HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 26 November 2024

MINUTES OF MEETING

Present: The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Hereford Cllr Kevin Tillett (in the Chair) and Councillors Mark Dykes, Susan Boulter, Sam Potts, Paul Stevens, Diana Toynbee, Cat Hornsey, Jeremy Milln, Jacqui Carwardine, Daniel Powell, Adam Spencer and Ben Proctor.

Attending: One member of the public; Jonnathan Chedgzoy – Museum, Libraries & Archives Manager, Herefordshire Council; Becci O'Reilly – Administration and Events Manager, Acting Town Clerk; Olena Hayward – Locum Clerk, HALC.

C2024/25.41 CLERK COVER FROM HALC

It was proposed by Cllr Tillett, seconded by Cllr Potts and unanimously

RESOLVED to approve clerk cover service from HALC and to appoint Mrs Olena Hayward as clerk for the meeting.

C2024/25.42 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Polly Andrews (unwell), Debbie Hobbs (conflicting commitments), Rob Owens (personal) and Alex Griffiths (unknown).

It was proposed by Cllr Powell, seconded by Cllr Hornsey and unanimously

RESOLVED to accept the apologies.

C2024/25.43 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES

None – should not have been included on a Council agenda.

C2024/25.44 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Potts declared a personal interest in item 7 of the Agenda (MR C2024/25.47), being a Trustee of HANDS and a previous contractor with St. John Ambulance.

C2024/25.45 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

C2024/25.46 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Council considered Minutes of previous meetings held on 25 June 2024, 20 July 2024 and 24 October 2024.

It was proposed by Cllr Powell, seconded by Cllr Hornsey and with majority vote of 11 (eleven) in favour and 1 (one) abstention

RESOLVED to approve the Minutes as correct and accurate record. The Minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

At the discretion of the Chairman the following item was deferred until after item 10 of the Agenda (MR C2024/25.50*) and considered thereat.*

C2024/25.47 SHIREHALL DESIGN UPDATE PRESENTATION

The Council received a presentation from Mr Jonathan Chedgzoy on the Library and Learning Centre (Shirehall, Hereford) design proposals and considered the planning and listed building application – 242506/7.

The Councillors asked a number of follow up questions, including clarifications on details of the design, cycle parking, landscaping and drainage, pedestrian access and connectivity to the wider city centre, visual cohesion with the surroundings and listed building context, internal and external disabled access, car parking arrangements including currently available parking retention/loss, emergency services access, design's compatibility with accessibility for people with diverse needs and sensory sensitivities (consultations with relevant bodies, i.e. Autistic Society).

It was then proposed by Cllr Hornsey, seconded by Cllr Potts and unanimously

RESOLVED to submit the following comments to the Planning Authority:

- **Members would like to see the glazed canopy repaired not replaced;**
- **Clarification is sought on the landscaping around the building, especially at the font, including details of Phase 1, the pedestrianisation of the front and Phase 3, the external seating, as well as the levels of cycle parking;**
- **Consideration should be given to pedestrian access from the surrounding streets, especially Gaol Street where there are currently no pavements in areas;**
- **Members support the installation of an easy movement door on the internal glazed porch, such as a revolving or horizontally sliding door, and do not support heavy glass swing doors;**
- **Suspended ceilings should not be added to those basement rooms that won't be accessible to the public, e.g. plant or store rooms.**

Mr Jonathan Chedgzoy left the room.

C2024/25.48 2023/24 AGAR EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Council NOTED the receipt of the External Auditor's Report on the Completion of the limited assurance review for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The Council extended its thanks to the staff for their work on the 2023/24 AGAR and throughout the year.

C2024/25.49 2024/25 INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Council NOTED the Interim Internal Audit Report, as produced by Adrian Shepherd-Roberts of Auditing Solutions Ltd and extended its thanks to the staff for their work on maintaining the Council's financial processes and procedures.

C2024/25.50 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS AND CIVIC EVENTS 2025

The Council considered the draft Calendar of Meetings & Civic Events 2025.

It was proposed by Cllr Powell, seconded by Cllr Hornsey and unanimously

RESOLVED to approve it.

