

HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING 24 May 2022

MINUTES OF MEETING

Before the meeting the Mayor asked Councillor Tillett to speak to note the passing of former Councillor Glenda Powell.

Present The Right Worshipful the Mayor Councillor Mark Dykes and Councillors Andrews, Carwardine, Foxton, Hey, Hornsey, Kenyon, Milln, Oliver, Owens, Powell, Stevens, Tillett and Toynbee

Attending Steve Kerry, Town Clerk

C2022/23.1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Clerk reported apologies from Councillors Boulter, Tyler, Wilcox and Williams.

C2022/23.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

C2022/23.3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

C2022.23.4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Councillor Tillett asked for some typographic corrections which were accepted. It was then proposed by Councillor Kenyon, seconded by Councillor Powell and with one abstention.

RESOLVED That the minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council of 9 May 2022 and the Council Meeting of 15 March 2022 be agreed as an accurate record and signed accordingly by the Mayor.

C2022/23.5 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Clerk reminded members that the Mayor is now ex-officio on all committees, but that the former Mayor Councillor Stevens is not currently on any committees.

Climate and Biodiversity Committee

The Clerk reported that in her apologies Councillor Boulter had also asked to withdraw from this Committee. It was proposed by Councillor Kenyon, seconded by Councillor Powell and

RESOLVED To reduce the elected membership of the Climate and Biodiversity Committee to six.

There was a discussion of co-opting people outside the Council with specific expertise onto this Committee. The Clerk advised that co-options were a matter for the Committee itself. He advised that co-optees should not be voting members and should not be more numerous than the Councillors. Decisions, binding on officers must be made by elected members of the Council.

It was the unanimously

RESOLVED That the members of the Climate and Biodiversity Committee are the Mayor (ex-officio) and Councillors Hornsey, Milln, Oliver, Owens, Powell and Toynbee.

Community Development Committee

The Clerk reported that in their apologies Councillors Boulter, Tyler, Wilcox and Williams had indicated that they wished to remain on this Committee. Councillor Foxtton proposed, Councillor Kenyon seconded, and it was

RESOLVED That Councillor Stevens be elected to join the Community Development Committee.

It was then proposed by Councillor Kenyon, seconded by Councillor Stevens and

RESOLVED That the members of the Community Development Committee are the Mayor (ex-officio) and Councillors Boulter, Carwardine, Hey, Hornsey, Kenyon, Oliver, Owens, Stevens, Tyler, Wilcox and Williams. One vacancy remains.

Planning Committee

The Clerk reported that in their apologies Councillors Boulter and Tyler had indicated that they wished to remain on this Committee. Councillor Williams in his apologies had indicated that he wished to withdraw from this Committee; Councillor Owens advised the meeting that he also wished to withdraw from the Committee.

Councillor Kenyon proposed, Councillor Owens seconded, and it was

RESOLVED To reduce the elected membership of the Planning Committee to seven.

It was then proposed by Councillor Kenyon, seconded by Councillor Stevens and

RESOLVED That the members of the Planning Committee are the Mayor (ex-officio) and Councillors Andrews, Boulter, Foxtton, Milln, Powell, Tyler. One vacancy remains.

Policy and Resources Committee

Councillor Hey indicated that she wishes to withdraw from this Committee. Councillor Foxtton proposed, Councillor Kenyon seconded, and it was

RESOLVED That Councillor Stevens be elected to the Policy and Resources Committee.

Councillor Kenyon proposed, Councillor Horney seconded, and it was

RESOLVED That the elected membership of the Policy and Resources Committee be nine.

Councillor Kenyon proposed, Councillor Powell seconded, and it was

RESOLVED That the members of the Policy and Resources Committee are the Mayor (ex-officio) and Councillors Andrews, Boulter, Hornsey, Oliver, Tillett, Toynbee, Wilcox and Williams.

It was noted that the Standing Employment Panel is appointed by the Policy and Resources Committee and is called if and when necessary to deal with capability, disciplinary, sickness management or grievance matters.

C2022/23.6 STANDING ORDERS

It was proposed by Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Tillett and unanimously

RESOLVED To re-adopt the Standing Orders for 2022/23 without amendment.

C2022/23.7 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Councillor Stevens stated that it was many years since the limit on the delegation to award grants at Community Development Committee had been fixed at £3,000. If it had been increased with inflation it would now be around £4,700. He felt that the Committee had done a good job of evaluating larger grants and all their recommended awards above £3,000 had been approved by Council. It was time to review that limit. Councillor Kenyon supported this suggestion, adding that the Committee would not automatically increase grants if the limit were higher, they would apply the same careful scrutiny of applications that they had done in the past. They could be trusted to award up to a larger amount.

