

THE CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR BOURNEMOUTH

Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 January 2024 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr A Filer – Mayor

Present: Cllr C Adams, Cllr S Bartlett, Cllr J Beesley, Cllr D Brown, Cllr P Canavan, Cllr S Carr-Brown, Cllr E Connolly, Cllr D d'Orton-Gibson, Cllr M Dower, Cllr J Edwards, Cllr J Hanna, Cllr R Herrett, Cllr J Martin, Cllr B Nanovo, Cllr L Northover, Cllr J Richardson, Cllr K Salmon, Cllr L Williams and Cllr K Wilson

Also in
attendance:

24. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Mayor G Farquhar and Councillors M Andrews, P Broadhead, J Challinor, O Brown, S Bull, R Burton, B Dove, D Farr, M Haines, G Martin and K Rampton.

25. Declarations of Interests

The Honorary Clerk reported that no declarations of interest had been received for this meeting.

26. Confirmation of Minutes and matters arising

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting. It was highlighted that the minutes required amendment to correctly list Cllrs Canavan and Herrett's attendance.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2023 be confirmed as a correct record, subject to the above amendments.

27. Charter Mayor's Communications

The Mayor reported on her activities since the previous meeting, which included attendance at events including:

- Bournemouth In Bloom
- Remembrance Sunday
- Black History Month
- High Sheriff of Dorset annual service
- Various community, interfaith and charitable events
- Dinner at London Guildhall
- Young Carers Christmas event

The Mayor confirmed that she would be working with the Council's Corporate Communications team to publicise future events.

28. Report of the Bournemouth Civic Working Group

Cllr J Beesley - Chair of the Civic Working Group, presented a report summarising the issues discussed at the meeting held on 8 January 2024. Trustees were informed of the Group's agreement to support the 80th anniversary of D-Day in June 2024 through the allocation of a £5,000 budget, to be agreed as part of agenda item 7: Budget and Precept for 2024/25.

Trustees were asked to agree to the implementation of a Mayor's Award's Scheme in principle, with a £2,000 budget to support the scheme to be agreed under agenda item 7: Budget and Precept for 2024/25. Trustees were also asked to delegate the use of that budget, if agreed, to the Civic Working Group.

RESOLVED: that

- a. the Charter Trustees agree to the implementation of a Mayor's Award Scheme in principle, and;**
- b. the Civic Working Group be delegated authority to oversee the use of any budget agreed in support of the Scheme.**

Voting: Unanimous

29. Budget and Precept for 2024/25

The Responsible Financial Officer presented a Budget and Precept report, highlighting:

- reductions in hospitality, mayor-making and out of pocket expenses budgets;
- the introduction of a £400 budget for work commissioned from the Council's Corporate Communications team;
- increased recharges for staff support, insurance, IT, accountancy and internal audit;
- a £5,000 budget to support the forthcoming anniversary of D-Day;
- an increased budget of £2,000 to support the Mayor's Awards.

Reserves at 31 March 2025 were forecasted to be £75,840, following a proposed draw-down of £23,645 in 2024/25. The council tax base was confirmed to have increased by 457 Band D properties. The Band D council tax charge was proposed to be frozen at the 2023/24 figure of £2.27 per annum.

Some Trustees raised concerns over the level of reserves and staffing costs in light of a public cost of living crisis and suggested that better value for money could be achieved through increased use of reserves and a reduction in the council tax precept. In response, officers advised that the budget proposed more accurately reflected the true cost of providing services to Trustees. 70% of charges incurred by the Trustees were fixed

from the Council and costs would likely increase should Trustees forward without Council support. Staff charges included the most recent pay award together with overhead apportionment from the Council.

Using reserves to reduce the council tax precept was not sustainable. Reserves were expected to decrease across future years, which in turn would likely result in a required increase to the Band D charge.

Trustees were advised that the Council administration was exploring options for changes to the governance of the Charter Trustees, such as setting up the Charter Trustees as a Parish Council.

The recommendations were put to a vote: For: 13, Against: 1, Abstention: 6.

The vote was carried and it was:

RESOLVED: that

- a. The proposed budget for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix A be approved;**
- b. The council tax requirement and precept of £148,091 be approved.**

30. Review of the Risk Register - Bournemouth

The Deputy Head of Democratic Services presented a report detailing the annual review of the Risk Register for the Charter Trustees of Bournemouth, highlighting the downgrading of risk relating to the safety of civic dignitaries.

RESOLVED: that the risk register, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

Voting: Unanimous

31. Appointment to the office of Mayor for 2024/2025 and subsequent Deputy Mayor in 2025/26

The Deputy Head of Democratic Services confirmed the appointment of Councillor George Farquhar as the Mayor of Bournemouth for 2024/25, and subsequent Deputy Mayor of Bournemouth for 2025/26.

Cllr Beesley congratulated the Mayor Elect on his appointment and wished him success during his term of office.

The meeting ended at 6.42 pm

MAYOR