HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

MINUTES OF MEETING

Present: The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Hereford Cllr Daniel Powell (in the Chair) and Councillors: Polly Andrews, Elizabeth Foxton, Alex Griffiths, Debbie Hobbs, Cat Hornsey, Jeremy Milln, Rob Owens, Sam Potts, Ben Proctor, Adam Spencer, Paul Stevens and Kevin Tillett.

Attending: Officers of the Council: Kim Carpenter – Town Clerk, Sarah Jones – Committee Co-ordinator, Hannah Davies – Administration Officer, HCC Youth Council Representative.

Cllr Powell opened the meeting with a minute's silence to mark the passing of past mayor and Honorary Freeman of the City Mr David Fleet.

Cllrs Andrews, Potts and Powell paid tribute to David commenting on him being a true gentleman, a great friend and councillor who will be deeply missed.

Cllr Hornsey spoke briefly about the use of the noticeboards in the centre of town having information within them about where help and advice could be found for people who were homeless or facing homelessness.

Cllr Potts spoke about access to the building and the Equalities Act 2010 and asked that the Clerk be instructed to write a letter to the Chief Executive about this and their failure to maintain access to the building.

It was RESOLVED that the Town Clerk would write a letter to the Chief Executive of Herefordshire Council regarding accessibility to the building.

C2025/26.37 – LOCAL POLICING TEAM UPDATE

A verbal report was received from a Senior PCSO from West Mercia Police which provided details about the priorities for the team, these being visibility of the team; anti-social behaviour; retail crime and hot spot policing. There were also concerns expressed due to the reduction in PCSO contracted hours. Cllrs were asked to provide insight to the local priorities within their wards to the officer, contact details were to be shared to facilitate.

This led to a discussion about anti-social cyclists and drivers and how the policing team were tackling the issues i.e. no lights, dark clothing, wrong carriageway and the rise in the derestriction of e-bikes & e-motorbikes and their increased potential speeds. Education and trying to provide equipment including bike marking, high visibility accessories etc is first principles but testing capacity or e-bikes/e-motorbikes and removal if failure is also undertaken. Cllr Proctor spoke about the ability through a grant application for the council to fund lights etc, the PCSO thanked him for identifying a potential funding opportunity.

Cllr Powell thanked the PCSO for their attendance and report.

C2025/26.38 – MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Cllr Powell proposed the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting on the 26 August 2025, Cllr Potts seconded, and they were agreed with a vote of 12 with 1 abstention.

It was RESOLVED to accept the minutes as a true representation of Council Committee on the 26 August 2025.

C2025/26.39 – YOUTH COUNCIL PRESENTATION

The Chair and Secretary/Vice-Chair of Youth Council were in attendance to present their preprepared slides to council which provided insight and information about the youth council, its priorities and how they consulted with young people and their inclusion. This presentation had been circulated within the meeting agenda pack. A Youth Winter Market on 6 December 2025 was being organised, along with a raffle for which they also required prizes.

Cllr Powell thanked them for their attendance and the presentation about the work of the youth council, noting how proud he was of them all and that we should listen to them. He also offered a tour of the Mayors Parlour with the Mayor as a prize.

Cllr Tillett added that during his tenure on Council this was the first time that the Youth Council had attended, and he would be happy for them to attend any meetings of the council. Cllr Proctor added that we need to consider what we can do to have a joint approach.

C2025/26.40 – HEREFORD ALLOTMENTS & LEISURE GARDENS

Cllr Potts formally moved to accept the motion as presented, this was seconded by Cllr Stevens. Cllr Owens had questions about the other identified areas of land and the potential for electors to call for additional allotment sites if the titles are passed to HALG. The Town Clerk responded with the need for the City Council to clarify the title deed situation and that the intention was for a lease to be drafted that allowed HALG to then seek alternative funding streams. The other identified land was to be pockets of land that Cllrs had identified and questioned and not all unused land within the city.