It was proposed by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Kenyon and unanimously

RESOLVED To amend Financial Regulations 1.14 and 5.9 to delete “£3,000” and insert “£5,000”.

It was then proposed by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Kenyon and unanimously

RESOLVED To adopt the financial regulations as amended for 2022-23.

C2022/23.8 CODE OF CONDUCT

It was proposed by Councillor Tillett, seconded by Councillor Andrews and unanimously

RESOLVED To re-adopt the Council’s Code of Conduct for 2022-23.

C2022/23.9 APPOINTMENT OF SIGNATORIES

It was proposed by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Andrews and

RESOLVED That the cheque signatories (who will also sign authorisations under BACS) are Councillors Andrews, Boulter, Hornsey and Kenyon and that Councillor Oliver is the member nominated to sign bank reconciliations.

C2022/23.10 MAYOR’S CORRESPONDENCE

The Mayor reported that the civic diary is filling up quickly with the 40th anniversary of the Falklands Campaign and the homecoming parade of the Queen’s Dragoon Guards. He is also looking forward to welcoming Three Choirs back to Hereford later in the year.

C2022/23.11 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

Climate and Biodiversity Committee – Councillor Toynbee presented the minutes of 5 April 2022 and advised that the next meeting was 7 June 2022.

Community Development Committee – As the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee had both sent their apologies, Councillor Kenyon, who had attended the meeting, presented the minutes of the meeting of 25 April 2022. In answer to a question, it was confirmed that the new grant application form is imminent.

Planning Committee – Councillor Tyler presented the minutes of 10 March 2022 and 7 April 2022.

Policy and Resources Committee – no meeting since the last Council Meeting.

Youth Council – Councillor Hornsey presented the minutes of the meetings of 21 February 2022, 21 March 2022 and 11 April 2022.

All of the above were noted.

C2022/23.12 REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Municipal Charities – Councillor Foxtan reported on the recent service at Holy Trinity Church and the appointment of a new chaplain for the Almshouses. As Chair of the Trustees Councillor Andrews reported that Councillors Boulter and Foxtan had now been elected as trustees in their own right. The Clerk reminded the meeting that members had anticipated this and selected two more councillors to serve as representatives and it would now be timely to re-affirm that appointment. It was proposed by Councillor Kenyon, seconded by Councillor Hornsey and unanimously

RESOLVED That Councillors Hornsey and Wilcox are appointed as representatives to the Municipal Charities.

Enterprise Zone Stakeholders Group – Councillor Andrews reported that after many years of silence there was expected to be a meeting shortly. It was proposed by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Foxtan and unanimously

RESOLVED That Councillor Andrews continues as representative on the Enterprise Zone Stakeholders Group.

Three Choirs – Councillor Foxtan reported that the meeting due tomorrow had been cancelled as the Chair was stuck in Spain having had his passport stolen, she would report to Council after the next meeting. Otherwise, preparations were in full swing for the festival in Hereford. The Mayor proposed, Councillor Andrews seconded, and it was unanimously

RESOLVED That Councillors Foxtan and Hornsey continue as representatives to the Three Choirs.

Twinning Association – The Mayor had nothing to report. Councillor Stevens asked if the idea of a zoom meeting with the Council President of Jaworzno could be taken up, the Mayor confirmed it would be. It was proposed by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Kenyon and unanimously

RESOLVED That Councillor Dykes continues as the representative to the Twinning Association during his Mayoral year.

Close House – Councillor Hey reported she had been unable to attend the last meeting at Close House due to Herefordshire Council duties, and that she would be happy to pass this to another member. Councillor Stevens declined her nomination. Councillor Kenyon offered to split the role if Councillor Hey was able to continue, to increase the chances of one of them being able to attend meetings. It was proposed by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Hornsey and, with one abstention,

RESOLVED That Councillors Hey and Kenyon share the role of representative to Close House with the expectation that only one of them will attend each meeting.

Hereford Business Improvement District – Councillor Stevens reported that he had supported Ferrous as Mayor, and it had been a great success. Recently the BID has installed 400 hanging baskets and have started serious work on their Christmas plans. In answer to a question, he stated that around 94% of the income due from businesses had been collected. There were two new board members, and the group was in a good place to develop. It was proposed by Councillor Kenyon, seconded by Councillor Tillett and, with one abstention,

RESOLVED That Councillor Stevens continues as the representative to the Hereford BID.

