**HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**Tuesday 23 February 2016**

**PRESENT:** The Right Worshipful Mayor of Hereford, Cllr Nicholls and Cllrs Tawn,

Chappell, Edwards, Hall, Kenyon, Michael, Baker, Stevens, Hey, Dykes, Mansell, Boulter, Wilcox, Bushkes and Lloyd-Hayes.

**C2015/2016.120 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Members received apologies for absence from Cllrs Griffiths and Hall who may be late arriving.

**C2015/2016.121 NOT PRESENT**: Cllr Rone

**C2015/2016.122 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**C2015/2016.123 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present.

**C2015/2016.124 MINUTES**

Cllrs asked for the following amendments to be made to the minutes:

Cllr Chappell’s name had been spelt incorrectly.

It should read Finance and Policy committee but reads Finance and Planning.

The amendments having been made and approved Cllr Edwards proposed seconded by Cllr Tawn and unanimously

**RESOLVED**

**To approve the minutes as a true and accurate account of the meeting and the Chairman duly sign, initial and date the minutes of the Meeting of the City Council held on the 12 January 2016**.

**C2015/2016.125 MAYOR’S COMMUNICATION**

The Right Worshipful the Mayor had nothing to report.

**C2015/2016.126 TREE WARDENS**

Members received a presentation from the Tree Forum and a report from the Town Clerk. Members noted this item was referred from the Planning Committee.

The Town Clerk gave a brief overview of his report covering the following points:

* The work of surveying the city’s trees and regularly inspections.
* Providing a regular monitoring and checking of trees.
* The cost of the affiliation and training fee which is set at £25-00 per warden/ward area.
* Affiliating to an outside body is a mater reserved for Council

Mo Burns informed member of a tree policy which had been adopted under the previous council (prior1998) a copy of this will be sent to the Town Clerk for the City Council to consider adopting.

Ms Burns gave a brief overview of their PowerPoint presentation and what is involved with becoming a tree warden and the different skills that can be brought to support this role.

She invited the City Council to consider having a tree warden in every ward within the city.

Tree warden network cost of £25 per year per tree warden per ward for help and advice. This £25 does not cover the training that will be delivered free to support them in their role.

The power point presentation covered the following:

* The tree warden Network
* The Tree Warden Council
* Volunteer Tree wardens
* Training
* Tree wardens have no statutory powers
* Invitation for the City Council to become part of the tree warden initiative

The Chairman invited questions from Members. Questions and comments covered the following:

* Fantastic idea.
* Members already aware of people who wish to become tree wardens who do they register with - through the Town Clerk.
* The Newton Farm ward already has a number of people who are already tree wardens or have been in the past.
* Consideration the City Council is expected to contribute £425 to affiliate to the scheme when other parish will only have to pay £25
* Good value for money at £425 per annum.
* Members welcomed this with Herefordshire Councils cut backs which will mean trees will no longer be looked after and there is an issue with trees as they get older they are getting too large for the areas where they are planted.
* Members hoped as a result of this scheme the tree wardens will come back to Council next year with a proposed budget for tree works and a plan to take information about trees in to the schools.
* Questions were asked in relation to whilst we have tree wardens to identify issues who is going to be responsible for carrying out the work required to the trees.
* Training may need to be given in time for anyone who wishes to take on the responsibility for tree maintenance. It is something that may develop in time.

Cllr Kenyon proposed affiliating to the scheme. Cllr Stevens seconded Cllr Kenyon’s proposal.

The proposal was put to the vote and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Council affiliates to the National Tree Wardens Forum to enable one warden per ward to be trained and authorises the spending of up to £425-00 on affiliation fees to enable this.**

There being no further question the Mayor thanked Mo Burns and her team for the presentation and they left the room.

**C2015/2016.127 NEW UNIVERSITY**

Members received a presentation from David shepherd and Tony Martin of

the New University Working Group as requested at the last meeting of the Council.

Mr Shepherd apologised for not responding to past communication from the City Council.

