

## Report of the Responsible Financial Officer

### Rationalization of Civic Regalia

#### Background

1. One of the unintended consequences of local government re-organization in 2008 was that the Town Council was, in some circumstances, treated as a successor body to Berwick Borough Council.
2. A consequence of this was that, alongside the civic regalia, Berwick Town Council became custodians of mementoes acquired over a period of years.
3. In addition it appears from the assets register that some of the items described as being in the custody of the Town Council should properly be in the property of the Guild of Freemen.

#### Future Action

4. The Town Council is not the ideal custodian for items not used as part of the civic function, since it has no facilities to display them and no skills base for their conservation.
5. There is a good working relationship between the Guild and the Town Council which has included discussions as to the future insurance and display arrangements for items which are not part of the everyday civic regalia.
6. It is therefore proposed that your staff be tasked with categorizing each item of civic regalia as either being
  - a. Used as part of the civic ceremonies of the Town Council,
  - b. Used as part of the fixtures and fittings of the Mayor's Parlour,
  - c. Items more properly the property of Berwick Freemen, or
  - d. Superfluous to requirements.
7. It is proposed that any items that are superfluous to requirements should first be offered to the Guild or a local museum to hold on trust for the town, and, if they decline, should be referred back to a future meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee.

#### Recommendation

1. That members should consider the report and indicate their preferences.