

HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE 5th February 2019

MINUTES OF MEETING

Present: The Right Worshipful the Mayor Cllr Susan Boulter and Councillors Lloyd-Hayes, Michael, Dykes, Hey, and Wilcox. Councillor Tawn arrived at 6.05 pm

In attendance Steve Kerry Town Clerk, Tracy Morriss Deputy Town Clerk

The Chair, Councillor Lloyd-Hayes reminded all present of the fire evacuation procedure and that the meeting is being recorded.

GP2018/19.83 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were noted from Councillors Stevens and Chappell. Councillor Tawn sent apologies for a possible late arrival.

GP2018/19.84 SUBSTITUTIONS

Noted that Councillor Stevens had nominated Councillor Dykes as his substitute, the Chair thanked Councillor Dykes for stepping in.

GP2018/19.85 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made at the start of the meeting.

GP2018/19.86 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

After correcting a typing error in item GP2018/19.77 fourth paragraph it was proposed by Councillor Wilcox, seconded by Councillor Hey and

RESOLVED That the corrected minutes be accepted as an accurate record and signed accordingly by the Chair.

GP2018/19.87 FREEDOM OF ENTRY – ARMED FORCES DAY

The Deputy Town Clerk presented the report and updated the Committee on a meeting held earlier in the day. The two Deputy Lieutenants involved would be speaking with the Lord Lieutenant to clarify the arrangements for inspection and saluting. In answer to a question it was confirmed that the Sounding the Retreat ceremony had been held on Castle Green in the past, and had been dovetailed on one occasion into the Historic Hereford Day event. Although this may be impossible to repeat if HHD is going on longer than previously, the Deputy Clerk was asked to raise our concern that Suvla Barracks, with limited parking and a fenced off area is not the ideal location. If possible, Castle Green or King George's Park would be better with a higher attendance likely. It was confirmed that with careful timing it will be possible for the Mayor to attend both HHD and key events on Armed Forces Day, and that the Mayor will not be expected to attend events that day outside the City in support of Armed Forces Day in view of the major event taking place in Hereford in the evening.

There will be a rolling road closure in place for the Freedom of Entry parade and Herefordshire Council's Markets Officer is responsible for ensuring that there is

adequate space between the market stalls for the venue to take place. There will be some additional stalls for military charities in High Town.

In discussion it was noted that the Council needs to be involved in planning events such as this from the start, to be able to exert its best influence.

After noting the point about seeking a better venue for Sounding the Retreat, and the possible difficulty of using Castle Green this year, members noted the report and the future meeting dates where the Deputy Clerk will be representing the Council.

GP2018/19.88 REMEMBRANCE DAY – LED SCREEN

The Deputy Clerk presented the report and answered questions.

It was noted that attendance at Remembrance Day has increased year on year since 2013 and even if it were to fall back to 2013 levels following the record attendance in 2018, the proposal was still worth considering. The additional screen enabled people who previously could only hear the event to see it properly. It was also noted that the spreading of orders of service among the crowd had not been fully effective with a large number being left at the chemists in St Owen Street. The Deputy Clerk explained that had asked the Scouts to deal with that when she became aware of it, but they had not had enough time to get them distributed.

It was proposed by Councillor Hey, seconded by Councillor Michael and

RESOLVED That the Committee agree to supply an LED screen at the Remembrance Day Service and Parade at a cost of £1,000, making allowance for inflation in future years, and to review this provision annually in the light of numbers attending.

GP2018/19.89 FREEDOM CEREMONIES

The Deputy Clerk introduced the report and explained that this one of a series of reports requested by the Committee to reconsider who is invited to what civic ceremonies. As with all civic ceremonial events it can be assumed that several of the invitees are very unlikely to attend, allowing for some flexibility.

The Chair suggested that it would be appropriate to invite the new university and other members suggested if this was to happen it would be appropriate to invite the principals or other representatives of the other major further and higher education providers in the city. In order to make space for additional guests, councillors, freemen and staff could no longer be invited to have a guest with them at the event, with the exception of the Mayor, Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, Honorary Recorder and Chief Steward.

It was proposed by Councillor Wilcox, seconded by Councillor Michael and

RESOLVED That the Council will invite representatives of the further and higher education institutes within the City to Freedom Ceremonies and will no longer invite staff, councillors and freemen to be accompanied by personal guests. The Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, Honorary Recorder and Chief Steward will continue to be invited to be accompanied by a personal guest.

GP2018/19.90 MAYOR-MAKING

As with the previous item this as a brief over-view of the event with details of the current guest list. There was some discussion of the complexity of military representation noting that there are in fact three regiments based at Credenhill, normally one of the military invitees represents all, occasionally two military representatives attend. The question was considered as to whether members wished to make similar alterations to the guest list as those agreed for freedom ceremonies and it was noted that Mayor-making is a more domestic event with members electing the new Mayor and sharing with one of their number the celebration of that election. Partners of councillors etc were therefore appropriately invited.

