolio Holders for Future Governance to explore options for the intervening period, including use of existing chains or interim solutions, to ensure the Council's future Chair has appropriate civic insignia when representing the Council.