**HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF GOVERNANCE AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE**

**The Hereford City Council Committee Room, Town Hall, Hereford**

**TUESDAY 4th JULY 2017 at 6pm**

**PRESENT:** The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Cllr Sharon Michael and Cllrs Chappell, Boulter, Kenyon, Lloyd-Hayes, Nicholls, Stevens, Tawn and Wilcox.

**ATTENDING:** Tracy Morriss – Deputy Town Clerk; Lesley Robinson – Administration, Finance & Information Officer.

**GP2017/2018.001 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN**

It was proposed by Cllr Nicholls, seconded by Cllr Tawn and unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

**That Cllr Chappell be elected as Chairman of the committee for the year 2017/2018.**

Cllr Lloyd-Hayes entered the room at 6.03pm and commented that she would need to leave the meeting around 6.25pm.

It was proposed by Cllr Tawn, seconded by Cllr Wilcox that Cllr Nicholls be elected as Vice Chairman. It was further proposed by Cllr Boulter, seconded by Cllr Stevens that Cllr Lloyd-Hayes be elected as Vice Chairman.

The two nominations for Vice Chairman were put to the vote:

Cllr Nicholls: 3 in favour

Cllr Lloyd-Hayes: 4 in favour

The Chairman thanked Cllr Nicholls for his work as Vice Chairman of the committee for 2016/2017 and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

**That Cllr Lloyd-Hayes be elected as Vice Chairman of the committee for the year 2017/2018.**

**GP2017/2018.002 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Hey.

**GP2017/2018.003 SUBSTITUTIONS**

None

**GP2017/2018.004 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

**GP2017/2018.005 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

It was proposed by Cllr Nicholls, seconded by Cllr Stevens and unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the meeting of Governance & Procedures committee on 7th February be approved and accepted as a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman.**

**GP2017/2018.006 SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM – Financial Support for Breast Cancer Haven Charity Event.**

The Town Clerk circulated his report and a copy email for members to read. The Chairman explained that this item had been put forward at the request of Cllr Wilcox, it was within the committee’s remit to take this on board and to ensure that Cllr Kenyon was present to put forward his comments as it related to an issue with a booking for a charity fundraising event at the Town Hall which had arisen during his Mayoral term.

Cllr Wilcox referred members to the copy email received today (04/07/17) from Debbie Hutchinson of Breast Cancer Haven (BCH) with regard to unexpected room hire costs for their charity event held in the Town Hall Assembly Room. Cllr Wilcox stated he was concerned about the reputation of the City Council - On her second day of employment with BCH, Debbie Hutchinson had approached The Mayor for City Council’s support with the event and with no mention of any room hire cost was under the impression it was agreed that no cost would be incurred – This didn’t happen and they later discovered they would be invoiced by Herefordshire Council. Cllr Wilcox felt that Council had a reputation issue at stake for the sake of a small charge around £120.00, it wasn’t appropriate for the charity to apply for a grant, and asked that Council agrees to pay the charge to maintain its good reputation and make good an offer interpreted as made in good faith.

Cllr Kenyon responded that he had agreed to the BCH event being held at the Town Hall and thought the booking would be covered as one of the Mayor’s ‘free issue days’. He was concerned that the charity was being charged for the room hire, had asked if this could be rolled over to next year’s Mayoral budget and stated that if City Council did not want to pay the charge, he would pay it himself. He also felt that it was wrong that schools are being charged by Herefordshire Council for room hire during the Town Hall’s normal weekday opening times.

The Town Clerk commented that his own report was strikingly similar to Breast Cancer Haven’s account and that The Mayor had thought he had a ‘free issue day’ room booking to offer. He added that having read Haven’s email sent today to see if there appeared to be any reputation injury to the City Council if BCH don’t get the money reimbursed, he didn’t feel that there was.

