



## Report of the Chief Legal Officer

Council - 28 March 2019

### Appointment of Honorary Recorder of Swansea

<b>Purpose:</b>	To appoint His Honour Judge Paul Thomas QC as Honorary Recorder of Swansea.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	None.
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that:  1) His Honour Judge Keith Thomas be thanked for his work as Honorary Recorder of Swansea;  2) His Honour Judge Paul Thomas QC be appointed as Honorary Recorder of Swansea commencing 1 April 2019.
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<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Ben Smith
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<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Rhian Millar

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The post of Recorder of Swansea was abolished following the reorganisation of the Court system in 1971. However, members of the judiciary and the legal profession, suggested that the Office of Honorary Recorder of Swansea should be created as it would enhance the status of Swansea both as a City and County and as a centre of legal administration and practice.
- 1.2 Council at its meeting on 4 October 2001 resolved to create the post of Honorary Recorder of Swansea. The Office of Honorary Recorder is a civic dignity bestowed by the Council on the Senior Resident Judge in Swansea and lasts until the holder retires as a Judge.
- 1.3 The Honorary Recorder of Swansea is not a formal judicial appointment and does not carry a salary.

## **2. Current & Former Honorary Recorders of Swansea**

- 2.1 His Honour Judge John Diehl (First Honorary Recorder of Swansea).  
Term of Office: 1 November 2001 - 20 June 2011.
- 2.2 His Honour Judge Keith Thomas (Honorary Recorder of Swansea).  
Term of Office: 20 June 2011 - 31 March 2019.

## **3. Judge Keith Thomas (Current Honorary Recorder of Swansea)**

- 3.1 Judge Keith Thomas is retiring as Resident Judge on 31 March 2019. Judge Keith Thomas has confirmed that Judge Paul Thomas QC will be his successor as Resident Judge of Swansea Crown Court. Judge Keith Thomas has requested that Council consider bestowing the Office of Honorary Recorder of Swansea on Judge Paul Thomas QC.

## **4. Biography of Judge Paul Thomas QC**

- 4.1 Paul is the son of two local teachers, and grew up in Garrod Avenue, Dunvant and all his schooling took place in Gowerton prior to gaining a MA at Cambridge University (Fitzwilliam College).
- 4.2 He was called to the Bar (Gray's Inn) in 1979, and was a Barrister at Iscoed Chambers, Swansea from 1980-2009. He was appointed QC in 2003 and held the position of Joint Head of Chambers from 2006-2009. Paul was appointed a Circuit Judge in 2009, sitting mainly in Swansea Crown Court since 2010. He was also appointed to sit in Court of Appeal Criminal Division in 2018.
- 4.3 Paul is married and has two children. He has a keen interest in rugby and played for Dunvant RFC between 1976 and 1984. He is also a Citing Commissioner for the Welsh Rugby Union. Paul is also Founder and chair of Skin Care Cymru, a registered charity.

## **5. Equality and Engagement Implications**

- 5.1 There are no equality and engagement implications associated with this report.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1 Section 54 of the Courts Act 1971 gives the Council power to appoint an Honorary Recorder. The appointment does not require the approval of the Lord Chancellor or Lord Chief Justice.

**Background Papers:** None.

**Appendices:** None.