HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

## TUESDAY 24 JANUARY 2017

## PRESENT: The Right Worshipful the Mayor; Cllr Jim Kenyon and Cllrs Baker, Boulter, Bushkes, Chappell, Edwards, Griffiths, Hey, Lloyd-Hayes, Mansell, Michael, Nicholls, Rone, Stevens, Tawn, Wilcox.

**C2016/2017.89 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Members received apologies for absence from Cllrs Dykes, Hall.

**C2016/2017.90 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There was a declaration of interest under the Herefordshire Code of Conduct pursuant to the Localism Act 2011 in respect of item 9 on the agenda from Cllr Edwards who is a Cllr. for the Belmont ward where the Belmont & Heywood Country Park is located.

**C2016/2017.91 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

One member of the Press was present. There were no members of the public present.

**C2016/2017.92 MINUTES**

Cllr Bushkes proposed, seconded by Cllr Griffiths that Members approve the minutes of the Meeting of the City Council held on the 6 December 2016 which were accepted as a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman.

**C2016/2017.93 MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR ELECT**

Members put forward and considered nominations for Mayor and Deputy Mayor Elect:

Mayor Elect: Cllr Michael was nominated by Cllr Chapel, seconded by Cllr Mansell, all were in favour.

Deputy Mayor Elect: Cllr Boulter was nominated by Cllr Lloyd-Hayes, seconded by The Mayor, Cllr Jim Kenyon, all were in favour

It was therefore unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

**That Cllr Michael is elected as Mayor Elect and Cllr Boulter is elected as Deputy Mayor Elect for the forthcoming year of office 2017-2018.**

**C2016/2017.94 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS AND CIVIC EVENTS 2017-2018**

Members received the new Calendar of Council, Committee and Civic Events 2017/2018 forapproval.

Cllr Michael questioned the second page where the year 2017/2018 was shown in relation to event dates from Thursday 11 January 2018 onwards and asked if the year should be amended from that point to 2018/2019?

In response it was advised that this document normally follows the Municipal Year.

It was unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

**that the Calendar of Meetings and Civic Events document be approved by Members subject to amendment of Municipal Year dates where necessary.**

**C2016/2017.95 PRECEPT AND RISK ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS**

The Town Clerk gave a brief overview of his report from the Finance & Policy Committee on 17/01/2016 as follows:

* F&P Committee had pondered if 0.5% increase in Council Tax was necessary and recommended there be no increase in Council Tax for 2017-2018 and to remain at £49.77 based on the Band D equivalent properties.
* Recommendation to accept budget estimates for 2017-18.
* Recommendation to agree total budget figure of £796,917 for the year.
* Council Tax remains unchanged which would help to cover cost of free toilet facilities in the City and recent staffing changes.
* Risk Analysis paper shows we remain a relatively low risk organisation with substantial reserves.
* We are well covered, the budget is affordable and we can progress with all the things we want to do.
* Finance &Policy Committee recommended this to Council Members for their approval.

Questions and comments from Members covered the following:

* A zero increase was first advocated at Finance & Policy Committee and the Finance Officer had reported we had £400,000 in reserve, almost twice as much as some Councils.
* The general public does not need to pay any additional funding and this is very positive going forwards.
* Budget had been very well debated and Members were very proud to be able to put this forward.

It was proposed by Cllr Edwards, seconded by Cllr Lloyd-Hayes and unanimously

**RESOLVED**

* **That the Council approves the budget estimates for 2017-18.**
* **That the Council approves the total budget for the year of £796,917, an increase of 1.5%.**
* **That the Council approves that a figure of £796,917 be served upon Herefordshire Council as the precept figure.**
* **That the Council approves a council tax level at Band D of £49.77, with no increase from 2016-2017 for 2017-2018.**

**C2016/2017.96 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OF PROMOTING A HIGHWAY SCHEME**

The Town Clerk gave Members a brief overview of his report and recommendations:

* The scheme had so far incurred some of his time and voluntary efforts but little other financial implications as yet. If progressed, substantial costs would be incurred by a referendum and the preparation of full technical drawings, land surveys etc.
* As a City Council, we have no legal power to be a highway authority however it would be within our powers to promote, support and advocate the scheme with lobbying etc. and these actions would not cost a lot of money.
* The Town Clerk asked Members to note that the recommendations at the end of his report are legal.