The Chairman asked members for their questions and comments which covered:

* Mayor has allowance of six ‘free issue days’ from Herefordshire Council for use of the Assembly Hall or Council Chamber – does not include Remembrance Day.
* No damage perceived to the reputation of the City Council.
* Pertinent for City Council to communicate with Herefordshire Council regarding bookings for school visits - schools should be able to use Town Hall for free – it is a living building with plans to have a museum element for benefit of the public.
* Suggested that Cllrs Wilcox and Kenyon could each pay half of BCH’s booking charge.
* Clarified that point 1.1 of Town Clerk’s report referred to BCH as being a past Mayor’s charity for the City during office of Cllr Wilcox.
* Payment by City Council may set a precedent for other charities to expect free room hire in future.
* Dependent on the Mayor of the day how the six ‘free issue days’ are used.
* Agreement that there had been a misunderstanding with the BCH booking.
* Prevent future confusion by booking ‘free issue days’ via Mayor’s Secretary who would keep track of these and what’s left.
* Agreement that City Council should settle the matter and pay the BCH room hire charge without delay.

Following discussion, all members were in favour of the recommendations with an amendment to be made to 3.2, i.e. to remove the word ‘charities’ and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

**3.1 - That Committee agrees the Breast Cancer Haven event should be paid by the City Council and charged to the Civic budget.**

**3.2 - That Committee wishes to raise the issue of Town Hall charges for schools with Herefordshire Council.**

The Chairman thanked Cllr Kenyon for his input and Cllr Kenyon left the meeting.

**GP2017/2018.007 RISK REGISTER**

Members received a brief overview of the Town Clerk’s report on the annual review of non-financial risks facing the Council and the measures in place to mitigate them:

The Town Clerk informed members that Council’s risk levels were steadily declining and there would be more resilience to staff absences and sickness as new staff are trained to cover across various administration tasks. He also advised members of a recommendation to change the post title of the Civic & Community Development Officer (CCDO) to Deputy Town Clerk as she officially deputises for the Town Clerk in his absence. The Town Clerk recommended and asked members to agree that that the annual non-financial risk report be accepted and referred to full Council.

Members’ questions and comments included:

* Report item 6.4 - queried out of hours emergency response service for public toilets? Town Clerk responded that this was covered by Recommendation 7.2.
* Proposed CCDO’s job title change to Deputy Town Clerk – Does the role of Deputy Town Clerk require a Town Clerk qualification/accreditation? – Committee previously resolved only to effect this if necessary – there is no legal requirement - except for attendance at one particular meeting, where an accredited Locum Clerk could be appointed to attend in Town Clerk’s absence.
* Any need to review CCDO’s salary? – Town Clerk replied - No pay implications as CCDO’s job description includes Town Clerk duties and job evaluated based on covering TC’s role with pay reflecting those duties.
* Recommendation 7.3 – Wording means members voting to change the current post title – not adding extra wording to title – Current CCDO job title means absolutely nothing to people outside the City Council.
* It’s just a straightforward and sensible name change to job title – not a problem.

Members were asked to vote on the recommendations and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

**7.1 – That the Committee accepts and refers to full Council the risk management report and the significant areas of risk highlighted, together with progress in reducing risk in other areas.**

**7.2 – That the Committee recommends that Community Development Committee reviews the operation of the toilets.**

**7.3 – That the Committee agrees to change the post title of the Civic and Community Development Officer to Deputy Town Clerk.**

**GP2017/2018.008 JUNIOR MAYOR**

The Town Clerk gave a brief overview of his report for members to consider options for developing the role of Junior Mayor which covered:

* Purpose of Junior Mayor - to give civic presence to a child representing children of the City and encourage their interest in work of City Council.
* Mayor had discussed with Town Clerk some difficulties getting schools interested and engaged with JM role.
* Opportunity for JM to be a member of the Youth Council – YC already involved interested and engaged with City Council - would make sense for Chairman of YC to be JM and represent youth of the City.
* No legal duty to have JM – or merge role with Chairman of Youth Council.
* Could do away with the role – or retain and make changes to work in a better way.

The Deputy Town Clerk gave members a brief overview of the Youth Council for information:

* YC are well represented by amazing young people and work very informally with them on looking at agendas etc.
* If their young members don’t attend more than three engagements they would have to be replaced.
* Worthwhile seeking view of YC at their next meeting in August – if Committee wished to go the YC route for appointing Junior Mayor.

