

HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING 15th September 2020

Present: The Right Worshipful the Mayor Councillor Kath Hey and Councillors Andrews, Butler, Foxton, Hornsey, Kenyon, Milln, Powell, Tillett, Toyne, Tyler, Wilcox and Williams.

Attending: Steve Kerry Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Tracy Morriss Deputy Town Clerk

At the start of the meeting the Mayor confirmed that the meeting was being held under the provisions of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations Sections Four and Five.

C2020/21.20 ACCESS FOR MEMBERS

The Mayor asked all members present to confirm they could see and hear the proceedings. This was confirmed.

C2020/21.21 ACCESS FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the meeting was being live streamed and was also being recorded. The Facebook Live reached 366 people with 212 views, 123 engagements, 3 shares and no comments.

C2020/21.22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Boulter, Dykes, Oliver and Stevens.

C2020/21.23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

C2020/21.24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public had asked to raise a question.

C2020/21.25 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by Cllr Kenyon, seconded by Cllr Butler and unanimously

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Council Meeting of 23rd June 2020 be accepted as an accurate record and signed accordingly by the Mayor.

C2020/21.26 JUNIOR MAYOR EXTENSION

The Clerk explained the rationale behind extending the current Junior Mayor's time in office by one year - Theo has not been able to attend functions due to Covid and additionally it might not be possible to hold a Junior Mayor Making ceremony in December due to social distancing.

It was proposed by Cllr Kenyon, seconded by Cllr Andrews and unanimously

RESOLVED

That the current Junior Mayor's tenure be extended by 12 months to December 2021.

C2020/21.27 MOTION TO COUNCIL TO GO PAPERLESS

Cllr Powell explained his reasoning for putting the motion to Council – the Covid 19 pandemic has forced the Council to rethink how it works and do things differently. It has proved viable to circulate Agendas by email and to conduct meetings over Zoom rather than in person.

It was suggested that a couple of paper copies could be available at physical meetings, and that certain documents such as accounts can be easier to read on paper. It was also noted that by law, the Council have to provide paper copies if requested.

The motion was brought by Cllr Powell, seconded by Cllr Hey and unanimously

RESOLVED

That Hereford City Council go paperless where possible to allow documents to be sent via email instead of the postal system and that Councillors are allowed to use portable electronic devices in Council and committee meetings to view documents relating to the meeting.

C2020/21.28 LARGE GRANT APPLICATION – CLIMB THE TREE

The Mayor gave a brief overview of the discussions and £9,050 award recommended to Council from Community Development Committee held on 20th July 2020. The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that Climb The Tree have been awarded other funding but the size and source of any other grants is not yet known.

Members' discussions involved:

- Experience in the court system and the need to use contact centres to agree contact and resolve family disputes. Shocked that HCC have to be asked to fund this vital service.
- Obviously a vital service however concerns over the business plan – there is an annual membership fee but also a £50-£60 charge per contact session. These are huge costs for people that can't afford it. Other local contact centres don't charge anywhere near as much – Redditch and Worcester have no fees at all, Gloucester has a small charge and Cheltenham have a small membership fee but no session charges. Concerns about the expected number of sessions and charges equaling approximately £52,000 profit per year – who is benefitting from this profit? All the other chargeable services detailed to be introduced in the future are available free online.
- Question as to whether City Council can help offset costs to families to support this – for example use the grant to offset city residents' charges.
- Concerns over costs – this is a business, even though a CIC, not a charity. How will progress be monitored as there is little information regarding this in the application.
- Proposals to defer and request organisation come back with more robust figures and responses to Members' concerns; award start up money and reduced charge for Hereford City residents; defer and request the organisation to revise their application
- General support of scheme and need however, this is a county-wide service yet we are the only parish council that have been approached for funding. Would like to see the organisation approach other parish councils. Grant requested is for set-

up costs, not running costs, therefore it might be easier to approach other parish councils for help towards costs once up and running.

It was proposed by Cllr Hornsey, seconded by Cllr Andrews and voted on with 7 for, 5 against and 1 abstention and

RESOLVED

That Hereford City Council defers the decision to the next meeting of Council in order to gain more information on costs, opportunities to support City residents, and more robust financial information.

