

THE CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR POOLE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 June 2022 at 5.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr T Trent – Mayor

Cllr J Bagwell – Deputy Mayor

Present: Cllr M Andrews, Cllr D Brown, Cllr R Burton, Cllr D Butler, Cllr D Butt, Cllr J J Butt, Cllr M Earl, Cllr L-J Evans, Cllr A Hadley, Cllr M Le Poidevin, Cllr T O'Neill, Cllr Dr F Rice, Cllr A M Stribley and Cllr M White

11. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs S Baron, J Beesley, M Brooke, B Dion, N Greene, M Haines, M Howell, M Iyengar, T Johnson, D Mellor, P Miles, S Moore, K Rampton, M Robson and V Slade.

12. Declarations of Interest

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

13. Confirmation of Minutes and matters arising

The minutes of the meetings held on 26 January 2022 and 20 May 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

Voting – Agreed

14. Charter Mayor's Report

The Mayor reported on his activities since his election as Charter Mayor for Poole on 20 May 2022. He reported that he had undertaken a wide variety of engagements which included:

- Laying a wreath at a memorial to Stephen Ford, a Poole lad who tragically lost his life on board HMS Ardent in the Falklands conflict 40 years ago.
- The opening of an exhibition at Poole Museum, one of four exhibitions, celebrating the life of author Thomas Hardy the theme of which was love.
- Dedication of a flag at Christchurch Priory
- Opening of a garden at Heatherlands School.
- Celebrations during the Jubilee weekend including the lighting of the Poole Beacon at Sandbanks.
- Laying of wreaths for those who put their lives at risk on D Day and the Falklands.
- Presentation of a book for children written by a local author at Rossmore Library.
- Relaunch of the Harry Paye Day event on Poole Quay.

15. Charter Trustees 2021-22 Internal Audit Report

The Responsible Financial Officer – RFO, Matthew Filmer presented the Annual Internal Audit report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Trustee and a copy of which appears as Appendix ‘A’ to these minutes in the Minute Book.

Mr Filmer reported that this was one of two reports which would lead to the signing of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The Charter Trustees were informed that the Internal Audit Report focused on a number of key areas on the governance of the Charter Trustees which were linked to the objectives of the AGAR form and the summary of those results were set out on page 17 of the agenda pack which was then reflected in the AGAR. On page 18 in the agenda pack was a summary of the audit findings for the internal audit. The RFO highlighted some of the key findings including the asset verification exercise, which was a high priority area. He explained that each year an asset verification needed to be undertaken to confirm that all the civic regalia was consistent with the asset register and was a key control. The Charter Trustees were advised that due to the closure of the Poole Civic Centre it was proposed that the verification would be undertaken in June to coincide with the move out of the Poole Civic Centre.

The RFO referred to the Financial Regulations and expenditure and confirmed that most issues highlighted had been dealt with and actioned with one area that would be brought back to the Charter Trustees regarding achieving value for money and how that can be demonstrated. Mr Filmer highlighted that as a public entity and publicly funded it was necessary to put steps in place to demonstrate value for money for the Charter Trustees expenditure.

Mr Filmer also referred to the remit of the Charter Trustees which was reflected in the handbook which stated, “that the Trust ensures the continuation of the civic historic and ceremonial traditions of the former Borough”. He explained that the Internal Auditors felt this was not potentially open enough to deal with new events that the Charter Trustees may wish to arrange. It was therefore proposed within the handbook that the following wording was added “and new events which are not inconsistent with those traditions.” Councillor Judes Butt asked if the proposed additional wording could be positive and amended to read “and new events which are consistent with those traditions.”

RESOLVED that the 2021-22 Internal Audit report be received and adopted subject to the amended wording as detailed above on the remit of the Charter Trustees being included in the Handbook.