The presentation covered the following points:

* Project this far.
* Delivered through a group of 40 volunteers.
* Back in 2012 the group canvassed business communities and other groups.
* Looked at other universities and where the gaps were in the market. This gap was in graduate engineers.
* The university would be small and support young engineers.
* It would be the first engineering only university in the UK.
* It would be the first university not to have been merged from other further education facilities.
* Most degrees in engineering need entry qualifications in maths and physics. The university will not be requiring this, it will be down to grit, passion and enthusiasm.
* Working with Herefordshire Council to identify areas where the campus should be placed within the City.
* Proviso is that accommodation will be based north of the City with the workshops based on the enterprise zone.
* Degree in liberal engineering and based on Warwick’s admission standards.
* Cooperating closely with the colleges in Hereford.
* This will be the first new university in England in 40 years.
* 60 companies signed up so far supporting the university.
* Much research has been executed into all aspects of this new venture which has shown an employer based need for graduates with engineering degrees with a working knowledge of the projects addressed in employment.
* It is planed that the University will be small and very good
* This will be the first engineering specific university in the UK
* Students will work for 46 weeks each academic year
* Higher level degrees will be offered as the University grows

The Mayor opened the floor to member’s questions which covered the following:

* How many staff and students are there likely to be in the first tranche?
* Financial benefit to the City.
* Opening number of students will be approximately 350 and will expand by about 350 per year until they reach 5000 students a year.
* Bulk of students from the UK with no more than 15% from oversees.
* Economic impact on the City will be approximately 12 million per year based on 5000 students a year.
* Will be based on the engineering industries based within the City and cover the area up to an hour and a half commute from the City Centre.
* Training in robotics.
* Policy to have 50/50 male and female students at the university.
* The university’s key focus will be on teaching and will not be involved with research as with the other universities.
* Need to think about what we do to encourage students to stay in the county once they have achieved their diplomas.
* Where has the block method described been practiced before - In Canada.

There being no further questions the Mayor thanked Mr Shepherd and Mr Martin for their presentation and they left the room.

**C2015/2016.128 TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE**

The Town Clerk gave a brief overview of his report.

The purpose of this report is to agree an identified building from which to deliver a tourist information centre. The Town Clerk requested Members agree to delegate responsibilities to him to agree a lease on the identified property clarifying that he will seek advice as and when he needs it. The lease will need to be sealed and signed. Contractors will need to be assigned to carry out work needed to fit out the shop. The Town Clerk confirmed that elements of information/reports/resolutions that need to be made in relation to this will be filtered through the relevant committees. The Town Clerk reiterated he would appreciate the Members support on this matter.

Cllr Edwards paid credit to the Town Clerk's enthusiasm but expressed that in his view that it is not practical for Members to do this when there are many answers to many questions required before a lease is signed. The identified building will take £34,000 straight out of the City Council’s budget before anything can happen. Cllr Edwards also asked if information had been sort on how Leominster delivered their centre and how it evolved and where do they get their literature from.

Cllr Edwards proposed to move 5.1 of the Town Clerk’s recommendations but opposed the rest and reiterated that the Town Clerk is not given delegation to deliver such key elements and suggested that the responsibility be delegated to the Town Clerk, Finance Officer and a Member of the Council i.e. The Mayor.

The Town Clerk informed Members that delegating him is a legal requirement and that delegated powers cannot be awarded to a member of the Council.

Discussions continued in relation to delegation of power and other concerns shared by Members. Discussion items also covered items such as:

* Not for Profit organisation
* 80% discount on business rates.
* Need for reports on progress to come back regularly to committee.
* The financial benefit to the county as a result of tourism.
* 5.6 should include following agreement by the Finance and Policy committee.
* Shop presence in High Town
* Working closely with the BID team to deliver a TIC
* Position of the suggested premises.
* Cost.
* Items for sale
* Promotion of local attractions.

Cllr Lloyd-Hayes proposed the Town Clerk’s recommendations with the inclusion in 5.6 with the approval of the Finance and Policy Committee. Cllr Chappell seconded this proposal.

Cllr Wilcox informed Members he too had his concerns and related to the comments of Cllr Edwards and of Cllr Kenyon and has concerns as well and would rather a plan was produced for consideration identifying costs, lease over what period, cleaning, lighting, etc to ensure the City Council can afford to deliver a TIC.