The Mayor opened the floor to Members for their questions and comments:

* The City has been pushing for a bridge crossing to ease traffic congestion and it is hoped this is not ‘dead in water’.
* Desirable to see a further crossing at Belmont to make moving across the City easier.
* Need crossings from South to East and South to West. A by-pass will not solve issues.
* Appreciation was expressed on the nature of the paper set out by the Town Clerk.
* It was suggested an amendment be made and that 6.2 could read, “This Council, in every opportunity it has, should support any group of like-minded people seeking a transport solution with an Eastern bridge”.
* Herefordshire Council’s policy on a Western route is known but many believe there should be an Eastern route.
* A view was expressed that the City Council should have some form of statement acknowledging the City Council’s support.
* Following a previous study a report is readily available which would negate the need to repeat or duplicate much of the work completed in the past
* Herefordshire Council have stated it will not consider an Eastern crossing until the Western crossing is completed.
* A Member stated the City Council must not give up and should continue suggesting and putting out thoughts and ideas in relation to an Eastern River crossing.
* Western bypass would increase the value of homes and Band D properties will increase in forthcoming years.
* Finding funding and justification for two new bridges would take more than pressure groups to promote to any parishes which are against it.
* Neither the Eastern or Western routes create a ‘bypass’.
* Herefordshire Council is supporting the Western route at this stage with the aim that through the implementation of additional phases there will eventually be a bypass circling the City.
* In the past the Government said ‘no’ to an Eastern route due to the Lugg Meadows and is there any point the City Council lobbying on an issue which has been debated exhaustingly over previous years?
* The City Council must bear in mind that with regard to funding the Government has stated they will listen to what the public have to say.
* There is a need to get the Western route up and running first before further routes are debated?
* The Mayor informed Members he has met with many parish councils and they are all fully supportive of an Eastern bridge.

Following discussions, the Town Clerk’s recommendations were put to the vote:

**Recommendation 6.1** - Proposed by Cllr Stevens, seconded by Cllr Edwards and unanimously

**RESOLVED**:

**That the Committee notes the report and the legal issues arising from promoting the scheme.**

**Recommendation 6.2 -** Proposed by Cllr Bushkes, seconded by Cllr Mansell and after extensive discussion was put to the vote:

9 Members in favour, 3 against, 3 abstained.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Council supports the creation of a pressure group to promote the case for an Eastern river crossing and a new road.**

**C2016/2017.97 COUNTRY PARK SUPPORTERS – Access All Areas**

Members were asked to consider a recommendation from Community Development Committee on 12th December 2016 in relation to the above large

grant application.

Cllr Edwards gave a brief overview of his report which had been circulated to Members prior to the start of the meeting. He stated that Cllr Dykes who was not present had already indicated his support for this project. The following points were covered:

* The location of the safety boardwalk was at Belmont Pools, near Newton Coppice and Belmont Abbey.
* This is a well-used area and in the past there had been a serious accident on the road where access across the pools at this part can only be gained via walking along the narrow and relatively dangerous part of Haywood Lane.
* Cllr Edwards asked that Members be more supportive and find a way to spread the total cost of the bid over two financial years. If Veolia’s funding bid does not come to fruition then there would be back up.
* It may be that a softwood timber boardwalk has a shorter life of approximately 10 years as opposed to the hardwood option which should last at least 30yrs.

The Mayor thanked Cllr Edwards for his input and asked Members for their questions and comments:

Questions asked:

* How much is the bid to Veolia? – The bid s is for £50,000.
* Is there a time limit on bids already approved? – Answer: The time limit has expired but we have asked for special permission for it to be extended.
* Was an application made to the County Council for any funding on this? – Answer: The County Council had already invested huge sums of money on the regeneration and other projects in the area as well as the 106 money for the footbridge.

General comments:

* Any additional funding not used would be returned to Council, pro rata.
* When the City Council supported community projects in the past it has always ensured funding provided quality and value for money.
* Request that the proposal is amended to grant funding of £36,000. £16,000 in this financial year and a further £20,000 if required subject to confirmation of other funding bids in the next financial year.
* Some Members expressed uncertainty about granting £36,000 but tentatively were in favour subject to other bids being exhausted.
* If the softwood option was chosen there would be a need for higher maintenance and this would cost more in the long run.
* Support for full amount of £36,000 as it equates to small amount each year and would be a good investment over the lifetime of the bridge.
* Scheme is very important because it would benefit many people across the whole City, encouraging them to get out and about walking and enjoying the countryside.
* Lengthy discussions on this had taken place at recent meeting of the Community Development committee.