Voting – Unanimous

16. Budget Outturn Report 2021-22

Matt Filmer, Responsible Financial Officer – RFO presented a report on the budget outturn for 2021-22, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The RFO explained that the figures in the report fed into the accounting section of the AGAR. The Charter Trustees was advised that throughout 2021/22, the Charter Trustees of Poole underspent against their approved budget by £31,734. The RFO explained that the activities of the Charter Trustees had been hampered by the pandemic. The underspend plus the budgeted contribution to reserves of £1,420 had been added to reserves. The RFO reported that the detail of the outturn was set out at Appendix A to the report. He explained that the Charter Trustees started the year with just over £85,000 reserves with total reserves carried forward of just over £118,000 as at 31 March 2022. The Charter Trustees were advised that the level of reserves accounted for 85% of the overall precept for 2022/23 which the RFO explained was high and consideration would be given to how the reserves could be used for one-off activities but also support the budget going forward. Officers responded to questions on the detail of the outturn position.

Councillor Judes Butt referred to the previous arrangements whereby badges were presented to the past Mayor, past Deputy Mayor and past Sheriff she reported that she did not know why the provision of past Sheriff's badges had stopped. She suggested in view of the reserves position that the arrangement of presenting a past Sheriff's badge be reintroduced. Councillor Judes Butt requested that a past Sheriff's badge be offered to previous Sheriffs in Poole who had not received them. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Daniel Butt.

Councillor Hadley asked in view of the budget position was it necessary to take such a high precept the following year. The RFO explained that the Charter Trustees had a choice similar to what was undertaken this year where some of the reserves were used to freeze the precept the same approach could be adopted for 2023/24 where reserves could be used to reduce the precept. He highlighted that this would be one-off funding so it would be necessary to consider the impact going forward. The Charter Trustees were reminded that there would be a budget workshop to address some of the issues that had been raised and the direction of travel which would aid discussions on the precepting arrangements for the next financial year.

Councillor Judes Butt reminded Charter Trustees of the purpose of her proposal relating to the past Sheriff's badge. The Deputy Head of Democratic Services reported that research could be undertaken on the cost of the past Sheriff's badges and reported to the Charter Trustees. Councillor Earl supported the principle but before commitment wanted to know the cost implications. Councillor Stribley indicated that she sympathised with the proposal whilst explaining the decision was taken to

stop presenting the badge on financial grounds largely because the Sheriff almost always goes on to be Mayor and the mayoral badge takes precedence and was generally worn on other public occasions. Councillor Le Poidevin reported that it would be appropriate to give a Sheriff who does not become Mayor for any reason a past Sheriff's badge but emphasised that she did not see the point of a past Sheriff's badge if the individual becomes Mayor as they would receive a past Mayor's badge. In particular she reported that that it was not necessary to have a past Deputy Mayor's badge as the individual would already have received the past Mayor's badge. The Mayor suggested that this was an issue that the proposed Working Group could look at. He highlighted the last budget workshop and the need for follow up on the issues raised whilst suggesting that the workshop should be held earlier in the process. The Charter Trustees were informed that the cost of the past Sheriff and past sheriff's lady or escort's badges was in the region of £1800. The Civic Team Leader, Carolyn Suter reported that the past Sheriff's badges stopped just after Peter Adams became Sheriff and was part of the Democratic Services budget savings. The Charter Trustees were informed that the past Sheriff's badge would be worn once at the Sheriff's Convention. Councillor Judes Butt reported that she had undertaken research and all the past sheriffs in the Country received a badge or some form of recognition. The Mayor as previously mentioned suggested that the matter be referred to the Working Group.

In response to a question Charter Trustees were advised of the proposal relating to the setting up of a Civic Working Group. The Deputy Mayor commented on the need to have the relevant officers in attendance at the Working Group to provide the necessary advice and guidance.

Councillor Earl referred to the use of reserves and the various options highlighting that when the issue was first raised there was discussion about arranging an event and suggested having a sub-group of Charter Trustees to look at the civic calendar with a budget to decide what events the civic party and the wider Charter Trustees should take part in, fund and organise.

