HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 18 March 2025

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, Diana Toynbee, Cat Hornsey, Jeremy Milln, Jacqui Carwardine, Daniel Powell, Adam Spencer, Polly Andrews, Debbie Hobbs, Rob Owens, Elizabeth Foxton, Jim Kenyon and Ben Proctor.

Attending: Officers of the Council**: -** Alison Tolley – Office Manager, Acting Town Clerk; Sarah Jones – Committee Co-ordinator; Olena Hayward – Locum Clerk, HALC.

1. **CLERK COVER FROM HALC (Herefordshire Association of Local Councils)**
   It was proposed by Cllr Potts, seconded by Cllr Boulter and unanimously

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

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
   Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors: - Paul Stevens and Alex Griffiths.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**
   - **3.1** Cllr Owens declared a pecuniary interest in item 6 of the Agenda – employed by Wildlife Trust/Wild Place and left the meeting for the duration of the item; and disclosable interest in the same item – member of Wildlife Trust.
   - **3.2** Cllr Proctor declared a disclosable interest in item 6 of the Agenda – member of Wildlife Trust.
   - **3.3** Cllr Toynbee declared a disclosable interest in item 6 of the Agenda – member of Wildlife Trust.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
   NONE

5. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**
   The Council considered the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2025.

   It was proposed by Cllr Kenyon, seconded by Cllr Hornsey and by majority vote with two abstentions

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

6. LARGE GRANT – HEREFORDSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Cllr Owens left the meeting for the duration of the following item.

The Council considered as follows:
Wildplay 2025 Project – recommendations of the Community Development & Grants Cttee, as Resolved on 4 March 2025, and of the Policy & Resources Cttee, as Resolved on 11 March 2025, to award grant of £3,000 for the project.

The combined total of grant funding awarded to Herefordshire Wildlife Trust Ltd. in the current Financial Year will exceed £5,000 (£7,717.56), should this funding be granted. Previously a grant of £4,717.56 was awarded by Climate & Biodiversity Cttee (June 2024), making the full Council's approval necessary.

DTr to write to HWT
Cllrs to look at their suggested locations in their wards

Cllrs provided feedback on Wildplay events previously delivered and the positive reception as well as impact they had on communities.

It was then proposed by Cllr Kenyon, seconded by Cllr Hobbs and unanimously

RESOLVED to approve the grant of £3,000, however, a request to be made to the applicant that it co-operates more closely with the Council and its Members and ensures that some of the Wildplay events are held in locations requested by the City Councillors. A list of planned events' locations to be requested. Cllrs to provide suggested locations in their respective Wards.

Cllr Owens re-joined the meeting.

7. CLOSE HOUSE – ANNUAL FUNDING AWARD

The Council considered the 2024/25 annual report from Close House and approval of the continuation of the annual funding award for FY 2025/26, as follows:
7.1 £20,000 – core grant – drop-in youth services;
7.2 £15,000 – running of the EPICs youth volunteering program.

It was reported that Policy & Resources Cttee felt that the annual report initially provided by the Organisation was not sufficient in terms of financial information. A request was made for more detailed breakdown, which has now been provided, ensuring that the Council complies with its duty of due diligence in managing public funds.

KC/AK to review annual financial reporting requirements

It was noted that the Council should make its financial reporting requirements clearer and uniform to all organisations applying for funding, both grants and annual awards, in the future.

DTr to support with finding additional sources of funding for Close House.

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

RESOLVED to approve the annual funding award as outlined in 7.1 & 7.2 above.

8. LOVE EXPLORING APP UPDATE

The Council NOTED a written report from the Tourism & Communications Manager, Connor Powell, on the re-launch of the Love Exploring App.

CP to provide further report - Autumn/Winter 2025/26

9. JOHN FINCH NEW IT SUPPORT CONTRACT

The Council NOTED the details of new IT support contract, as approved by the Policy & Resources Cttee on 11 March 2025.