C2024/25.51 DRAFT BUDGET 2025/26

The Council received a short update on the Draft Budget 2025/26 setting process from the Acting Town Clerk, Becci O'Reilly. It was reported that due to insufficient information and number of unknowns, including the relevant Tax Base and staffing matters, the Policy & Resources Committee deferred consideration on the Draft Budget 2025/26 recommendation until its January 2025 meeting.

C2024/25.52 HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL "h-THaWS" CONSULTATION

The Council considered the response to the Herefordshire Tree, Hedgerow and Woodland Strategy.

It was proposed by Cllr Hornsey, seconded by Cllr Carwardine and unanimously

RESOLVED to delegate the Acting Town Clerk, in consultation with the Vice-Chair of Climate & Biodiversity Committee to submit a response to the consultation on behalf of the Council.

C2024/25.53 MOTION TO COUNCIL

The Council considered a motion, submitted to the Proper Officer of the Council prior to the meeting and in accordance with the Council Standing Orders, by Cllr Ben Proctor and Cllr Rob Owens, as follows:

"Trees in Hereford's streets and parks make a vital contribution to the wellbeing of the people of the city. Trees reduce heating, alleviate flooding, promote biodiversity and enhance the overall feeling of our city. Data published by the Woodland Trust on Tree Equity shows that Hereford urgently needs more trees especially in the more urban parts of the city.

Herefordshire Council is responsible for the maintenance of trees in our streets and parks. That council does not fund the replacement of trees that have to be felled as a result of disease or damage. That means that Herefordshire Council is actively ensuring that the number of trees in our streets and parks is declining.

The Council therefore resolves to:

- Write to the leader of Herefordshire Council calling upon him to reverse his council's policy of reducing the number of the city's trees by stealth

- Write to the Chief Executive of Herefordshire Council asking how many trees have been lost from Hereford's streets and parks over the past five years."

Following a discussion on the original motion, it was proposed by Cllr Proctor, seconded by Cllr Powell and unanimously

RESOLVED

53.1 That the Acting Town Clerk writes, on behalf of the Council, to the Leader of Herefordshire Council calling upon him to reverse his council's policies which have led to the reduction of number of trees in the city and expressing the City Council's support for Herefordshire Tree, Hedgerow and Woodland Strategy;

53.2 That the Acting Town Clerk writes, on behalf of the Council, to the Chief Executive of Herefordshire Council asking how many trees have been lost from Hereford's streets and parks each year over the past five years;

53.3 That the City Council considers strategies and projects to support initiatives leading to an increase of trees numbers in the city, for example:

- provision of tree stump grinders to allow for replanting where a tree was lost;

- sponsorship of a tree in every school in the city;

- tree planting for commemoration of national events and anniversaries, like VE Day.

C2024/25.54 LARGE GRANT – ENCORE ENTERPRISES CIO - £15,000

The Council received and considered a recommendation from the Community Development Committee, as resolved on 15 October 2024 (MR CD2024/25.30), to award £15,000 Large Grant funding to Encore Enterprises CIO for the project 'Encore Music, Arts & Wellbeing Hub".

It was proposed by Cllr Proctor, seconded by Cllr Dykes and by majority vote of 11 (eleven) with 1 (one) abstention

RESOLVED to approve the Community Development Committee's recommendation and award £15,000.

C2024/25.55 MARKETING ASSISTANT – NEW PART TIME POSITION

The Council received and considered a recommendation from the Policy & Resources Committee, as resolved on 22 October 2024 (MR PR2024/25.41), regarding a new part time position of Marketing Assistant, as follows:

"That the new post be created as a matter of urgency, with the conditions as per approved Job Description, Person Specification and Salary Grade, as above (MR PR2024/25.41 and that the recruitment process be commenced without delay. The services of HALC, Hoople and Indeed to be employed in advertising the vacancy."

It was then proposed by Cllr Hornsey, seconded by Cllr Potts and unanimously

RESOLVED to approve the Policy & Resources Committee's recommendation in full. The Post to be funded from General Reserve for the remainder of current financial year and budgeted for in the 2025/26 Budget.