Members’ questions and comments covered the following:

* During JM nominations, does Council send out list of events JM would be expected to attend/commit to? If not, why not?
* Not ideal to put JM automatically into the chair as may not be right person – should be someone already on Youth Council and specify cut-off age of 18.
* Cannot merge the roles of YC Chairman and JM.
* YC has approx.15 members with maximum of 12 attending meetings.
* YC elects their own Chairman YC - Let them choose who is going to be JM – hold joint discussions with them.
* That the roll of JM and the Youth Council Chairman are not one of the same as a JM changes each year whereas the Chairman of the HCYC may hold that post for several years.
* Happy to retain this important role and for YC to elect the JM.
* The Youth Council to shape how the selection for the JM will happen.
* Responsibilities expected of JM should be made clear.

It was proposed by Cllr Wilcox, seconded by Cllr Michael that the wording in Recommendation 3.1 be amended and unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

**That Committee agrees to consider nominations for Junior Mayor going forward to be selected by the Youth Council.**

**GP2017/2018.009 YOUTH COUNCIL AND CIVIC CEREMONIES**

The Town Clerk gave a brief overview of his report

* Youth Council in their second year of operation – has no current status within Council’s civic functions.
* Consideration to grant YC appropriate status for official invitation to attend civic ceremonies and events (i.e. Armistice Day, Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Day, Mayor Making, Thanksgiving, May Fair Opening, Three Choirs Festival, occasional freedom ceremonies or installation of civic officers).
* YC would be represented at events by their Chairman and one other member.

Members briefly discussed this, the Mayor commented that she was totally impressed with the Youth Council which was echoed by members who felt it would be fitting and appropriate for the Youth Council to be added to the civic list.

It was unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Youth Council be consulted about being added to the civic list and, if they agree, that the Chairman and one other member of the Council be invited to the civic occasions as listed above).**

**GP2017/2018.010 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

With regard to consideration under the Public Bodies (Access to Meetings) Act 1960 s1 (2) to exclude the press and public to enable a confidential matter **under item GP2017/2018.011** to be discussed, **there were no members of the press and public present.**

**GP2017/2018.011 STAFFING REVIEW – SECOND STAGE**

Members received the report and recommendations of the Town Clerk which covered:

* New staff successes – One employee’s permanent reduction in hours (from 18 to 14 per week) had only caused a minor issue with getting cheques out on Wednesday’s or Thursday’s – This would be addressed once all administrative staff fully trained. – New hours suit the employee’s work life balance.
* Beneficial to have an officer in post for social media and website – Recommended that members agree the temporary part time post (for Connor Powell) be made permanent.
* Clearly established a need for three part time administrative staff.
* Need for someone to undertake current Mayor’s officer duties after Roger Stokes’ retirement – Bob Tomkins has been in training – Suggested Council employs Roger in retirement for around six hours per week as a Custodian and Guide for the proposed new civic museum when it opens – to undertake tours of vault, parlour and museum - and keep him employed whilst the silver is being moved.
* Mayor’s Secretary post – Most Mayor’s seem to want a full time Secretary – Suggested the role supports parlour activities when appropriate.
* Staff cover for Reception – Takes staff away from their own roles. Not a problem for covering Receptionist’s lunch breaks and short absences but is an issue for longer term absences - Three of the Liveried Men have full reception experience – Recommended we appoint them for reception cover during some periods of staff holiday and sickness absences.

Members’ questions and comments covered the following:

* Mayor’s observations: Would be lost without secretarial support of Gill March - Everything going through a Secretary is more efficient with no confusion. Bob Tomkins would make an admirable Mayor’s Officer – Continuing his training with Roger – Council should retain Roger for as long as possible. Agreed with all recommendations.
* Agreement echoed by members for Town Clerk’s recommendations.
* Pay for Liveried Men covering reception should be per the Receptionist’s rate on a pro rata basis – All members agreed.
* Are there any financial implications? - Town Clerk advised no significant financial implications - only marginal ones well within scope - Finance & Policy committee had already agreed the Town Hall major project for a civic museum – Reduction in work hours for one member of staff.
* Confirmed Connor Powell’s working hours as 18 hours per week on permanent contract with City Council - no longer employed with Hoople agency.

