

Birmingham City Council

Council Business Management Committee

16 December 2019



Subject: Request for the Use of the Coat of Arms
Report of: Acting Director of Governance
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Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If relevant, state which appendix is exempt, and provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential:

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 To consider an application by Ms Gill Gregory for the use of the Coat of Arms on a stitched panel as part of a project to celebrate and commemorate the Commonwealth Games being staged in Birmingham.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to determine the application.

3 Request for the Use of the Coat of Arms by 'Threads Together' project

- 3.1 The project is entitled 'Threads Together' and aims to draw families, communities and countries together to share their stories and skills through working on one (or more) of the proposed 75 stitched panels.

The email from Ms Gregory states:

"Central to this project is the fact that Birmingham is as dear to many of those who have made their homes in the City more recently, as it is to those with deep roots here.

To reflect these feeling, in addition to a panel for each country competing in the Games, other panels will depict aspects of the sport, industry, culture etc. within the City. The central panel will feature the iconic buildings that the world recognises as "Birmingham".

- 3.2 The project would like permission to be able to use the City Crest as its main focus.

4 Background in Respect of the Use of The Birmingham Coat of Arms

- 4.1 Section 73 of the West Midlands County Council Act 1980 provides that:

“If any person without the consent of the local authority uses in connection with any trade, business, calling or profession any part of the armorial bearings of that authority, or any emblem or device closely resembling any such part, in a manner calculated to lead to the belief that he displays the part, emblem or device with the approval of that local authority, he may at the suit of the local authority be restrained by an injunction from continuing to use that part, emblem or device.”

- 4.2 The Coat of Arms is a dignity granted by Royal Charter and, as such, is not a property right. The Council cannot therefore license or authorise its use (by others) as such. All that the Council can do is to indicate whether it has any objection to its use. If the Council has no objection, then it would be safe to assume that it will not seek to restrain the use by way of an injunction.
- 4.3 The Committee’s normal practice has been to indicate that the Council would object to the use of the Coat of Arms except on materials sponsored or produced by, or closely associated with, the Council or in other special circumstances.