It as proposed by Councillor Michael, seconded by the Mayor and

RESOLVED To make no changes to the guest list for Mayor-making.

GP2018/19.91 OPENING MAY FAIR

The Deputy Clerk asked members to note that Councillors generally don't need personal guests at this event, and that all costs are met by the Showmen's Guild. The Chair noted that some members do not do the whole tour of the Fair but cut that short and arrive early at the refreshments. This was inappropriate and that in future the Assembly Hall will not be opened until the Mayor returns with the main party. It was recognised that some members might struggle with the whole tour, which is quite understandable, they would be offered a place to sit and wait for the main party to return.

Members felt there was no need to make any changes to the guest list which is in any case issued by the Showmen's Guild.

It was proposed by Councillor Lloyd-Hayes, seconded by Councillor Tawn and

RESOLVED That no change be made to the arrangements for opening the Mayor Fair.

GP2018/19.92 THREE CHOIRS

The Deputy Clerk reminded members that this occurs every three years in Hereford and we host a civic lunch for the three cities and the mayoral towns of the diocese of Hereford. This mirrors practice in the other two cathedral cities, Hereford diocese market towns are not invited to Gloucester or Worcester. The diocese of Hereford extends well into Shropshire and therefore Ludlow and Bridgnorth mayors are invited to Hereford. Consideration was given to the possibility of combining the Dean's lunch for clerical guests which is attended by the Lords Lieutenant and High Sheriffs of the three countries with the civic one attended by mayors, livery teams etc. This has been done once in Worcester, very successfully, but is not usually done in either Hereford or Gloucester. Apart for being more sociable to have everyone together it may well be more cost effective by having only one venue hire shared among the two groups.

Members also noted that we have progressively scaled down the receptions organised on behalf of the Mayor for volunteers and stewards as they have become

too few to be able to take time out during the festival. Recently the Council has provided, and the Mayor hosted, a reception for choristers, stewards and other volunteers which takes place from 10-30 pm after the final event and runs till around midnight or shortly after. It was also noted that at the most recent one the Festival Director gave a long speech of thanks to almost everyone involved but conspicuously forgot to mention the Council even though he was in the Town Hall.

There was a general view that the council needs to be more up front in its dealings with the Three Choirs. It was regrettable that there used to be a single secretary for each city and communication could take place in the two years leading up to the event. Now there is only one secretary to contact who inevitably is mainly focused on the city in which the festival is due to take place. Nonetheless more proactive communication is required.

It was proposed by Councillor Wilcox, seconded by Councillor Lloyd-Hayes and

RESOLVED That the Council's representatives on the Three Choirs Steering Cttee raise as soon as possible the issue of organising a single meal for both clerical and civic guests.

GP2018/19.93 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

The Deputy Clerk reminded members that the size and form of the event is largely dictated by the space available around the war memorial. The civic party has a specific space and some years it has required quite a lot of fine tuning by the Mayor's Officer to squeeze everyone in. The number of JP's attending is unpredictable, sometimes one or two, last year many more. Some uniformed organisations join at the back of the civic parade, which is very hard to stop and causes a problem given the limited space.

There was a discussion about deleting some of the former mayors from the guest list who don't normally attend but it was generally thought this could be rather hit and miss in its application and might cause some offence. It was noted that the catering is simply to provide tea and coffee after the service in the Assembly Hall so it is not crucial to manage numbers to the degree it is with other events.

There is a problem with members of the public walking across in front of the saluting dais, they should be, and are, directed to use the passage way to go around the rear of the town hall or cross the road but there will always be some who are so focussed on getting away promptly they ignore that and simply walk across. As far as possible scouts, cadets or other stewards could be deployed. If they are available, but this is likely to remain a problem as it is public highway so ultimately people do have a right to use it, however inconvenient or discourteous that might be on the day.

Finally, it was noted that there are normally about four meetings in the year to organise the event.

After considering all the above there was no proposals to make any changes and the report was noted.

GP2018/19.94 THANKSGIVING SERVICE

The Deputy Clerk reminded members that the main restriction here is numbers that can be accommodated in the church, which is usually St Peter's. There used to be tea and coffee afterwards and then a two course meal for invited guests. This has now been replaced by a buffet meal using the very good facilities available at St Peter's which works very well.

There were no proposals to make any changes and the report was noted.