Stronger Towns Fund – Councillor Hey asked the Clerk to give an update on the electric bus project. The Clerk gave a detailed report of the process, deadlines, decisions, and difficulties that he had encountered, especially since the final business case had been accepted by the Project Delivery Group and the Board, which he had thought would be the end of the matter until we heard from the government. He expressed great concern that if such a simple project, where the full business case had been completed before the early deadline given, was still mired in the assessment process, then other much more complicated projects coming up for review before the end of June would not be able to get through and the funding would be at risk. He confirmed that this was his personal view not a comment from the Board itself. Members discussed their concerns over poor communication and an apparent confusion as to Herefordshire Council's role as the accountable body for managing the funds which seems to have been assumed to be an overall management and oversight role on all aspects. The roles and function of the two firms of consultants engaged was also discussed, as was the ability of City Council members who are in the cabinet to use their position to require an injection of timely and effective management before projects were lost. Having been challenged regarding a remark Councillor Kenyon re-affirmed that he had full confidence in Councillor Hey as the City representative on the Board but was frustrated at the difficulties the Board were encountering with Herefordshire Council. Other members expressed the view that the funding model of councils competing with each other for funds in artificial settings was not an effective or fair way to allocate public funds, which was a matter to raise with the MP.

The position regarding the cycle track scheme was clarified, with the news that British Cycling, a key funding partner, had extended their deadline to enable the project to continue. The Clerk added that he had made a final alteration to the business case to re-assert the Council's discretion over how it found the revenue to fund the buses, it was not committing to council tax increases year on year as the only way of meeting the costs.

It was proposed by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Kenyon and

RESOLVED That the Clerk write to the Leader and Chief Executive of Herefordshire Council expressing the concerns of the City Council at recent developments and asking for their intervention to ensure projects are progressed within the timescales after proper, but not excessive, scrutiny.

It was proposed by Councillor Kenyon, seconded by Councillor Tillett and unanimously

RESOLVED That Councillor Hey continues as the representative to the Stronger Towns Board.

Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School Charity – Councillor Wilcox had included a report with his message of apology for the meeting. It was proposed by Councillor Kenyon, seconded by Councillor Stevens and unanimously

RESOLVED That Councillor Wilcox continues as the representative to the BHBS charity.

Youth Council – Councillor Hornsey referred members to the minutes already presented and further advised members that new youth councillors had joined, the group was focussing on honing its many ideas into some clear priorities for the next two or three years.

It was proposed by Councillor Kenyon, seconded by Councillor Tillett and unanimously

RESOLVED That Councillors Hornsey and Powell continue as representatives to the Youth Council.

Community Land Trust – Councillor Milln reported that this was rather quiet at the moment, the Trust are seeking a site for a modular build in timber. It was proposed by Councillor Kenyon, seconded by Councillor Stevens and unanimously

RESOLVED That Councillor Milln continues as representative to the Community Land Trust.

Hereford Allotment and Leisure Gardeners – Councillor Kenyon reported that things were settling down well now and he would be willing to carry on as the Council’s representative if members wanted him to. It was proposed by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Oliver and unanimously

RESOLVED That Councillor Kenyon continue as representative to HALGs.

C2022/23.13 TOWN CLERK’S CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk reported that the item for next meeting, a presentation by Amy Pitt of Herefordshire Council on community hubs and the Talk Community project had been cancelled as the Herefordshire cabinet member, Councillor Tyler, had asked Amy not to attend. This would be held in September and would be combined with a presentation from Herefordshire on defibrillators. The Clerk added that he had responded to Councillor Tyler suggesting funding for defibrillators was not solely a parish responsibility and some injection of funds, perhaps to equip all hubs with a machine, would be welcomed.

The Clerk also reminded members of the first beacon lighting of the Platinum Jubilee weekend which is taking place on Thursday 2 June at 7.30pm in Churchill Gardens.

In answer to a question the Clerk confirmed that he was aware of an impending cabinet report on the future of the Town Hall, that he had sent the proposal of the City Council for a charitable trust and time to develop that, while urgent repairs were done to the building so it was genuinely an asset that could be transferred, but that he would not have sight of the report until it was released into the public domain.

C2022/23.14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 21 June 2022 at 6pm

There being no further business the Mayor closed the meeting at 7.40pm

Signed

Date