Following discussion, members agreed the recommendations and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

**6.1 - That the Committee notes the successful induction of the two new staff into the posts of Administration, Information and Finance Officers and agrees to the reduction in hours for one post to fourteen hours a week.**

**6.2 - That the Committee noted the proof that the Council does benefit from dedicated time being sent on its website, facebook and twitter and agrees to make the third Administration, Information and Finance Officer post permanent and to offer the post to the current agency staff member Connor Powell.**

**6.3 - That the Committee notes the work done to develop a civic museum and the commitment of Finance and Policy Committee to fund this development.**

**6.4 - That the Committee notes the ongoing need for an experienced and knowledgeable person to undertake the duties of a Mayor’s Officer following the retirement of the current incumbent and therefore agrees to offer the post as described above as a full time employment to Bob Tomkins.**

**6.5 - That the Committee notes the need for adequate cover for the museum and for relief Mayor’s Officer functions and to employ Roger Stokes on a continuing contract for five to seven hours a week, once the museum is completed and to employ John Marshall on an ad hoc contract as required.**

**6.6 - That the Committee notes that in most Mayoral years there is a proven need for a full time secretary and resolves to continue with this post as a full time one, with any spare time being deployed as listed above.**

**6.7 - That the Committee authorises the use of liveried men with suitable experience to provide cover when needed for reception at the Town Hall.**

**GP2017/2018.012 READMISSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

On the conclusion of the confidential item listed above, there were no members of the press and public to be readmitted.

**GP2017/2018.013 NEW UNIVERSITY WORKING GROUP**

Members received a brief overview of the Town Clerk’s report and attached proposal for a joint university project board.

The Town Clerk stated that although Council were invited to nominate representatives to this body it seemed odd that those representatives had been generally ignored and communication was lacking. Reports had suggested that scrutiny would be done by the cabinet member which was irregular as this would not normally be done by one person and cabinet is not a scrutiny body. There would be a risk of too much financial pressure and no compensation to Herefordshire Council’s taxpayer’s should the university not be successful.

Members’ questions and comments covered the following:

* A member on the university working group had never been invited to any meetings.
* Why was there a mass resignation last year of 6 members of the Tertiary Board? – Despite some background investigation, unable to find out - was a ‘closed shop’.
* This whole thing is worrying.
* A member had a long conversation with the Principal of Ludlow College who feels very let down and undermined by the university group.
* Where are all the huge sums of money going to come from to develop this university? - Hereford and Ludlow College are already providing exactly the same facility.
* Concerned about intellectual property rights – Has Herefordshire Council put this scheme through their own scrutiny committee? – This needs to be properly investigated by them and not by its’ own individual member.
* Questions need to be raised at the next meeting of Herefordshire Council.
* Sets alarms bells ringing – No invitations to working group meetings and no email communications.
* Seems to be two organisations – one looking for student accommodation (money-making) – the other, the university.
* Chatter behind scenes about viability – Council definitely should be challenging this.
* Scrutiny committee should be working properly to address issues on this.
* City Council should not be financially committed to supporting this if it folds.
* This affects Hereford BID and reputation of the City.

Following member’s concerns the Town Clerk stated that he would write a letter from the City Council to The Leader of Herefordshire Council and copy the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee to raise all the issues concerned and that members could put forward any questions for the next meeting of Herefordshire Council.

Members were in agreement and accepted the Town Clerk’s recommendations and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

**6.1 - That the Committee mandates the Clerk to write to the Leader of Herefordshire Council and the members of the City Council appointed to lead on the new university issue to raise at every opportunity the following issues:**

**6.1.1 - Membership of the project board must reflect the political diversity of Herefordshire Council.**

**6.1.2 - Scrutiny must be through the appropriate scrutiny body not cabinet.**

**6.1.3 - Herefordshire Council must confirm that it can deliver the project support listed without detriment to other council services.**

**6.1.4 - A more satisfactory provision must be made for conflict resolution**

**6.1.5 - The position of Herefordshire Council must be more strongly protected against the risk that the university does not become a going concern so there is no residual loss to the council tax payers in that event.**

f

**GP2017/2018.014 ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

Members identified the following matters for discussion at future meetings of the Committee:

* HR Advice – Update on proposed use of Hoople as HR advisers to City Council.
* Youth Council Invitations

**GP2017/2018.015 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 26th September 2017

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 7.30pm

Signed ……………………………………………………………….

Dated …………………………………………………………………