GP2018/19.95 INDUCTION FOR NEW COUNCILLORS

The Deputy Clerk explained that this report covers what was in the previous induction programme and what needs to be added to make sure it is fully up to date. Councillors noted that two paragraphs appear to be expressions of opinion about the relative performance of members of council which was felt to be inappropriate in a report of this nature. These paragraphs would be deleted. The induction syllabus stresses the civic role as well as the political. It was noted that a section on members duties under GDPR regarding data they hold on personal systems and on safeguarding where relevant should be added. This was agreed.

With amendments noted above it was proposed by Councillor Michael, seconded by Councillor Hey and

RESOLVED That the proposed induction programme be accepted, with the addition of sections on members' responsibilities under GDPR and safeguarding.

GP2018/19.96 TRAINING STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Deputy Clerk reported that this item was being presented after a discussion with the President of the Society of Local Council Clerks who had forwarded a document which had been adapted to fit Hereford after discussion with the Town Clerk and was now being presented for consideration. It is recommended that Councils should set their training statements before, rather than after elections so new members came in knowing what was expected. The Clerk added that there was a choice between committing at this stage, which was recommended, but could be criticised for outgoing councillors seeking to impose something on incoming members they hadn't done during their own term of office. However, if the decision was left to new members it might be unreasonable to ask newly elected councillors to be sufficiently informed about their roles to be able to make an informed decision about training needs. The Clerk was also concerned about the use of the term "unless already qualified in the role" as it was open to debate and interpretation about what was accepted as a previous qualification which could undermine the application of the policy.

A number of members noted that the requirement for members to be trained in various roles should be stated as should rather than must.

After discussing these points it was proposed by Councillor Lloyd-Hayes, seconded by Councillor Dykes and

RESOLVED That this matter be deferred and that it be brought before members shortly after the council elections in May 2019.

The Clerk pointed out that attached to this item was request to formally approve a training agreement for the course currently being undertaken by the Deputy Clerk in pursuit of CiLCA accreditation. This had been agreed at Committee on 18th December, when the matter had been discussed in the context of appraisal feedback. However, SLCC were asking for a formal agreement to be signed by a Councillor after a fresh resolution, and had asked course members to get this resolved by their supporting councils. The Clerk strongly recommended that the agreement be signed, as the Deputy had already started the course and completed the first module.

It was proposed by Councillor Lloyd-Hayes, seconded by Councillor Wilcox and

RESOLVED That the Committee reaffirms its earlier decision and that the Chair should sign the agreement for the Deputy Clerk to enrol on the SLCC programme for CiLCA accreditation.

GP2018/19.97 LOCAL AWARD SCHEME

It was proposed by Councillor Lloyd-Hayes that this item be deferred for the next administration, in line with the decision on the earlier item about member training. There being no other comments this was affirmed without a vote.

GP2018/19.98 MAYOR'S HANDBOOK

Offices explained that this is a compilation of elements of the standing orders (where there is an appendix relating to the mayoralty) a previously written document on civic protocol and procedures and the Mayor's Handbook. The handbook has itself been amended and updated on many occasions, and was reviewed after each mayoral year to see if anything had cropped up which ought to be referred to in future in the handbook. As an aid to incoming mayors, and possibly all councillors, it was suggested that this should be consolidated into a single document.

As the review of contents began one member commented that it was a very long document and proposed that discussion be deferred. He was advised that the Chair had specifically asked members to read it well before the meeting and come with suggested alterations if they had any.

After some discussion it proposed by Councillor Wilcox, seconded by Councillor Michael and

RESOLVED that a working group of the Chair, the Deputy Mayor and the Clerk review the text and bring a revised and condensed document to the next meeting.

(The date for this meeting was resolved as 22nd February at 10-00 am)

GP2018/19.99 DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Clerk reported that this document was the culmination of a series of meetings and shared drafts with Dave Stevens of Unison. The drafts had also been seen by the two councillors asked by the Committee to lead on this. The disciplinary procedure for dealing with cases had been written by the Clerk and shared with Mr Stevens, the behaviour policy and code of conduct had been written by Mr Stevens and

shared with the Clerk. The final composite document had been compiled by the clerk and sent to Mr Stevens for any final comments or suggested changes. There had not been any and this now stood as a jointly recommended policy from Unison and the Clerk.

Councillor Lloyd-Hayes commented that his had been a long haul and she was grateful for the officers and members who had spent time bringing this fully up to date and making sure the Council had a key policy that was fit for purpose.

It was proposed by Councillor Key, seconded by Councillor Dykes and

RESOLVED

This policy, the attached code of conduct and the procedure is endorsed by the Committee and is in place with effect from 5th February 2019.

GP2018/19.100 PROPOSED VISIT BY A DELEGATION FROM JAWORZNO

The Clerk presented a report based on confirmation available at the time of writing. Since then it had been confirmed that this would be a party of five, although it was not known if this was two couples and one single or some other configuration. The quote from Three Counties was indicative of the cost of accommodation to roughly the equivalent standard of that provided in Poland. It was noted that locations closer to the city centre would reduce the travel costs as several venues would be in walking distance. Members also noted that the size of party as confirmed could be transported from and to the airport in a people carrier by the Mayor's Officer rather than a minibus, which would reduce the cost of the visit.