In view of the decision to defer a second motion concerning making a grant was not put.

C2020/21.29 POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER ANNUAL TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL SURVEY

The Town Clerk suggested that Members read the survey and send their response to him via email and it was

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk will collate a response based on the Council's views by the end of September.

C2020/21.30 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Right Worshipful the Mayor Cllr Kath Hey informed Members that she is on the Knife Angel Project steering group and that the Deputy Town Clerk has been working with them to apply for grant funding.

Cllr Hey is also on the Stronger Towns Board who are trying to get funding to benefit the City and draft a Town Plan.

Met Rt Hon Robert Jenrick Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and had taken him to task on affordable housing.

The Mayor also informed Members that a number of people have been involved with planting crab apple trees on the corner of Union Street and Bath Street, with a small ceremony taking place on 24th September.

Mayoral engagements have picked up and she has attended a few recently.

The new website is live with interactive and engaging content.

C2020/21.31 DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

The minutes of Governance and Procedures Committee for 30th June were received for information.

No Finance and Policy Committees have taken place since the last Council meeting.

The minutes of Community Development Committee for 7th July and Grants Committee on 20th July were received for information.

The minutes of Planning Committee for 25th June, 16th July and 13th August were received for information and Councillor Andrews also gave a brief overview of correspondence with Taylor Woodrow who have taken the Council's points on board and are now installing electric vehicle charging points and solar panels.

The minutes of the Youth Council for 18th June and 23rd July were received for information.

C2020/21.32 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Municipal Charities – Cllr Foxton is continuing with this body after a useful meeting with Heather Hughes, speaking to the Chair and being provided with information. No meetings to date as not all trustees are able to Zoom. Cllr Andrews reported that all houses are full and there is a long waiting list.

Market Towns Forum – No meetings.

Enterprise Stakeholders – No meetings.

Three Choirs – No meetings and festival deferred for one year.

Twinning Association – Nothing to report as Cllr Dykes not present.

Tourism Group – Unsure if this group still exists – Town Clerk to investigate.

Hereford in Bloom – The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members about the work to the flower beds at Morrisons.

New University Working Group – Cllr Hey has been to visit the new facilities.

Close House – Cllr Boulter not present to report however Cllr Hornsey reported that they are open and doing as much as possible outside.

The BID Group – Cllr Stevens was not present however will be asked to circulate any relevant information to Cllrs.

Hereford Area Plan – On hold at present. Cllr Hey will speak to David Hitchener about this.

Community Land Trust – Cllr Milln informed Members that the organisation may have to close due to financial issues however they have currently been rescued by membership.

The Historical Buildings Report is now complete which identifies historic sites and underuse of buildings, especially shops in the City. He would like to set up a meetings to discuss the results. There are a few hard copies with Cllr Milln at £7.50 each or the Deputy Town Clerk and Members have been asked to be sent the link to the electronic document.

At this point, Cllr Powell's computer froze and he left the meeting temporarily but waited and rejoined.

C2020/21.33 TOWN CLERK’S COMMUNICATIONS

The Clerk reported that the final year of the three year Service Level Agreement for Country Park Supports has been paid and that Community Development Committee will be considering a new five year SLA on 22nd September. All Members are welcome to attend this meeting.

The BMX track resurfacing work has been completed.

The PESTEL has been revised a copy circulated with the Agenda.

The Clerk reported that he has received correspondence about the state of Victoria Footbridge. It is not unusual for people to get in touch about issues that are not HCC’s responsibility. He suggested they form a volunteer group to look after it which may happen.

HCC have organised to use Herefordshire Council’s franking machine and be recharged for any post in order to remove the requirement for our own (which has not been performing well).

Since the last Council meeting, HCC have sadly lost a member of staff, Janice Pugh. The Clerk paid tribute to Janice, a long-standing, reliable and conscientious employee.

Before the end of the meeting, Cllr Toynbee informed Members that a planning white paper has been released for consultation until the end of October. Cllr Andrews stated she expected a u-turn on this paper.

C2020/21.34 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

17th November 2020 at 6 pm

There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 7.25 pm

Signed

Date