Following matters were raised by Cllrs for future action:

- Consider tendering the IT support contract every 3 years;
- Take quotes from other providers next year

AT to find out annual cost to the Council & any ongoing costs

10. MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR ELECT

The Council considered nominations from Members of the Council for Mayor and Deputy Mayor Elect for municipal year 2025/26, as follows.

10.1 Cllr Owens offered a nomination speech, proposing the candidature of Cllr Powell as Mayor Elect.

It was seconded by Cllr Kenyon and by majority vote with Cllr Powell abstaining

RESOLVED to approve the nomination of Councillor Daniel Powell as Mayor Elect for the municipal year 2025/26.

10.2 Cllr Hobbs offered a nomination speech, proposing the candidature of Cllr Hornsey as Deputy Mayor Elect.

It was seconded by Cllr Carwardine and unanimously

RESOLVED to approve the nomination of Councillor Cat Hornsey as Deputy Mayor Elect for the municipal year 2025/26.

11. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor extolled the fair and open system, based on seniority of the service, the City Council has in place for the annual election of the Mayor.

On this last meeting of the Full Council he Chaired, the Mayor noted the immense privilege and honour it has been for him to serve as the Mayor of the City and to represent the Council and the community in the many and varied functions the Office called for and thanked all Members and staff for their support during his Mayoral Year.

The Mayor reminded all present that the Civic Service of Thanksgiving will be held on 27 April 2025 at St. Martin's church.

Other communications:

- Conclusion of the City Centre Survey, with the analysis of the responses ongoing and recommendations being formulated; good participation of 700+ respondents;

- Call for Members to sit on the Zipper Working Group – all enquiries to Cllr Hornsey;
  Cllr Kenyon offered to sit on the Group. **Zipper Working group – Cllrs to suggest interest to CH**
- Call on Members to only accept Membership on the Council's Committees if they are able to take up the full commitment & workload;

12. REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES REPORTS AND ELECTION OF NEW REPRESENTATIVES

a. Hereford in Bloom

- Cllr Foxton updated that the HiB are working hard on the 2025 entry, working towards a special award for gardens managed by volunteers and hoping for Gold award overall;
- Cllr Boulton updated that next meeting will be held on 8th April and suggested that the new Town Clerk should be in attendance;

b. Close House

Cllr Potts commented that the organisation are doing a marvellous work for the City and updated that next meeting will be at the end of March.

c. Hereford Business Improvement District

No report.

d. Stronger Towns Board

Cllr Proctor reported:

- Castle Green pavilion should be soon restarted with new contractor and opened in Summer;
- Encore pulled out of the planned purchase of St. Michael's church due to Listed Building constraints clashing with plans and significant costs.

Cllr Hornsey raised the matter of grant awarded to the organisation by the Council.

e. Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School Charity

The Council considered nomination of a new representative for the body. **To Notify BoHBSC of the new appointment**

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

RESOLVED to appoint Cllr Toynbee to the role.

f. Community Land Trust

Cllr Milln offered feedback following the conclusion of the Outlandish Project. It was reported that the Project proved to be of great value to the City and participating artists and was very well received by the public.

The Mayor commented that the public's positive reception of the Project also was reflected in the City Centre Survey.

g. Hereford Allotment & Leisure Gardeners

Cllr Kenyon reported that Winter has been a quiet period, expected to become more busy as growing season approaches.

h. Hereford Association of Local Councils

Cllr Potts reported:

- HALC Executive meeting tomorrow – 16 March;
- He has represented HALC at the National Assembly in London;
- The Herefordshire Parish Charter is being finalised – comments welcome and to be forwarded asap;
- Invitation to submit comments on the NALC & HALC relationship;

i. 3 Choirs 2025

Cllr Hornsey updated:

- Minutes of the last meeting have been forwarded to Officers for distribution;
- Festival will not be spread across the County;
- Launch of the Hereford Programme on Thursday night (17 March);
- Small community events will be happening;
- Prospectus will soon be in distribution
- Next Festival due in Hereford in three years will be the 300th anniversary of 3 Choirs.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 13 May 2025 – Mayor Making;
- 20 May 2025 – Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Meeting of the Council.

There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 7:06 PM

Signed ……

Date ……