The proposal was put to the vote 12 voted in favour, 2 voted against one abstained.

**RESOLVED**

**That Council agrees that 4 St Peter’s Street appears to be an acceptable site for a TIC and re-affirms its wish to see such a facility open in Hereford as soon as possible.**

**That Council delegates authority to the Town Clerk to agree terms including any rent free periods for fitting out etc to enable the leasing of the premises.**

**That Council approves the signing of the lease once final negotiations have been concluded and any necessary legal or property survey advice has been taken.**

**That Council authorises the Town Clerk to engage a surveyor and a solicitor should either or both be necessary to provide professional advice during the negotiations and to conclude the arrangements.**

**That Council authorises the Town Clerk to sign and seal a lease on conclusion of negotiations.**

**That Council authorises the Clerk and Finance Officer to engage contractors to carry out necessary work to fit out the TIC and prepare it for opening following the approval of the Finance and Policy Committee.**

**That Council notes the respective roles of committees as listed in the Town Clerk’s report in taking this project forward.**

**C2015/2016.129 TEAM HEREFORD**

Members received the report and recommendations of the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk gave a brief overview of his report.

Cllr Stevens proposed the recommendations contained within the Town Clerk’s report, seconded by Cllr Bushkes and unanimously

**RESOLVED**

**That Council endorses the proposals for a joined up approach to managing anti-social and nuisance behaviour as the first priority for a “Team Hereford” project similar to that in place in Shrewsbury.**

**C2015/2016.130 CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

Members received the report and recommendations of the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk gave a brief overview of his report.

Members were keen to see a visiting advisory team coming to the City.

Cllr Edwards proposed to support the recommendation as laid out in the Town Clerk’s report. This was seconded by Cllr Bushkes.

Cllr Lloyd-Hayes offered the Whitehouse Community building as a suitable venue to offer this service from.

The proposal was put to the vote and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED**

**That Council resolves not to release the £10,000 grant budgeted in the current year as the CAB has not sought to claim it and is ceasing operations.**

**That the funds be placed in the Carry Forward Reserve and be earmarked to support start-up costs for an on line CAB service within Hereford once a suitable venue is found and a provider is confirmed.**

**That the Council supports the efforts of the Market Towns Forum to secure a travelling CAB service to be available on appointed days within the market towns and City and resolves to redirect the budget for a CAB grant in 2016-2017 to support this venture.**

**C2015/2016.130 TRAINING FOR MEMBERS**

Town Clerk gave a brief overview of his report covering the following items:

* Consideration as to whether it is now appropriate to organise a training event, conference or away day for training and discussion on the major issues facing the Parish Council.
* That members commit to making a maximum effort to attend and agree to make this a priority.
* Town Clerk to draw up a suitable agenda and suggestions for venues to be considered by Governance and Procedures Committee who shall have oversight of this project.

Cllr Kenyon proposed the recommendations of the Town Clerk.

Cllr Stevens informed Members he was opposed to the idea and did not agree with these type of events and would not be attending.

Cllr Michael seconded Cllr Kenyon’s proposal suggesting using the school where she works as a suitable venue and asked that the Town Clerk is mindful of dates and times as most of the Cllrs work during the day.

Cllr Dykes suggested that if some dates were put forward for the Members to choose from then the Council could ensure maximum attendance.

Cllr Bushkes offered the Core community facility provided the event was delivered during the school holidays.

The proposal was put to the vote: 10 Members voted in favour, 1 Member voted against and 3 Members abstained from voting.

**RESOLVED**

**That Council felt it appropriate to organise a training event, conference or away day for training and discussion on the major issues facing it.**

**That 10 members commit to making a maximum effort to attend and agree to make this a priority.**

**That the Council authorises the Town Clerk to draw up a suitable agenda and suggestions for venues to be considered by Governance and Procedures Committee who shall have oversight of this project.**

**C2015/2016.131 RECOGNITION OF MAYOR-ELECT AND DEPUTY MAYOR-ELECT**

Members considered nominations for Mayor-elect and Deputy Mayor-elect for the Municipal Year 2016-2017.