C2024/25.56 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Right Worshipful Mayor, Cllr Tillett, reported as follows:

- At the half-way point of the Mayoralty 160 engagements were attended;
- In June the Mayor visited Vierzon and represented the Council and the City during ceremonies of commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the Liberation;
- Two more local schools have entered twinning with Vierzon schools;
- Two Freedom ceremonies conducted recently;
- Call on Members to clarify attendance at the Honorary Recorder appointment ceremonies;
- Reminder of upcoming quarterly meeting with Superintendent and call on Members to register any issues to be raised as soon as practicable.

C2024/25.57 DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

The Council NOTED the Draft Minutes of Committees meetings, as follows:

57.1 CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes of the meeting of 18 June 2024 were presented by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Ben Proctor. No questions were posed.

57.2 PLANNING & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes of the meetings of 27 June 2024, 25 July 2024 and 19 September 2024 were presented by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Jeremy Milln. No questions were posed.

57.3 POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes of the extraordinary meetings of 10 September 2024 and 22 October 2024 were presented by the Chair of the Committee, Cllr Cat Hornsey. No questions were posed.

57.4 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes of the meeting of 9 July 2024 were presented. In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee no questions were posed.

57.5 YOUTH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the meetings of 20 May 2024, 17 June 2024, 15 July 2024 and 16 September 2024 were presented by the Chairman of the Council, the Right Worshipful Mayor of Hereford, Cllr Kevin Tillett.

C2024/25.58 REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

58.1 HEREFORD IN BLOOM

It was reported as follows:

- Gold Medal won in the 2024 In Bloom competition and Mayoral reception was held;

- Christmas meal will be held;

- Policy & Resources Committee released funding, as previously awarded - £10,000, with a request for increase to £13,000 refused; review of the level of funding recommended to be undertaken in next financial year.

58.2 CLOSE HOUSE

It was reported that two meetings were held recently. Cllr Proctor updated that he was substituting for Cllr Potts.

58.3 HEREFORD BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Cllr Stevens reported that he will be stepping down from his role in March/April 2025 and the Council will need to appoint new representative/observer.

58.4 STRONGER TOWNS BOARD

Cllr Proctor reported:

- Wyeside Project – planning permission was not granted; some of the funding may be redistributed to other projects, provisional on government's approval;

- Zippers – large portion of capital award unspent, proposal to move £60,000 to Revenue budget.

58.5 BISHOP OF HEREFORD'S BLUECOAT SCHOOL CHARITY

In Cllr Foxton's absence there was no report.

58.6 COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

Cllr Milln reported on art project – "Artlandish" – planned for next year; changing weekly exhibitions to be held in empty units on Belmont Road; opportunities to showcase local artists; grant funded.

58.7 HEREFORD ALLOTMENT & LEISURE GARDENERS

In Cllr Kenyon's absence there was no report.

58.8 HEREFORD ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Cllr Potts reported that most recent meeting has been deferred; Parish Summit organised by the HC held recently and attended; NALC website recently redesigned with direct registration for individual members; HR & legal advice may now be accessed directly from NALC.

58.9 3 CHOIRS 2025

No meetings held recently.

C2024/25.59 TOWN CLERK'S COMMUNICATIONS

None.

C2024/25.60 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

28 January 2025 – **CONFIRMED**

C2024/25.61 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

A **RESOLUTION** was passed to exclude members of the public and press from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, S 1(2)

The Chairman thanked the member of the public attending.

One member of the public left the room.

C2024/25.62 CONFIDENTIAL STAFFING MATTER

62.1 [REMOVED. Minutes of this item are contained in the Confidential Minute Book**]**

62.2 [REMOVED. Minutes of this item are contained in the Confidential Minute Book**]**

62.3 [REMOVED. Minutes of this item are contained in the Confidential Minute Book**]**

62.3.1 [REMOVED. Minutes of this item are contained in the Confidential Minute Book**]**

62.3.2 [REMOVED. Minutes of this item are contained in the Confidential Minute Book**]**

There being no other business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8:35 PM

Signed ……

Date ……