It was proposed by Cllr Nicholls, seconded by Cllr Wilcox to amend the grant award to the figure of £16,000 for this financial year, with a further £20,000 funding award in the next financial year which will be dependent on any funding raised from other bids.

The Mayor asked Members to vote on this new proposal:

8 in favour, 1 against, 5 abstentions

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Council awards £16,000.00 for this year towards the cost for installation of a hardwood bridge.**

**That the remaining £20,000.00 be held until the group confirm the total of any funding raised from their various other bids.**

**C2016/2017.98 SOUTH WYE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION - Belmont Library**

Members were asked to consider a recommendation from Community Development Committee on 12th December 2016 in relation to the above large

grant application.

It was proposed by Cllr Boulter, seconded by Cllr Bushkes that this item be deferred to the next meeting of Community Development Grants Committee pending receipt of additional information. This was put to the vote:

11 in favour, 3 abstentions.

It was

**RESOLVED:**

**That this item be deferred to the next meeting of the Community Development Grants Committee on Monday 13th February 2017, pending receipt of additional information from the South Wye Community Association.**

**C2016/2017.99 WHEELED SPORTS FOR HEREFORD – Cycle Track**

Members were asked to consider a recommendation from Community Development Committee on 12th December 2016 in relation to the above large

grant application.

The Town Clerk gave a brief overview of correspondence received from the relevant partners, as follows:

* The City Council has received a letter from HALO in full support of this project.
* The City Council has received confirmation from Wheeled Sports 4 Hereford that they are happy to give their continued support in applying for funding to support this project subject to proposals and leases being in place.
* Herefordshire Council had stated that, subject to proposals and leases, they have no objection in principle to the project.
* At present no communication has been received from the racecourse confirming their support with regard to the cycle track project.

Members were asked for their comments and questions:

* At the last Community Development Meeting, Members stated letters of support from other parties involved must be submitted and that it was important to have this confirmation in writing before the Council considers awarding any grant funding towards the project.
* Members expressed the importance to provide means to encourage and help people to keep fit.
* Support for project in principle but there are some doubts on financial aspects.
* Reassurance needed that the £30,000 kick-start funding is banked securely and City Council kept informed upfront when and how the money is being spent.
* Members aired concerns about the cost of the track (£600-£800 per metre) making total cost very expensive at approximately £1,000,000.
* Question: Would British Sports & Cycling be happy to help support this? Answer: They have indicated they would welcome an application to support this project.
* This is an enormous opportunity for Hereford.
* The need for the City Council to be forward thinking by first investing some of initial money required to progress this project.
* Wheeled Sports 4 Hereford is a fantastic representative for fundraising.
* Important opportunity to improve the health of the community and a great opportunity to work in unison with Herefordshire Council who are also supportive.
* Very comprehensive business plan has been put forward and this has been very well debated by the Community Development Committee.
* The initiative fits in very well with HALO and the Skate Park’s aims and objectives and would be of enormous benefit to disabled people and the community in general.

Following discussion it was proposed by Cllr Bushkes, seconded by Cllr Lloyd-Hayes that the City Council supports this project and awards the £30,000 grant funding requested.

Members were asked to put this to the vote.

Cllr Kenyon, whilst contributing to the discussions abstained from voting on this item:

13 in favour, 2 abstentions

It was

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Council supports the Wheeled Sports 4 Hereford Cycle Track project with a grant funding award of £30,000.00.**

**C2016/2017.100 MAYOR’S COMMUNICATION**

Members received communication from The Right Worshipful the Mayor:

* The Poland trip had been very successful and full communications would follow.
* Various plate visits had taken place in the Mayor’s Parlour.
* Talks had been taking place about the military exhibits at Museum.
* The Mayor had received a letter from Amnesty International regarding prejudice and had replied to express that prejudice was not tolerated in this Council.

