**HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL**

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

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

**TUESDAY 7th FEBRUARY 2017 at 6pm**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Boulter, Chappell (Chairman), Kenyon, Lloyd-Hayes, Nicholls, Stevens, Tawn.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Steve Kerry (Town Clerk), Lesley Robinson (Administration, Finance & Information Officer).

**GP2016/2017.27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Hall, Wilcox, Michael.

The Chairman welcomed Lesley Robinson, recent new starter in the role of Administration, Finance & Information Officer.

**GP2016/2017.28 SUBSTITUTIONS**

None.

**GP2016/2017.29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**GP2016/2017.30 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Members received and confirmed the minutes of the extra ordinary meeting of the Governance and Procedures Committee held on the 27TH September 2016.

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

**RESOLVED:**

**That that the minutes of the meeting of 27th September 2016 be agreed as a true and accurate record.**

**GP2016/2017.31 DISPLAY OF CIVIC TREASURES**

The Town Clerk gave a brief overview of his report:

* Civic Treasures coming out of the vault would be more accessible for viewing by the public.
* Significant issues included converting part of the ground floor for access.
* Alternative suggestion for Mayoress’ Parlour to be used as display site – there would be some implications for Mayors.
* Purpose of this discussion – to change proposed site from ground floor area to Mayoress’ Parlour.
* Need to ensure original historic charters remain secure and kept in environmentally protected store.
* Vault would still be a secure place - cannot guarantee protection if removed from the vault.
* We could adapt vault and leave originals there for people to see. Vault getting damper each year.
* Good photographic reproductions of Charters could be stored downstairs.
* For security, use of Mayoress’s Parlour does look the better option plus no need to move any staff out of that area.

Members were asked for their questions and comments which included the following:

* Kitchen windows are a vulnerable part of the Parlour – Would it be possible to have security bars?
* Security would be looked at from all angles including secondary double glazing, window bars, alarms etc.
* Parlour offers better protection from theft than ground floor location.
* Idea originally suggested by Mayor’s Officer, seems very viable and would save us money on vault rental.
* We can work together with Herefordshire Council on this.
* Alternative suggestion made to site Charters in The Mappa Mundi building at the Cathedral – There is a charge to the public.
* This could be looked into – The Cathedral would be delighted to display the Charters and have wanted to do so for some time.
* This keeps the Charters within the City walls and offers a better tourism option for the City.
* If ground floor access was acquired (BID office or cellar) some artefacts currently at Friar St Museum would be excellent for us to put on display – e.g. The Mayor’s carriage (interior refurbished by City Council) and large Chinese cabinet.
* In the past, the City Council had spent money on these items - a shame the items are not on display to be enjoyed.

Following discussions, it was proposed by Cllr Kenyon, seconded by Cllr Tawn and unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Committee supports the proposal to focus attention on developing the Mayoress’ Parlour as a suitable site to display the Civic Treasure, noting the need to have good quality facsimilies made of the charters and for the originals to be stored in a suitably secure and environmentally protected archive or vault.**

**GP2016/2017.32 RESTORATION AND HERITAGE PARTNERSHIP**

Members received a brief oral update from the Civic and Community Development Officer:

* Received contact last week from Hannah McSherry, Project Development Officer, Herefordshire Council, regarding works to façade of Town Hall.
* Herefordshire Council must have some educational element to this project.
* Great opportunity for City Council and Herefordshire Council to work together.
* HC looking for £100,000 Heritage Lottery funding with £20,000 coming to the City Council to develop the project’s museum element.
* Project plan has been drafted by Hannah McSherry to go with bids for submission to Heritage Lottery Fund.
* Several benefits to the City Centre - Already looking at some of the ideas.
* City Council would have to match the funding with £20,000. We haven’t identified a budget yet but is a win-win situation from our point of view.
* We would be working closely with Archiving team who would advise on correct storage for artefacts, suitable cabinets for storage or upgrade to the vault etc.
* We could further benefit from working with Archiving team - Items from Centenary may be available to come back to Town Hall for display.
* Project Plan identifies areas, subject to change, that City Council should look at moving forward. They are only suggestions for noting at this stage, and open to possible changes.