Cllr Powell called for a vote on the motion as presented and this was agreed by a unanimous vote of Council.

It was RESOLVED to carry the motion and allow the Town Clerk to be able to use funds to look into the correct ownership of the allotments.

C2025/26.41– COURTYARD SEND APPLICATION

Cllr Andrews spoke briefly about this and that she fully supported the application. Cllr Powell proposed that this grant funding be awarded, this was seconded by Cllr Andrews and agreed with a vote of 12 and 1 abstention.

It was AGREED that the proposed funding would be awarded to the Courtyard for their SEND project.

C2025/26.42 – DCK ACCOUNTING LIMITED

There was a very brief discussion about the Councils ability to now undertake the year end process in-house and the cost savings this would bring. The motion to exit the contract with DCK Accounting Ltd was proposed by Cllr Stevens, seconded by Cllr Foxton and agreed with a vote of 12 and 1 abstention.

It was RESOLVED to exit the contract with DCK Accounting Limited and that the Town Clerk would inform them of this via the appropriate channel.

C2025/26.43 – HEREFORD ZIPPER REPORT

The report was briefly spoken about by the Town Clerk with Cllr Proctor adding that we need to undertake an options appraisal of the Zipper and its potential future and proposed a slight amendment to the motion, which was to increase the funding commitment to £5,000 for the feasibility study.

This led into a debate about the decision-making process and the availability of information upon which reports were presented, this included the original business case and the key date information that had been presented. Cllr Powell added poor communication has not helped but a proper study, which is being discussed, was a step in the right direction. Cllr Potts asked the Town Clerk to research the timeline of the business case being presented to Council for approval.

Cllr Powell asked if the amendment to the motion was accepted, which was agreed and then called for a vote of the motion to spend up to £5,000 for the feasibility study in partnership with Stronger Towns and Herefordshire Council, this was carried with a vote of 12 for and 1 against.

Cllr Potts asked for his vote against the motion to be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

It was RESOLVED to spend up to £5,000 for the Zipper feasibility study in partnership with Stronger Towns and Herefordshire Council.

C2025/26.44 – P&R COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Cllr Hornsey spoke briefly about the thinking behind the proposed change to the structure, which was about the volume of work which needs to be done on Governance and the policies which need reviewing, writing and finalising as well as the volume of work on financial matters. These would have meant meetings would be too long and it made sense to split and share the workload.

This had been discussed at P&R and the recommendation to Council was to split the committee to Finance, Governance and re-name the Standing Employment Panel to Staffing Committee. This recommendation was proposed by Cllr Stevens, seconded by Cllr Hornsey and carried with a vote of 12 and 1 abstention.

It was RESOLVED to split the P&R Committee into Finance and Governance committees and to rename the Standing Employment Panel to Staffing Committee.

Councillors were then asked to express their interest in the new committees; the following were proposed:

C2025/26.44. 1 FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllrs Proctor, Owens, Stevens, Hornsey & Potts would be on this committee with the first meeting being the 14 October, this meant that the Climate & Biodiversity Committee would be moved to 4 November.

It was RESOLVED for the first meeting of the Finance Committee to take place on 14 October and to move the Climate & Biodiversity Committee to the 4 November 2025.

C2025/26.44. 2 GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Cllrs Stevens, Andrews, Hobbs, Hornsey, Boulter & Toynbee (in their absence) would be on this committee with the first meeting on the 21 October

It was RESOLVED for the first meeting of the Governance Committee to take place on 21 October 2025

C2025/26.44. 3 STAFFING COMMITTEE

Cllrs Potts, Hobbs, Owens, Toynbee and Boulter would be on the committee with the first meeting is to be arranged when needed.

It was RESOLVED to arrange the first meeting of the Staffing Committee when needed.

Cllr Tillet left the meeting at this time.