RESOLVED that the

- (a) Charter Trustees note the budget outturn position for 2021/22.**
- (b) proposal for the introduction of the past Sheriff's badge be considered by the proposed Working Group.**
- (c) suggestion set out above on the use of reserves be considered as appropriate.**

Voting - Unanimous

17. Annual Governance Statement 2021-22

The Charter Trustees considered the Annual Governance Statement set out in section 1 of the AGAR return which had been circulated to each Trustee and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The RFO reported that the statement needed to be signed off by the Honorary Clerk and the Chairman in order to comply with the statutory deadline of 30 June 2022. Charter Trustees were informed that AGAR was published on the Charter Trustees website where it was open for public inspection for 10 working days and subsequently externally audited. The RFO reported that the Annual Governance Statement reflected what had been set out in the internal audit report as the Internal Auditors work to the control objectives of the AGAR.

Councillor Hadley referred to the internal control objectives which indicated that there were a number of questions where the answer was no and asked if that was compliant. Councillor Butler sought clarification on the figures reflected in the AGAR compared to the Outturn Report.

The RFO reported that the figures related to the next agenda item on the statement of accounts but in response to the question it was due to the rounding of the figures. The RFO responded to the issue raised by Councillor Hadley explaining that the Annual Internal Audit report in some cases deems that the financial regulations had failed and classed the response as no but the subsequent annual governance statement draws upon those findings which has found that in the professional judgement of the Internal Auditors that the controls were still substantial to tick yes.

RESOLVED that the Charter Trustees approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22.

Voting – Unanimous.

18. Statement of Accounts for 2021-22

The RFO presented the Statement of Accounts for 2021-22 as set out in the AGAR which draws upon the Outturn Report previously presented.

The RFO reported on the value of the fixed assets and civic regalia and the insurance valuation of £1.2 m. He reported that it had not changed since last year as it was revalued every five years in line with the insurance policy.

If approved the statement would be signed off by the RFO and the Chairman.

Clarification was sought on the valuation of the Civic Regalia and where it would be located in Poole. The RFO reported that everything of high value was covered by the insurance policy as per the asset register. The Deputy

Head of Democratic Services reported that appropriate arrangements were being made for the assets to be stored within relevant locations. She explained the current position relating to the insurance cover which included testing the market to enable the Charter Trustees to make arrangements for their own insurance cover. In response to a question the RFO reported that the rooms at the Poole Civic Centre would be covered under the building insurance for the whole Civic Centre. A Charter Trustee raised concern about the reported valuation of the Civic Regalia and suggested that re-evaluation should be undertaken. Councillor Brown commented on the arrangements for insurance cover which was currently under contingency arrangements with the BCP Council and requested a report back to the next meeting of the Charter Trustees on insurance valuations, cover and the options available. The Deputy Head of Democratic Services reported that it was expected that a report would be submitted to the Charter Trustees at the next meeting in October on this issue.

Councillor Daniel Butt sought clarification on the location for the assets highlighting that they should be located in Poole. Councillor Hadley referred to the email which had recently been circulated to all Charter Trustees providing assurance that these items would be securely stored within the BCP area and that we need to trust officers to make appropriate arrangements whilst highlighting that this was an interim situation.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Statement of Accounts for 2021-22 be approved.**
- (b) that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Charter Trustees on the arrangements for insurance cover for Charter Trustee assets.**

Voting – Agreed

19. Charter Trustee Handbook - Arrangements for Selection and Election to Office

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'D' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Charter Trustees were asked to consider amendments to the handbook relating to the selection and election of civic offices and the establishment of a Civic Working Group to consider and make recommendations on matters before the Trustees.