Members’ comments covered the following:

* The project is a great idea – City Council would be mad not to go with it.
* Not yet sure what’s happening with proposed Tourist Info Centre for Town Hall – could some of this funding be used?
* City Council need to be building relations with Herefordshire Council – this project is an excellent opportunity.
* Generally too much negative Press! City Council are working with HC on several projects.
* City’s connection with Lord Nelson - One of City’s Freemen has a collection of Nelson Memorabilia.
* City Council’s finances are very healthy – don’t see why this project shouldn’t be moved forward.
* Perfect timing for the City of Culture bid.
* Mention of a BBC series of TV programmes looking at artefacts in various Town Hall’s across the country. Suggestion to invite, via Town Clerk, BBC Producers to come to Hereford to see our civic treasures.
* Mayor mentioned Council had already contacted the BBC, plus Presenter, Kate Bliss.
* Press coverage of Council meeting which took place in the Chamber on 24th January – The Hereford Times (hard copy) gave a much better, balanced view of the meeting. City Council’s ‘No increase in Council Tax’ received good coverage (electronic version not complimentary).

Following discussions, members put the recommendation to the vote:

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

**RESOLVED:**

**That the City Council agrees to match the funding amount of £20,000.00, being provided by Herefordshire Council’s funding bid with Heritage Lottery Fund, to be used for developing the museum element and display of the City Treasures at the Town Hall building.**

**GP2016/2017.33 INSTALLATION OF CHIEF STEWARD AND RECORDER**

The Civic and Community Development Officer gave Members a brief oral update which covered the following:

* General update on arrangements including, ceremony filming, photgraphic recording.
* Menu choice – Honorary Recorder and Chief Steward had indicated a preference for the cold menu selection – Members were asked to confirm which menu selection they would be happy with.

There was some discussion including members’ questions and comments:

* Noticed only a small price difference between the hot and cold menus.
* How many invitees? - Total of 106, although it is anticipated a fair amount will not accept.
* A restriction of a maximum number of 90 which can be accommodated in the Council Chamber.
* If we have 80 attendees, City Council could save approx. £180.00.
* There are 7 Liveried men on the list, who get paid in two sessions.
* One possible suggestion - Staff are invited to attend but if not on duty, not invited to attend the meal afterwards.
* As this only gives a minimal saving then felt we should invite staff to the meal.
* In the past, Liveried men in attendance had been included in the meal.
* Not happy for some guests to be invited to the meal and others not.
* Relatively small sum of money – It’s a civic ceremony and part of our heritage - Liveried men should be included.
* The Photographer will be working for free.
* The Chairman stated that this is for Member’s information only at this stage and requested separate, further discussion on it with the Town Clerk and Civic & Community Development Officer.

Following discussions, the Civic & Community Development Officer asked Members to confirm their choice of menu option for the luncheon:

Hot meal menu – 4 voted in favour, 1 abstained

Cold meal menu – 2 voted in favour, 1 abstained

It was agreed by members and

**RESOLVED:**

**That the choice of luncheon menu is agreed as the hot meal option for the event of the Installation of The Honorary Recorder and Chief Steward, on Sunday 19th March 2017.**

**GP2016/2017.34 APPRAISAL AND NEW STARTERS**

The Town Clerk gave Members a brief oral report with his recommendations:

* Appraisals – Members to note that staff appraisals have been held.
* New starters - Admin, Finance &Information Officers – All three are being treated as new starters, including the part-time member who has returned from maternity leave on a variation to her contract of 14 hours per week, from 18 hours per week.
* Recommended that we will need three members of staff, including the temporary officer.
* Requested member’s authorisation to agree trial for one staff member’s reduction in working hours from 18 to 14 hours.
* Authorisation for extension of the existing 6 month temporary contract of the 3rd new starter to be addressed at the next meeting on 4th July.
* No legal reason why Committee cannot make a temporary post permanent if all goes well. Despite the myth, there is no need to advertise the post if a person is already in post and doing the job successfully.

Members’ discussions included the following comments:

* Hesitant to agree to another permanent role until more is known on progress of proposed Tourist Information Centre.
* Appraisal for Town Clerk undertaken by the Chairman & Vice Chairman of this Committee (Governance & Procedures). Town Clerk’s last appraisal was done in September 2016.
* Felt it was odd that Chairman & Vice Chairman carry out appraisals with no formal training.
* An organisation of this size should be looking to outsource HR functions to a professional company so we don’t leave ourselves wide open legally.
* Done some research – Other City Councils (Ross on Wye and Kington) are outsourcing.
* We use Hoople as our HR advisors. No reason why the Chairman & Vice Chairman could not ask for Hoople’s support and input on Town Clerk’s appraisal.
* Hoople do not carry out the appraisal but only there to ‘hold hands’. We as large parish council need to be more professional.
* Members not qualified for appraisal process but used common sense and general understanding enabling proper judgement of the processes.
* Didn’t think Hoople’s presence would have added anything to process and felt happy with our conduction of the appraisal.
* Not a bad thing for Hoople to be involved in our appraisal process as a guiding force and it would make us open and more transparent.
* Hoople provided us with support for job vacancies where five staff were shortlisted.
* We should take Hoople’s advice going forward - Hoople’s presence could be very useful if dealing with difficult challenges, e.g. staff with ‘an axe to grind’.
* Suggested we could use an outside agency, preferably with local government experience. It would cost us some money but we would be more professional and it protects both sides.
* Support for use of independent HR witness on the basis it is ‘independent’ to protect ‘both’ sides.

The Chairman stated he would inform members at the July meeting of the date when we intend to start this.

It was suggested by Cllr Kenyon that recommendation 6.1 be amended with an addition stating that we use external HR support in future for the Town Clerk’s appraisals.

All members were in favour to all recommendations with the additional amendment to 6.1 and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

**6.1 - That Committee notes that appraisals have been held where appropriate and that the City Council utilises external HR support for the future appraisals of the Town Clerk.**

**6.2 – That the Committee congratulates the new starters and the staff member returning from maternity leave on a successful start/restart with the Council.**

**6.3 – That the Committee authorises the Clerk to agree with one of the staff members a reduction of 4 hours in the regular working week to be expressed in a variation to their contract of employment if the experiment is judged to be successful by both the Clerk and the employee.**

**6.4 – That the Committee authorises an extension to the temporary assignment with Hoople for the one member of staff provided by that organisation until 5th July to allow for consideration by Committee of any recommendation that may be forthcoming for either an extension to temporary service or the creation of a permanent job.**

**GP2016/2017.35 ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

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

* **Mayoral Support Team/Civic Museum Staffing** - Update reports including progress and costs.
* **Heritage Lottery Fund Bid** – Update.
* **Update on temporary post of Administration, Finance & Information Officer** - either to keep as a temporary post for a period or go to a permanent post.
* **City Council website - Governance section** - Report on where we are and where we should be.
* **British Tourism & Travel Show – 22nd and 23rd March 2017** - City Council Stand.
* **City Council Social Media -** Ward area information requested from Councillors for inclusion and to support our website.

**GP2016/2017.36 DATE OF NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING**

Members noted the date of the next meeting:

**Tuesday 4th JULY 2017** - 6pm - COMMITTEE ROOM

There being no further business the Chairman thanked members for all their work and called the meeting to a close at 7.05 pm

Signed ………………………………………………………………………..

Dated …………………………………………………………………………

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Hereford City Council has adopted the Code of Conduct of Herefordshire Council pursuant to the Localism Act 2011. In terms of declarations of interest the following principles now apply.

1. The former distinction between prejudicial and personal interests has been replaced, and these terms should no longer be used. They will not be used in minutes.
2. Where a member has registered a financial or “pecuniary” interest in the register of interests held by the Monitoring Officer of Herefordshire Council, they must repeat this declaration when any item in which they have such an interest is on the agenda at any meeting they attend. Having made that declaration, they must fill in the register brought to each Committee and Council meeting and may not make any comment whatsoever while the item is under discussion. They may, if they wish, remain in the meeting to observe the debate.
3. Where a member has an interest which is sufficient to give rise to a reasonable expectation that they will not be able to consider a matter impartially, for example where they have a close personal relationship with a party involved, where they have made a public and unequivocal statement of their views etc, this is a disclosable, but non-pecuniary, interest. They should declare this interest at the start of the meeting and may remain in the room and speak (provided members of the public would also be allowed to speak on this item). Members who have declared an interest of this type may not, however, vote on the item to which their interest applies.
4. Where a member becomes aware of an interest during discussion they must declare it immediately and act accordingly.
5. Members of the Planning Committee should continue to resolve at the start of each meeting that their views are preliminary and that those who are members of Herefordshire Council reserve their final position until all representations and facts have been considered.

Steve Kerry

Town Clerk

**All enquiries concerning this agenda should be addressed to the Town Clerk, Hereford City Council,**

**Town Clerk’s Office, Town Hall, St. Owen Street, Hereford HR1 2PJ. Tel: 01432 260429**