

# HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE GOVERNANCE AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 17 JUNE 2014

**PRESENT:** Cllr Chappell, Chairman, The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Cllr Tawn and Cllrs Chave, Edwards, Michael, Nicholls, Preece, and Wilcox.

**G&P2014/2015.1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Members received apologies for absence from Cllr Toon and Cllr Wilcox who will be late to arrive at the meeting.

**G&P2014/2015.2 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES**

Members noted the appointment of substitute for Cllr Toon was Cllr Edwards.

**G&P2014/2015.3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members received no declarations of interest under the Herefordshire Code of Conduct pursuant to the Localism Act 2011 in respect of items on the agenda.

**G&P2014/2015.4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Members considered the minutes of the meetings of the Governance and Procedures Committee held on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014. The Town Clerk informed Members Cllr Wilcox requested an amendment to G&P2013/14.40 the paragraph referring to Cllr Wilcox proposing an amendment to 7.5 should read "The Mayor should only accept those engagements OUTSIDE the county....". Members were happy with this amendment and Cllr Edwards proposed the approval of the minutes as a true and accurate account of the meeting, seconded by Cllr Michael and unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

**Members approve the minutes as a true and accurate account of the meeting including the amendment as referred to above. The Chairman duly initialled, signed and dated the minutes following the amendment being made to the minutes.**

**G&P2014/2015.5 STANDING ORDERS AND THE ANNUAL CALENDAR**

Members received and considered the report from the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk gave a brief overview of his report and the 4 options as laid out in the report.

Cllr Chave informed Members she felt option 2 was the neatest and simplistic and proposed the committee recommend option two to Council. This was seconded by Cllr Edwards and unanimously agreed

**RESOLVED:**

**The Committee recommends to Council, noting that the present situation is unsatisfactory, resolves to retain current practice and recommends to Council that Standing Order 39 be amended.**

**G&P2014/2015.6      PROTOCOL FOR MEMBERS DEALING WITH OFFICERS**

Members received and considered the report from the Town Clerk.

Cllr Chappell gave a brief overview of the report to Members explaining the need to lay out common standards and courteousness'. He explained that himself and the Mayor requested this report was drafted by the Town Clerk. He also informed Members that the examples listed as inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour under 3.2 of the report had all occurred bar one of the 14 listed.

Covered in the discussion:

- Why do we need this document on top of the adopted Code of Conduct.
- Addition arm to the CoC which is un-needed.
- The City Council have achieved so much as a council.
- This seems like a lack of respect to officers.
- The City Council has achieved so much as a team working with the officers.
- The need to treat officers with respect to achieve the City Council's aims and to ensure Members do their best for City Council officers.
- Whilst the CoC refers very loosely to harassment and bullying it can cause issues to go on for months if an issue is taken to the standards board.
- The examples laid out in the report are all situations which have occurred since the Town Clerk has been in post and we as a Council need to have an in house way of dealing with situations and a document to say the council will not stand this type of behaviour.
- The national and county code of conduct is there as guidance and can be used to resolve issues in house and without referring issues to the standards board.
- Sad that this document seems to be necessary.
- The document can be used as a reminder of what is expected of Members.
- Resolving issues in house is an option before going to the standards board.
- Disappointment that the document has to come to committee as generally Members and Officers work well together.
- This document lays down guidance.
- Most situations are as a result of misunderstandings but this does outline some of the situations Members would not normally think about.

Cllr Wilcox arrived in the chamber at 6.20 pm.

- Where the document states there is no paper that declares a set of standards for treatment towards officers needs to be amended as the CoC does lay this out.

Cllr Edwards proposed the document is not adopted which was seconded by Cllr Wilcox and Cllr Preece.

Members then considered if changing some of the wording within the document would make it acceptable to Members.

Cllr Chave suggested changes as follows:

- In the title heading change “Protocol and Procedures Committee” to “Governance and Procedures Committee”.
- 1.1 remove the paragraph “There is currently no declared set of standards.....”
- 3. Change “Standards for Conduct” to “Guidelines For Conduct”
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Point 1, 2 and 3 of Cllr Chave’s suggestions were proposed, seconded by Cllr Nicholls and unanimously agreed.

Cllr Edwards suggested an amendment to 2.5 as it was too restrictive and suggested adding “or unless given delegated authority by the Council or a committee”.

The Town Clerk informed Members that 2.5 is defined in law and cannot be changed.

Cllr Tawn suggested and proposed the amendments as agreed above are made to the document and it is referred to council who can decide on the adoption of. This was seconded by Cllr Wilcox and unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

**The amendments as agreed in the above are made to the said document and it is referred to council to consider and agree on the adoption of.**

**G&P2014/2015.7 MAYORAL HANDBOOK**

Members considered the attached guidance for holders of the Mayoralty.

The Town Clerk gave a brief over view of the handbook and its history. He informed Members that it is an advisory document and that he had circulated it to every member of the Council for comment but had received no comments in relation to the document.

Cllr Chave informed Members that she had responded which referred mainly to typing errors and deleting the word “autumn” under point 1.5 so it read “charity

fetes, fayres and carol concerts”.

Cllr Preece felt it was a handy document to have when executing the role of Mayor.

Cllr Wilcox felt the document should form part of the New Councillor Induction pack and endorsed the document.

Cllr Edwards informed Members he had responded in relation to the document and most of the suggestions he had made had been changed but the following still needed changing:

- 1.3 “You must ensure” changed to “You should ensure”
- 3.2 “you must not make comments” to “You should not make comments”
- 5.1 “The Deputy Mayor is not to be used” to “The Deputy Mayor should not be used”

Cllr Nicholls informed Members he found the document very helpful and applauded it.

Members proposed the amendments as above and recommends to Council to agree the handbook as laid out as an advisory document on the role of Mayor and that a copy is kept in the Mayors Parlour, a copy is circulated to every Member of the Council and a copy is also included in the “New Councillor” Induction pack. Cllr Nicholls seconded the proposal and it was unanimously agreed to go to council for ratification.

**RESOLVED:**

**The Committee recommends to Council to agree the handbook as laid out as an advisory document on the role of Mayor and that a copy is kept in the Mayors Parlour, a copy is circulated to every Member of the Council and a copy is also included in the “New Councillor” Induction pack.**

**G&P2014/2015.8 ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

Vellum Scrolls

**G&P2014/2015.9 DATE OF NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING**

Members noted the date of the next meeting as 7 October 2014

Cllr Chave asked the Town Clerk to confirm the procedures for recommending members of the community for Mayor’s commendations and for a Freedom of the City.

Cllr Edwards asked for assurance from the Town Clerk that in future all new members of the Council get the appropriate Councillor Induction packs and paperwork.

There being no further business the Chairman called the meeting to a close at 6.58 pm

Signed.....

Dated.....