

THE CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR POOLE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 October 2025 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr M Howell – Mayor

Present: Cllr K Rampton (Sheriff), Cllr M Andrews, Cllr J Beesley, Cllr D Brown, Cllr P Cooper, Cllr D d'Orton-Gibson, Cllr M Earl, Cllr C Goodall, Cllr B Hitchcock, Cllr M Le Poidevin, Cllr S Mackrow, Cllr S Moore, Cllr Dr F Rice, Cllr T Trent and Cllr G Wright

19. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Sue Aitkenhead, Councillor Julie Bagwell, Councillor Richard Burton, Councillor Judes Butt, Councillor John Challinor, Councillor Jo Clements, Councillor Matthew Gillett, Councillor Andy Hadley, Councillor Emily Harman, Councillor Dawn Logan, Councillor Oliver Walters and Councillor Clare Weight.

20. Declarations of Interests

None.

21. Confirmation of Minutes and matters arising

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2025 be approved as a correct record.

22. Charter Mayor's Communications

The Chair announced the passing of former Poole Councillor, Sheriff and Mayor of Poole, Dame Annette Brooke. Trustees stood for a moment of reflection in Dame Brooke's honour.

The Mayor then updated Trustees on his activities since the last meeting, which included attendance at:

- Dorset Archives;
- Chestnut Nursery;
- Roma Holocaust Memorial Service;
- Canford Heath Residents Association fete;
- Broadstone Horticultural show;
- Yacht Club races;
- Launch of the Poverty Truth Commission;
- Open Gymnastics competition for disabled youngsters at Rossmore Leisure Centre.

23. Report of the Poole Civic Working Group

The Sheriff, Councillor Karen Rampton, updated Trustees on the activity of the Poole Civic Working Group (CWG) following its meeting on 6 October.

As set out in the report, the CWG had discussed various issues including future accommodation needs, progress on the creation of a Community Organisations Database, regalia storage, updates to the Mayor and Sheriff Boards and the Sheriff's Wand, new event processes and the implications of the (now completed) Community Governance Review.

On the updating of Boards and the Sheriff's Wand, Trustees were advised that quotes were being obtained for bronzing/gilting and for wholly new boards, where required. Restoration of the Wand would ensure that it retained its historic appearance, rather than appearing new.

Regarding future accommodation needs, Trustees were advised that an online workshop had been scheduled for 6pm on Tuesday 28 October, at which Trustees could discuss the matter in detail. All Trustees had been invited via their calendars. A visit to Poole Civic Centre could also be arranged, if deemed necessary following the workshop.

Some Trustees suggested that the accommodation workshop would be more effective if it were held in person. The Sheriff advised that this had been considered, but it was felt that an online session would promote greater Trustee attendance.

Discussions were ongoing regarding a suitable venue for the next CWG meeting. Trustees suggested that Hamworthy Library or the Dolphin Centre could have meeting rooms equipped with the requisite resources. The Mayor requested that the Clerk review the lack of meeting spaces in Poole.

24. Finance Update September 2025

The Responsible Financial Officer, Matt Filmer, provided a financial update. Trustees were informed that, as of the end of September 2025, the Charter Trustees were forecast to underspend against the budget set. This was due to the level of spending to date and the planned activity for the rest of the year being lower than originally envisaged.

The forecast underspend for the year was £24,015, which would result in a closing position of £89,452 in reserves.

The AGAR, submitted earlier in the year, had since been externally audited and given a clean bill of health. Relevant documents would be uploaded to the website in the coming days.

25. Community Governance Review Update

The Head of Democratic Services, Richard Jones, provided a verbal update on the Community Governance review following BCP Council's meeting of 14 October 2025.

Trustees were advised that, following BCP Council's decision to create new Town Councils at its meeting on 14 October, the Charter Trustees were to be dissolved on 31 March 2026. Early actions were underway ahead of that dissolution, including the convening of a Task & Finish Group (T&F) to discuss legal and other considerations.

Various Orders to be actioned included the agreement of the transitional arrangements required to provide continuity between the existing Mayoralty/Trustees and the new Town Council. This could include the creation of a shadow Council, to be in effect from 1 April 2026 until the elections for the new Town Council.

Other matters to be considered included the transfer of assets to the new Town Council, a budget for 2026/2027, contacting the College of Arms for the formal transfer of the Coat of Arms, Charters etc., Tax rates, staffing requirements (including an interim Clerk), the mapping of new parish areas and contacting regulators.

The budget for 2026/2027 would be an 'anticipated' budget to ensure sufficient provision for Town Council services. Once formed, the Town Council would then determine how they wished to use that money. The Town Council as not required to spend up to the anticipated amount, as any surplus would then be used to bolster reserves.

As part of this budget, the Tax would be set by BCP Council for the first year. The BCP financial team would then help advise the Town Council to set their own Tax for 2027/2028 and beyond.

Charter Trustee reserves would transfer to the new Town Council, though a review exercise was required to determine the final amount.

Trustees sought further information on the transfer of specific assets, such as civic vehicles and number plates, together with revenue generating sites such as car parks and beach huts. Officers advised that the transfer of assets was limited to civic/ceremonial regalia and mandatory assets like allotments, and there was no intention to transfer revenue generating assets at this time. The team maintained comprehensive records of civic assets which would allow for safe transition.

Trustees were reminded of the need for caution when seeking to commit the new Town Council on certain issues or the transfer of certain items. For example, the decision to transfer a civic vehicle could be taken by a shadow Council, but this would be committing the new Town Council to that decision despite the Town Council being unwilling to take ownership of a

vehicle and all of the implications inherent to that (e.g. maintenance, employment of chauffeurs, etc.)

For this reason, it was suggested that Trustees could seek to keep many services or such assets within BCP Council until the new Town Council was properly established.

The Mayor referenced a proposed Beating of the Land Bounds event and, given the above, sought feedback from Trustees on a suitable time for the event to take place. Trustees suggested the event should take place after Poling Day in 2026.

Cllr Rice left 18:51

The meeting ended at 7.05 pm

MAYOR