C2025/26.45 – HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL WEBSITE REPORT

The report was presented and supported by Cllr Powell, this led into a discussion about the current website, its functionality and that information submitted by grant applicants were

being lost in the system. The inclusion of Youth Council in discussions and the lack of predicted budget allocation was mentioned.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the intention was to reconvene the task and finish group, which could be extended, to discuss the website and its requirements, review best practice and to seek quotations for the provision of the site. This would be presented in a report to Council for approval prior to moving forward.

The recommendations within the report were proposed by Cllr Hobbs, seconded by Cllr Potts and carried by a unanimous vote of Council.

It was RESOLVED to reconvene the website task and finish group to look at revieing the current website, best practice, seek quotations from different providers and submit this to Council for approval.

C2025/26.46 – PLANNING APPLICATION 240422 LAND TO EAST OF HEREFORD, SOUTH OF A438 LEDBURY ROAD

This prompted much debate about the need for housing, sites which have approval but not developed and the need to protect nature. Cllr Proctor suggested that council quote the applicants own figures back in the response as well as the lack of active travel scheme mitigation. Cllr Milln talked about the impacts on the landscape and setting of this proposed development, with Cllr Andrews talking about the potential for increased flooding due to run-off.

Cllr Potts proposed that we support our neighbouring parishes in objecting to this application whilst also mentioning concerns about traffic flows and flooding, this was seconded by Cllr stevens and carried with a vote of 10 and 3 abstentions.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk would submit comments supporting neighbouring parishes objections to Herefordshire Council.

C2025/26.47 – LGA PAY AGREEMENT

This was noted by Council.

C2025/26.48 – MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Cllr Powell thanked Cllrs Hornsey and Tillett for stepping in during his recent absence. He also thanked councillors and staff for their messages following his recent marriage.

He commented on the wonderful summer of events attended and noted that the Honorary Freedom ceremony for Peter Issac was a wonderful event. He also advised council of the fund raising presented at The Barrels beer festival, which was £2,000 to each of his charities.

C2025/26.49 – REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The following reports were received from councillors:

a) Hereford in Bloom – Cllr Foxton gave a brief update on the grading meeting, which is due to be held in October and spoke briefly about the outstanding grant payment of £5k, which is being dealt with.
b) Close House – Cllr Potts reported that there was an executive meeting, and a written report will be presented soon.
c) Hereford BID – Cllr Stevens gave a brief update on events and the unanimous decision of the board to pull away from the visitor economy group and to write to the HC Chief Executive about their representative's lack of attendance and failed governance, to request a replacement.
d) Stronger Towns Board – Cllr Proctor gave a brief update but there was nothing much to add
e) Blue School Charity - No update as Cllr Toynbee was not in attendance at the meeting.
f) Community Land Trust – Cllr Milln spoke about Art Share and the funding application for the 18th Century Coach House in the Town Hall car park.
g) Hereford Allotments & Leisure Gardeners – No update as Cllr Kenyon was not at the meeting.
h) Hereford Association of Local Councils – Cllr Potts gave a brief update and advised that from next year HALC would be able to give quality legal advice which would improve their service for members.
i) 3 Choirs – This was a great success, but Cllr Hornsey proposed that this item be removed from the agenda until May 2027 when preparations for its return to Hereford would be underway.
j) Youth Council – Due to the Youth Council presentation earlier in the meeting there was no further update.

C2025/26.50 – TOWN CLERK'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Town Clerk advised that an accounting opening application was in process with Unity Trust but needed confirmation of the current signatures to be included. The members to be added to the application were confirmed as Cllr Hornsey, Andrews, Boulter and Kenyon. The Town Clerk advised that an additional two councillors would be preferable and that she would be in touch for a 'memorable word' from each to complete the application.

Cllr Potts asked what the Council would need to consider/do if a group with an SLA had failed with their Charity Commission return, which was some 334 days late. The Town Clerk confirmed that she would research this situation and investigate why it was delayed and report back to Council.

C2025/26.51 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Council will be held on 28 October 2025

The meeting closed at 19:57.

Signed.....

Date.....