

The Saltash Mayoress Chain was presented circa 1919 by the then Mayor, Cllr J H Pooley JP with the intention that it be worn by the spouse or female consort of an incumbent Mayor, who would be referred to as Mayoress. It was perhaps not foreseen back in the early days of the twentieth century, that the Mayor of Saltash would be anything other than a male.

Additional links were added to the Chain during the following years, each depicting a different event or theme, up until the opening of the road bridge in 1961.

The Chain continued in use up until 2017 when for the first time, the chain was worn by the male Consort of a female Mayor, which did not meet with universal approval of the then Members of Council. A Regalia working party was set up and eventually came to Full Town Council with a recommendation that the Chain be placed into retirement. The recommendation was accepted by a majority at that time, but it should be noted that there are currently serving Members of this Council who were persuaded at that time to support the retirement proposal, but would now take the opposite view.

Upon retirement of the Mayoress Chain, a replacement Chain, to be worn by male or female Consorts, was gifted to Saltash Town Council by Cllrs B Samuels and P Samuels, together with a Deputy Mayor Chain that replaced a simple fabric collar, both Chains supporting pre-existing Medallions.

It has become apparent that a number of current Members of Saltash Town Council would like to see the Chain restored to full use and once again become the envy of other towns in Cornwall.

Members are therefore asked to consider whether the Mayoress Chain be brought back into use, or remain in retirement.

If it were to be decided to bring the Chain back into use, then a further decision would need to be made as to whether it would be most appropriate to retain it for use only by a Mayoress, thus preserving the historical integrity, with a male Consort using the modern Consort Chain, or should it also be available to a male Consort, reflecting modern attitudes to gender equality.

A third option to the aforementioned would be to allow discretion by an incumbent Mayor as to whether the Mayoress Chain or the Consort Chain should be used during their tenure.

Cllr Pete Samuels

END OF REPORT