

REPORT TITLE: MAYORS FOR PEACE

17 JULY 2019

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Councillor Thompson – Leader and Cabinet Member for Communications and Transformation

Contact Officer: David Blakemore Tel No: 01962 848217 Email dblakemore@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

A local resident has contacted the Mayor of Winchester with regard to the Council affiliating itself with an organisation called 'Mayors for Peace' and an e-petition was initiated accordingly. By the time the petition was closed it had not achieved enough signatures for the matter to have been debated at Full Council and due to the ceremonial nature of our Mayor, it is a matter for the executive to consider.

This report suggests that Cabinet consider the global nature of the initiative and its objectives before making a decision whether the Council should join the organisation Mayors for Peace. Cabinet will also wish to consider the petitioner's request that, in accordance with the Council joining Mayors for Peace, it should hold a peace memorial event each year in August to mark the anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet considers whether it wishes to endorse that Winchester City Council, as represented by Mayor, joins the UK and Ireland Chapter of 'Mayors for Peace'.

IMPLICATIONS:

1. COUNCIL STRATEGY OUTCOME

- 1.1 The key objective of Mayors for Peace is pursuing world-wide peaceful co-existence (by addressing problems such as poverty, human rights abuses, environmental destruction and degradation etc) and these do accord with the Council Strategy priorities of improving the health and happiness of our community and the quality of the District's environment.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 Winchester City Council may choose to request affiliation with Mayors for Peace free of charge. However, member authorities are actively invited to support the organisation's campaign work with an annual voluntary invoice of £120.

3. LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 places a duty on local authorities for the submission and consideration of relevant petitions within set guidelines.
- 3.2 The report states that the petition which is the subject of this report received 97 signatures, and correctly states that this does not require consideration by Full Council. For action by Cabinet the subject matter of the petition should be a matter over which the Council has control, or over which it has some influence.

4. WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None directly.

5. PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None directly.

6. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 Both the Mayor and the Leader have been consulted on background to Mayors for Peace.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 None required.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSEMENT

- 8.1 None required.

9. DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 None required.

10. SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

10.1 A local resident has previously initiated an e-petition which was worded as follows and achieved 97 signatures:

“Despite the 2017 agreement at the United Nations to create the International Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, there are still enough nuclear bombs to produce the equivalent of 280,000 Hiroshima-sized bomb explosions. The organisation ‘Mayors for Peace’ actively campaigns for the total elimination of nuclear weapons and to create a more peaceful and sustainable world. Led by the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, with over 7668 member councils worldwide – including 81 in the UK - and representing over a billion people, it encourages towns, cities and counties to show solidarity and declare its belief that all efforts should be made for the reduction and eventual elimination of all nuclear weapons. We the undersigned call on Winchester City Council, as represented by the Mayor, to join the UK and Ireland chapter of the international peace movement Mayors for Peace and to hold a peace memorial event each year in August to mark the anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.”

10.2 Mayors for Peace was first established by the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki after the United Nations Conference on Disarmament in 1982. Its key objective is to actively campaign for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, over an agreed period of time, and so bring about a nuclear free world. This would be achieved through the structure of the United Nations Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.

10.3 Mayors for Peace has an international structure and membership and in the UK there are 81 towns, cities or council areas that are currently members. Its international president is the Mayor of Hiroshima. The lead UK authority is Manchester City Council.

10.4 As part of its lobbying work to eliminate nuclear weapons, in October 2003, Mayors for Peace developed the ‘2020 Vision’ (Emergency Campaign to Ban Nuclear Weapons). Mayors for Peace still actively campaigns and promotes initiatives aimed at achieving the guidelines within the vision. As referenced by the Mayors for Peace website, the United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres has stated that ‘the total elimination of nuclear weapons remains the highest disarmament priority of the UN and that he will work with Hiroshima and Nagasaki to that end.’

