

THE CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR BOURNEMOUTH

Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 January 2025 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr G Farquhar – Mayor

Present: Cllr C Adams, Cllr M Andrews, Cllr S Bartlett, Cllr J Beesley, Cllr D Brown, Cllr O Brown, Cllr R Burton, Cllr P Canavan, Cllr S Carr-Brown, Cllr E Connolly, Cllr D d'Orton-Gibson, Cllr B Dove, Cllr J Edwards, Cllr D Farr, Cllr J Hanna, Cllr R Herrett, Cllr A Keddie, Cllr G Martin, Cllr J Martin, Cllr A-M Moriarty, Cllr B Nanovo, Cllr L Northover, Cllr K Rampton, Cllr J Richardson, Cllr C Rigby, Cllr K Salmon, Cllr T Slade, Cllr T Trent and Cllr L Williams

18. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Hazel Allen, Sara Armstrong, Philip Broadhead, Simon Bull, John Challinor, Adrian Chapmanlaw, Michelle Dower, Anne Filer and Rachel Pattinson-West (nee. Maidment).

19. Declarations of Interests

None.

20. Confirmation of Minutes and matters arising

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2024 be approved as a correct record.

Voting: Unanimous.

21. Charter Mayor's Communications

The Mayor began by remarking that the number of Trustees in attendance was encouraging, showing that Trustees were prepared to work together to uphold and maintain the primary objective of the Charter Trustees.

The Mayor then updated Trustees on his activities since the previous meeting, including:

- Regalia talks;
- School and community group visits, including Bournemouth School for Girls Founders Day;
- Presentation of Mayor's Awards to worthy volunteers;
- Welcoming of international students;

- Holocaust Memorial events.

The Mayor thanked the Deputy Mayor for her attendance at meetings that he was unable to attend.

The Mayor highlighted the importance of using the Mayoral platform to act as a champion for diversity and inclusivity.

22. Report of the Bournemouth Civic Working Group

The Chair of the Bournemouth Civic Working Group (CWG), Councillor Lawrence Williams, introduced the report and moved the recommendation therein.

In support of the recommendation the report was summarised, highlighting the CWG's review of Trustee attendance at Charter Trustee (CT) meetings and its instruction to the Honorary Clerk to write to any Trustee who had not attended the two most recent meetings, asking them to confirm whether they wished to continue as Charter Trustees or whether they wished to be considered for removal.

Upon publication of the report, no requests for removal had been received and the CWG was satisfied that the letter had successfully highlighted the need for Trustees to attend meetings wherever possible. Therefore, the CWG was not recommending that any Trustee be removed at this time, though suggested that attendance be reviewed at each subsequent CT meeting by way of a standing agenda item.

The Honorary Clerk further advised that, since the publication of the report, two Trustees had submitted requests for removal and further details would be brought to the next meeting of the CT.

The Mayor advised that he supported the recommendation and highlighted the opportunity for Trustees to request their removal if they were unwilling or unable to uphold the objectives of the Trustees.

RESOLVED: that Charter Trustees note the attendance record set out in Appendix A and continue to monitor attendance at each CT meeting through a standing agenda item.

Voting: Unanimous.

23. Budget and Precept for 2025/26

Matt Filmer, Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), introduced the report, highlighting that the Charter Trustees (CT) were required to set the budget for 2025/26 and any subsequent precept for submission to BCP Council by 31 January 2025.

The RFO highlighted:

- An underspend of £18,389 for 2024/25, as BCP Council had now agreed to pay for King's Counsel (KC) advice;
- The in-year position had resulted in carrying forward reserves of £103,577;
- A meeting of the Bournemouth Budget Workshop had been held, which had afforded Trustees the opportunity to review and shape the budget for 2025/26.
- Budget lines removed included the Remembrance events and Civic awards, in line with the revised CT remit following acceptance of the KC advice;
- The budget for hospitality had increased due to an expectation of increased regalia talks and other such events;
- Overall staffing costs had reduced despite an increase in recharges for insurance, IT, accountancy, and internal audit services;
- Draw-down of reserves was not being recommended;
- The Council Tax base had grown following an increased number of Band D properties and introduction of the second home premium, allowing for the recommendation that the Band D precept to be reduced to £2.24 per annum.

It was recommended that the proposed budget for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A be approved; and that the council tax requirement and precept of £151,713 be approved.

Some Trustees referred to the KC advice and suggested this should be shared with all Trustees. The Mayor reminded Trustees that this had been addressed at the previous meeting, as set out in the minutes of that meeting. Trustees were reminded that the advice had been shared with the CWG and that any Trustee was able to attend CWG/budget meetings upon request to the Chair.

The Honorary Clerk confirmed that no Trustees had approached to request sight of the advice, however, it was agreed that the feasibility of sharing the advice would be reviewed with the Council's Monitoring Officer.

Trustees queried the proposed budget of £400 for communications, versus the £10,000 set out in the Poole CT budget. In response, the RFO confirmed that the increased budget line for Poole CT was following a direct request from the Poole CWG who wished to increase promotion of the CT. However, the £10,000 figure had not been based on anything specific and instead had been set to avoid having to use reserves throughout the year. It was confirmed that the Bournemouth Budget Working Group had not requested a similar increase, however, reserves were available to support promotion of the CT should this be required. The Honorary Clerk suggested that Trustees could be updated on how Poole CT were using the £10,000, to allow Bournemouth CT to then use reserves if those actions were deemed effective.

Trustees sought clarity on why reserves held were recommended to be approximately 20% of the proposed precept. In response, the RFO advised

that this figure was a benchmarked figure used by public organisations, following risk assessments.

The Mayor highlighted the importance of retaining sufficient reserves to deal with in-year issues that could arise e.g. repairs, etc.

RESOLVED that

(a) The proposed budget for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A be approved; and

(b) The council tax requirement and precept of £151,713 be approved.

Voting: Unanimous.

ACTION: The Honorary Clerk to review the feasibility of sharing the KC advice with the Council's Monitoring Officer.

24. Review of the Risk Register - Bournemouth

Neil Fraser, Deputy Head of Democratic Services, presented the report which provided Charter Trustees with the opportunity to review the Risk Register attached as Appendix 1 to the report, taking account of updates to existing risks and any new and emerging risks.

Trustees were advised that following a recommendation by the Council's Audit team, the Register had been changed to the Audit Team's preferred format.

All categories from the previously reviewed Register remained present, with the addition of an identified Risk regarding the drafting of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) for the provision of support between BCP Council and the Charter Trustees. The SLA was currently being drafted for proposed adoption at a future CT meeting.

RESOLVED that:

The risk register, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

Voting: Unanimous.

25. Nominations for appointment to the office of Mayor for 2025/2026 and subsequent Deputy Mayor in 2026/27

Neil Fraser, Deputy Head of Democratic Services, presented the report, confirming that following a request to Charter Trustees for nominations to the position of Mayor of Bournemouth for 2025/2026 and subsequent Deputy Mayor of Bournemouth 2026/2027, Cllr Jackie Edwards was confirmed as Mayor elect for 2025/2026 by way of uncontested nomination.

Trustees congratulated Cllr Edwards.

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Cllr Edwards confirmed she was honoured to be proposed, thanked those who nominated her, and advised that she was looking forward to her mayoral year.

The meeting ended at 6.42 pm

MAYOR