

10.00am, Thursday, 20 September 2018

## Burgess Roll

Item number	8.2
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	
Council Commitments	

### Executive Summary

---

This report outlines the current arrangements relating to the Burgess Roll and the issuing of Burgess tickets. Following a request from the Burgess Association of Edinburgh, new arrangements for the handling of these are proposed.

## Burgess Roll

### 1. Recommendations

---

- 1.1 To agree that the keeping of the new Burgess Roll now be carried out by the Burgess Association of Edinburgh, including the setting and collection of fees; and
- 1.2 To agree that the Lord Provost, the Lord Dean of Guild, and the Deacon Convener of the Trades (as all may be appointed from time to time) and / or their Deputies now sign the newly designed Burgess ticket attached at Appendix 1.

### 2. Background

---

- 2.1 The origins of the admission or grant of Burgesship in Edinburgh can be traced to the year 1406. To become a Burgess was a necessity for anyone wanting to earn a living in a regulated occupation in Edinburgh. In return for the right to work in the town, Burgesses had to accept a share of civic responsibilities.
- 2.2 Virtually all Burgesses qualified for admission by fulfilling the requirements to have residence in the town, be related by birth or marriage to an existing Burgess, pay the required fees, being entered in the roll and consequently receiving their Burgess ticket. In exceptional circumstances, this procedure was waived.
- 2.3 The relevance of the Burgess ticket has changed considerably over the centuries. At the time of the enactment of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, entry in the Burgess Roll conferred no tangible privileges or duties. The Act's creation of a regional and district authority also overtook Edinburgh's status as a royal burgh and, following the implementation of the Act in May 1975, the Burgess Roll in Edinburgh was closed. However, the former City of Edinburgh District Council and the City of Edinburgh Council retained within their Standing Orders provisions to grant honorary Burgessships ("Freedom of the City").
- 2.4 On 20 December 2005, the City of Edinburgh Council agreed to introduce a new Burgess Roll and issue a new type of Burgess ticket. Under the new arrangements the Conventry of the Incorporated Trades undertook responsibility for the receipt and processing of applications and would then make recommendations to the Council. A fee of £50 was set for each Burgess ticket and it was agreed that the tickets would be issued under the signature of the Lord Provost and the Council Secretary.

- 2.5 It should be noted, however, that no actual Roll of the Burgesses has been created by the Council since the agreement in 2005 to replicate the former Burgess Roll.

### **3. Main report**

---

- 3.1 On 30 October 2017 the Burgesses adopted a Constitution for a new Association 'the Burgess Association of Edinburgh' created under the auspices of the Conventry of Trades and the Company (now Royal Company) of Merchants of Edinburgh. The Court of the Burgess Association of Edinburgh has established a Roll and the names of any new Burgesses and those created under the old regime, and still alive at that date, are all being entered.
- 3.2 The Court of the Burgess Association of Edinburgh would like to formalise this practice and have requested that the responsibility for the keeping of the new Burgess Roll be passed to the Burgess Association. This would include the authority to set and collect fees associated with the tickets.
- 3.3 In doing so, the Burgess Association have also requested that their newly designed Burgess ticket should now be signed by the Lord Provost, the Lord Dean of Guild, and the Deacon Convener of the Trades rather than the Lord Provost and the current equivalent post to Council Secretary. The signatories additional to the Lord Provost or Deputy Lord Provost are the respective leaders of the Merchant and Trades Burgesses.

### **4. Measures of success**

---

- 4.1 The keeping of the new Burgess Roll is carried out by the Burgess Association of Edinburgh.

### **5. Financial impact**

---

- 5.1 There may be a net, but minimal, loss of income to the Council.

### **6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact**

---

- 6.1 No adverse risks or policy impacts have been identified as associated with this report.

## **7. Equalities impact**

---

7.1 There are no equalities impacts as a result of this report.

## **8. Sustainability impact**

---

8.1 There is no sustainability impact as a result of this report.

## **9. Consultation and engagement**

---

9.1 Consultation has taken place with the Burgess Association of Edinburgh.

## **10. Background reading/external references**

---

10.1 [The Executive of the Council 20 December 2005 - Burgess Tickets](#)

### **Andrew Kerr**

Chief Executive

Contact: Stuart Johnston, Committees Officer

E-mail: [stuart.johnston@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.johnston@edinburgh.gov.uk) | Tel: 0131 529 7035

Contact: Gavin King, Democracy, Governance and Resilience Senior Manager

E-mail: [gavin.king@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:gavin.king@edinburgh.gov.uk) | Tel: 0131 529 4239

## **11. Appendices**

---

Appendix 1 – Proposed new Burgess ticket



*At Edinburgh, the Twentieth Day of March Two Thousand and Eighteen,*

*The City of Edinburgh Council, having received the solemn declaration of  
John Smith Esquire, Accountant and Member of the Incorporation of Hammermen*

*Of being desirous to promote the commonweal of Edinburgh and her citizens*

*Of being observant of the principles of fairness, equality and non-discrimination*

*Of undertaking just dealing with the citizens of Edinburgh and fellow Burgesses*

*and for good deeds done and to be done within the City, hereby admits the same to be*

*A Burgess and Free Citizen of Edinburgh*

.....  
*Lord Provost*

.....  
*Lord Dean of Guild*

.....  
*Deacon Convener of Trades*

