

THE Mayor of Worcester has been landed with a £600 bill after taking delivery of a portrait of himself which he assumed was a gift.

Derek Prodger now faces taking his plight to city council officers to decide how the situation can be resolved.

Councillor Prodger said he did not realise Hungarian Emese Gabor would charge any money for the work.

"The Hungarian lady visited Worcester last year as part of an 18-strong choral group which was invited to the Mayor's Parlour," he said today.

"She said she was interested in painting my portrait and I was very flattered. I agreed to have my photograph taken so she could paint from it. But I was never told it would be offered for sale."

by **PAUL STAMMERS**

Evening News

He felt it was an honour, because the last time a portrait of the Mayor was commissioned was in 1962.

Miss Gabor has since returned to the city on holiday and has asked for a fee of between £500-600 for the 100 hours spent on the work.

She also wants the oil painting hung in the Guildhall, something which Coun Prodger says makes him feel "awkward".

"It looks as if this is a publicity exercise on my behalf and that wasn't my motivation at all," he said. "I don't want self-glorification."

The portrait is being kept in the Mayor's Parlour and Miss Gabor returns to Hungary on Thursday.

"I'm going to have to sound out the council's opinion," stated Coun Prodger, who admired the portrait for its lifelike qualities.

"I don't know what the reaction will be. In my opinion the fee asked for the painting is a simple request and is not a commercial proposition."

The matter might be left to chief officers to handle, he added. They could advise him on whether the policy and resources committee would agree to foot the bill.

"It's the first I've heard of it," the council's principal director, David Wareing, said today. "Until Coun Prodger raises it with me, I can't comment."

**Artist's
£600
picture
charge**



▲ Mayor on canvas: Councillor Derek Prodger and the portrait she painted of him. Picture by Jo Blizzard. 0641/6

**THINKING OF YOUR FUTURE?
THINKING OF STARTING A COURSE
LATER THIS YEAR?**

**Find out how an INDIVIDUAL LEARNING
ACCOUNT can help YOU.**

If you are working and make regular payments into your learning account, the Chamber of Commerce could contribute up to £150 towards your course costs.

You may not know which course you want to take at the moment, but planning ahead for your career development is important.
So contact the Chamber of Commerce on FREEPHONE

0800 104010 to find out more!



WORCESTER
College of Technology

Quality Education and Training for the Community