Jack and Anya who had been heavily involved in setting this link up would be asked to join the party for visits whenever they were available and would be asked to interpret where necessary. It was not known how many of the party speak English and to what standards. If possible, the high cost of external professional interpreters would be avoided.

Members then considered the recommendations in the report one by one and updated in the light of information available since the report was written.

That the Committee welcomes a visit by a delegation from Jaworzno from Saturday 13th to Wednesday 17th April.

That the Committee agrees to accommodation being booked for five guests at a central venue such as Aylestone Court, other establishments in Bodenham Road, Kidwells or similar.

That the Committee agrees to necessary expenses being met for lunches, dinners and sundry expenses, but asks members of the Council to offer hospitality in homes as well as the formal meals already arranged.

That the Committee notes that the Mayor has already agreed to host a dinner for the delegation on their last night.

That the Committee agrees to the hire of a people carrier to collect the delegation from and return them to the airport and will seek the co-operation of members in

supplying their own cars to supplement the Mayor's car when venues cannot be reached by walking.

That the Committee asks all members to co-operate actively with the visit and to make time to meet the delegates, join in escorting them at venues, show them community projects in their wards as well as features of the city. To this end, the Mayor's Officer will circulate the programme as it currently stands and asks members of council to commit to filling the vacant slots to complete the programme.

That the Committee notes that between now and the visit the Mayor's Officer will be co-ordinating with his opposite number in Jaworzno the detailed arrangements and seeking to fill the programme with the support of members of council.

After noting the changes to original recommendations set out above, it was then proposed by Councillor Lloyd-Hayes, seconded by Councillor Boulter and

RESOLVED That the delegation be welcomed on the date shown and that preparations for the visit continue as set out above.

GP2018/19.101 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To enable the consideration of confidential items, it was proposed by Councillor Lloyd-Hayes, seconded by Councillor Michael and

RESOLVED That in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s1(2) the press and public be excluded from the meeting.

GP2018/19.102 PAY STRUCTURE

The Clerk reported that there was more work to do to make sure this report was an accurate application of the new pay scales to anticipated incremental progression and that external advice could be sought before it was finalised.

Councillor Lloyd-Hayes proposed, Councillor Hey seconded and it was

RESOLVED That this item be deferred to the next meeting and that external HR advice be taken to verify or amend the contents.

GP2018/19.103 CHAIR'S REPORT – PROPOSALS REGARDING STAFFING MATTERS

Councillor Lloyd-Hayes reported that many members of the Committee had met with an external HR advisor (Julie Davis of Hoople) to clarify how best to approach the issues of TOIL raised at previous meetings. This has widened into a general review of job descriptions, some of which were out of date, and contract of employment which were currently based on a template developed some ten years ago by a different HR consultant.

The purpose of the discussion had been to clarify that the work being undertaken was to bring conditions of service, contracts and job descriptions fully up to date. There had been a lot of incremental change which had been actioned and letters of variation etc had been issued but it was hard for members to assimilate all of those and review what the current structure and distribution of work was. A full updating of the core document was timely and necessary.

Councillor Lloyd-Hayes thanked members who had attended the meeting for the time they had put into a line by line review and confirmed that if the proposals were accepted in principle by members she would attend the monthly staff meeting the day after the Committee to explain to staff to make it very clear that this was not about the individuals, who were considered to be doing an excellent job and was not about cutting posts. The value for staff of updating and clarifying conditions and job descriptions would be fully explained, as would the process which would involve each member of staff spending time with the adviser to collect their input into any redesign of their documents. The process would be fully consultative.

It was then proposed by Councillor Lloyd-Hayes, seconded by Councillor Wilcox and

RESOLVED That the Council engages Julie Davis of Hoople to consult staff and carry out a general review of contracts of employment, terms and conditions and job descriptions stressing that the review was of roles and responsibilities to align duties in a fair way and not a review of the current incumbents of posts.

GP2018/19.104 READMISSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was noted that the confidential business of the meeting had now been concluded and that the press and public could be readmitted.

GP2018/19.105 ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Appointment of the Junior Mayor (noted that the Mayor had requested this item be considered in time for this agenda but with so many items already confirmed the Clerk had asked, and the Mayor had agreed, that this could be considered in March.)

Items deferred from this meeting – staffing procedures and Mayor’s handbook

GP2019/19.106 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 19th March 2019 at 6 pm at the Town Hall

There being no further business the Chair declare the meeting closed at 8-10 pm

Signed

Date