**C2016/2017.101 DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEES**

Members noted the draft minutes of the meetings as laid out below:

**Community Development Committee**

(Grants) 12th December 2016

13th December 2016

**Planning Committee**

12 January 2017

**C2016/2017.102 CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

* Governance & Procedures Committee – Cllr Mansell stood down, vacancy not filled and deferred until the new municipal year.
* Community Development Committee – Cllr Mansell stood down, Cllr Stevens was elected to fill the vacancy.
* Finance and Policy Committee - Cllr Griffiths stood down, vacancy not filled.

**C2016/2017.103 REPRESENTATIVES OF OUTSIDE BODIES**

Members received reports fromMembers who represent the City Council on the following bodies.

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| 1. **Municipal Charities (x 4 Members)** Cllrs Boulter, Baker, Hey and Lloyd-Hayes   **MLH -** There had been a huge spend on Alms Houses in the City. |
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| 1. **Herefordshire Market Towns Forum (x 3 Members)** Cllrs Nicholls and Wilcox. (plus 1 outstanding vacancy) – The next meeting was scheduled for tomorrow. |
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| 1. **HALC Executive Committee (x 3 Members)** Cllrs Nicholls and Griffiths (plus 1 outstanding vacancy) – Cancelled. |
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| 1. **SAM (x 2 Members)** Cllrs Nicholls and Griffiths – Meeting due next week. |
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| 1. **The Enterprise Zone Stakeholder Group (X 1 Member)** Cllr Griffiths – The next meeting to take place in February. |
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| 1. **Three Choirs Festival (x 2 Members)** Cllrs Lloyd-Hayes and Nicholls – Attended recent meeting where new Chief Executive and Publicity Manager were announced. Possibility of a scheme to present free tickets for the 2018 Festival. Based on idea that if people regularly purchase tickets and they buy a second ticket, it could go into a pool and be given free. |
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| 1. **Hereford Twinning Association** (x 1 Member who is always the Right Worshipful the Mayor of Hereford as President of the Twinning Association) **-** Cllr Michael as Deputy Mayor – Nothing to report. |
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| 1. **Hereford City Tourism Group (x 1 Member) -** Cllr Lloyd-Hayes – Tourism Group are wondering what is happening on the proposed TIC at the Town Hall and would like to receive an update soon.. 2. **Hereford in Bloom (x 1 Member)** Cllr Michael – Nothing to report. |
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| 1. **New Hereford University Working Group (x 2 Members)** Cllrs Lloyd-Hayes – Nothing to report. 2. **Close House (x 1 Member)** Cllr Tawn – Nothing to report. 3. **City of Culture Board (x 1 Member)** Cllr Hall – Nothing to report. 4. **The BID group (x 1 Member)** Cllr Len Tawn – Attended the BID meeting where C Paskin was introduced as the new City Inspector. Request that Mr Paskin is invited to a future Council meeting.   - There had been an increase was in theft over the Christmas period where City was targeted for pick-pocketing.  - Funding review to be carried out on ‘How safe the City is’.  - Contributed to consultation on free parking event. Maylords car park reverting back to Pay and Display.  - Introduction of wireless readers is affecting the ‘bring and go’ service.  - July/August – Award ceremony planned.  - Chewing gum machine is working extremely well. |
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**C2016/2017.104 TOWN CLERK’S COMMUNICATIONS**

Members received communications from the Town Clerk:

* Battle’s Over - WWI Tribute & Beacons of Light Ceremony - The Deputy Mayor elect has stated she is happy to support this event. Other suggested celebration tribute for a bagpiper to play outside the Cathedral at 06.00 am - not proving popular due to early time!
* General updates:
* As part of budget it had been agreed to stop charging for use of public toilets. This has also been agreed by Geoff Hughes, Herefordshire Council. The City Council will only be paying for labour charges for the new lock changes on these toilets.
* Town Clerk had met with Spencer Grogan recently, who is the expert for the park and Disabled Swing installation. Pleased to report that SG will be working with the contractors on this project.
* Town Hall building - Future management – Surveys are starting soon to look at various aspects of the building.
* Syrian refugees should be welcomed into the City and have been invited into the Mayor’s Parlour.
* Vennture – They will be doing the City Spring clean.

**C2016/2017.105 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 7th MARCH 2017

The Mayor thanked all Members for their contributions. There being no further business the Mayor closed the meeting at 7.25pm

Signed …………………………………………………………………………………..

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