Cllr Lloyd-Hayes proposed Cllr Kenyon as Mayor Elect. This was seconded by Cllr Bushkes.

10 Members voted in favour with three abstentions.

**RESOLVED**

**Cllr Kenyon is voted as Mayor Elect for 2016/2017.**

Cllr Kenyon proposed Cllr Michael as Deputy Mayor Elect. This was seconded By Cllr Chappell.

13 Members voted in favour.

**RESOLVED**

**Cllr Michael is voted as Deputy Mayor Elect for 2016/2017.**

Cllr hall arrived in the Chamber at 8.15

**C2015/2016.132 DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

Members noted the draft minutes of committees held since the last meeting of Council.

Members noted the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee 26th January 2016.

Members noted the minutes of the Planning and Highways Committee 13 January 2016 and 3 February 2016.

Cllr Edwards raised the issue that in the minutes of the 3 February 2016 in relation to an additional river crossing do not make sense. The Town Clerk explained the contents of the minutes. Cllr Edwards requested that the minutes reflected the discussion so the minutes could be understood. He also highlighted that in the mornings and afternoons the Great Western Way is full of pedestrians and cyclist and there really is not the room to add vehicles on to this foot way and asked that these points be noted and included in future considerations.

This was echoed by Cllr Chappell.

Members noted the minutes of the meeting of the Community Development Committee on the 2 February 2016.

Members noted the minutes of the Governance and Procedures Committee on the 9 February 2016.

**C2015/2016.133 REPRESENTATIVES OF OUTSIDE BODIES**

Members received reports from Councillors who have attended meetings of Outside Bodies as laid out below:

a) **Municipal Charities - Cllrs Baker, Boulter, Hey and Lloyd-Hayes**

Next meeting 8 March 2016.

b) **Herefordshire Market Towns Forum - Cllrs Nicholls, Tawn and Wilcox**

Cllr Wilcox reported a long meeting had been held at which the Herefordshire Council Director of Resources dealt with a number of questions on financial matters.

c) **HALC Executive Committee - Cllrs Griffiths and Nicholls (one vacancy)**

No meetings since the last meeting of council.

d) **SAM - Cllrs Griffiths and Nicholls**

Nothing to report.

e) **The Enterprise Zone Stakeholder Group - Cllr Paul Stevens.**

Nothing to report. Two previous meetings were cancelled a third was taking place tonight.

f) **Three Choirs Festival - Cllrs Baker and Bushkes**

Nothing to report.

g) **Hereford Twinning Association**

**(The Mayor automatically holds this post as President of the Association)**

Nothing to report.

h) **Hereford City Tourism Group - Cllr Lloyd-Hayes**

The group will be delighted with the news this evening in relation to a Tourist Information Centre..

i) **Hereford in Bloom - Cllr Michael**

Nothing to report.

j) **NALC Larger Councils Committee**

k) **New Hereford University Working Group – Cllrs Lloyd-Hayes and Stevens**

Nothing further to report following the presentation received tonight.

l) **Close House - Cllr Tawn**

Nothing to report.

m) **City of Culture Strategic Board - Cllr Hall**

Still no contact from the group.

n) **Business Improvement District Board of Management - Town Clerk**

Nothing to report.

Cllr Kenyon asked the Mayor to excuse him as he had to leave for work and left the room at 8.25 pm.

**C2015/2016.134 TOWN CLERK’S COMMUNICATIONS**

Members received communications from the Town Clerk as follows:

* Enforcement of planning decisions.
* Works for the restoration of the Belgium flag.
* Visit to Close House - building work nearly finished.

**C2015/2016.135 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 5th April 2016**

Members noted the date of the next meeting being 5 April 2016.

Cllr Edwards asked if the Finance Officer from Herefordshire council had written to the Town Clerk about the council tax grant as he had requested the Herefordshire Council Finance Officer to do.

There being no further business the Mayor called the meeting to a close at 8.45 pm.

Signed……………………………………………………………………………………

Dated……………………………………………………………………………………..