- 10.5 Since 2015, UK and Irish members of Mayors for Peace have established their own specific 'Chapter' of Mayors for Peace (known as the 'UK and Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter') to encourage more active involvement of its membership. This is administered by Manchester City Council and is chaired by their Lord Mayor. The Chapter takes account of the ceremonial nature of Mayors in the UK and Ireland (as opposed to only executive Mayor style of leadership). It encourages both the ceremonial and executive part of the Council to fully support the organisation.
- 10.6 The Chapter also supports the work of Mayors for Peace and considering ways that it could promote local government involvement in other peace issues such as through Holocaust Memorial Day, the International Day of Peace, Hiroshima and Nagasaki Days and World Refugee Day.
- 10.7 In addition to the promoting a nuclear free world, Mayors for Peace is also committed to pursuing a more enduring world peace by working to address other matters associated with peaceful co-existence; such as poverty, conventional warfare, human rights abuses and environmental destruction and degradation. Mayors for Peace are a registered United Nations Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) and it has "Special Consultative Status" with the United Nations. Mayors for Peace seek to promote more peaceful and sustainable towns and cities through its strong support of the eight United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which are, in summary:
1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger
 2. Achieve Universal Primary Education
 3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women
 4. Reduce Child Mortality
 5. Improve Maternal Health
 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases
 7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability
 8. Global Partnership and Development
- 10.8 The petitioner has highlighted that, in accordance with the Council joining the UK Chapter of Mayors for Peace, it should hold a peace memorial event each year in August to mark the anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6th and 9th August.

It is suggested that the memorial could take place on *either* of the two anniversaries, subject to the availability of the Mayor and Leader and at a time to be agreed. The memorial could be similar to that which currently takes place annually from the Guildhall steps at 11am on 11th November to commemorate the Armistice. Officers and visitors to the Council are notified of the two minute silence by the brief sounding of the fire alarms at the start and end of the period. A temporary traffic regulation order is arranged so that vehicles can be lawfully halted during the period of commemoration.

- 10.9 The Mayor has been approached by the petitioner about Abbey House hosting a photo exhibition on Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the week commencing 5 August 2019 as well as the possibility of a talk one evening. The Mayor has indicated that that this will be acceptable, subject to logistical arrangements.
- 10.10 Detailed information and background on Mayors for Peace and its campaign work can be found via <http://www.mayorsforpeace.org>.

The Mayors for Peace model declaration is set out as an appendix to this Report for reference.

11. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 11.1 Cabinet will wish to respond to the petition and the proposal to support Mayors for Peace initiative. It is considered that the petitioners request to mark the anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombs can be relatively easily achieved.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Detailed information on Mayors for Peace is available via this link:
<http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/>

Further information on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is available via this link:
<https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 - Mayors for Peace - Model resolution

Appendix 1



MAYORS FOR PEACE

Model resolution

Model Council resolution:

This Council notes that there are still enough nuclear weapons in the world to create 280,000 Hiroshima-sized bomb explosions.

It also notes the rapid development of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki led Mayors for Peace, which campaigns for a nuclear weapons free world. It now has over 7,650 member towns and cities from 163 countries, representing over a billion people worldwide. It campaigns for a nuclear weapons free world through support of the UN International Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons and the UN Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Its main charter calls for “closer cooperation among towns and cities, strives to raise international public awareness regarding the need to abolish nuclear weapons and contributes to the realisation of genuine and lasting world peace by working to eliminate starvation and poverty, assist refugees fleeing local conflict, support human rights, protect the environment, and solve the other problems that threaten peaceful coexistence within the human family.”

The Council hereby resolves –

- To join the Mayors for Peace and consider the approval of a voluntary donation of £120 to assist development of the UK and Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter and the international campaigning work of Mayors for Peace led by its International Secretariats in Hiroshima and Ypres.
- To consider, along with the Mayor, a permanent representative for the Council to attend twice yearly meetings of the UK & Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter.
- To consider holding an annual Hiroshima – Nagasaki commemorative peace ceremony to remember all innocent civilians killed in all conflicts over the past 75 years.