The Head of Democratic Services reported on the proposed amendments to the handbook as set out in Appendix 1 to the report. He suggested that a heading also be added prior to the final paragraph on page 43 of the agenda pack namely “Standing for more than one office” Councillor Judes Butt sought clarification and the inclusion of appropriate text to support the

definition. The Head of Democratic Services referred to the agenda pack and the relevant text relating to the heading.

The Head of Democratic Services outlined the proposed membership of the suggested Civic Working Group, the frequency of meetings and the process for consider issues and making recommendations formally to Charter Trustees. The Mayor suggested that all previous Mayors serve on the Working Group which was supported by Councillor J Butt. Councillor Stribley whilst supporting the proposal that all previous Mayors serve on the group referred to the membership of the previous civic advisory group indicating that the Sheriff had not been part of that group but was happy if it was proposed to include the Sheriff. Councillor Judes Butt in commenting on the membership of the Group indicated that previously it was about the experience and knowledge of the Mayor rather than Sheriff who had not yet undertaken the Mayoral role and indicated if that was a proposal from Councillor Stribley then she would second it – Councillor Stribley confirmed that it was not a proposal. The Mayor indicated that he was happy for the Sheriff to be included in the Working Group. Councillor Butler expressed her concern that such a group may become political and referred to the opportunity for other Charter Trustees to provide input.

Councillor Mike White left at 18:06 pm

The Head of Democratic Services in response to comments on the establishment of more than one Working Group indicated that he was concerned about the resource implications. He explained that the Civic Work Group would look at a wide range of issues that come up including the flag and arrangements for the Jubilee where it had proved difficult to discuss in a full Charter Trustees meeting. Charter Trustees were informed that for issues on the budget and suggestions about the use of reserves etc the budget workshop would still continue so that work would be a separate activity. The Head of Democratic Services commented on engagement with the wider membership of the Charter Trustees and reminded Members that the Charter Trustees was a non-political body. Councillor Brown suggested that the Civic Working Group should have the power to co-opt additional Charter Trustees onto the Working Group at anytime if they offer particular knowledge, skills and experience that would benefit the Working Group.

Councillor Le Poidevin referred to the role of the Sheriff and the opportunity for the Sheriff to learn about the mayoralty by being a member of the working group. She also sought clarity on the remit of the Group. The Honorary Clerk indicated that it was hoped that the Working Group would provide an informal opportunity to look at any issues by way of preliminary discussions and bring recommendations forward this would also include the ability to informally invite other charter trustees to meetings of the Group to input into issues.

Charter Trustees were informed that the budget workshop had been held for the past two years and assists the RFO in developing the budget to which an offer of attendance had been sent to all Charter Trustees. The

proposed Working Group would cover all other issues, would not be a decision-making body but would make recommendations to formal meetings of the Charter Trustees.

Councillor L-J Evans left at 6.15 pm

RESOLVED that

- (a) the Selection and Election to Office procedures as amended and as set out in Appendix 1 to this report, be approved subject to the inclusion of the additional heading as detailed above;**
- (b) a Civic Working Group with the membership and remit as set out in paragraphs 9 and 10 to this report be established subject to the inclusion of all past Mayors who are existing Trustees and the Working Group informally inviting other Charter Trustees as appropriate.**

Voting: Agreed with 1 abstention

20. Request from the Poole-Cherbourg Twinning Association to use the Coat of Arms

The Charter Trustees were advised that a request had been received by the Poole-Cherbourg Twinning Association to use the Coat of Arms.

The Deputy Head of Democratic Services reported on the advice received from the College of Arms who advised that the Coat of Arms belongs to the Corporate Body to which they have been granted and borne only by that body which in this case was the Charter Trustees. She explained that as an example a Local Authority could use the Coat of Arms on stationery, signs and flags etc but would not be able to grant licenses or other permissions to outside bodies. The Deputy Head of Democratic Services reported that unfortunately the request could not be agreed.

The Mayor declared an interest as a Member of the Poole-Cherbourg Twinning Association.

Councillor Andrews spoke as the Chair of the Twinning Association explaining that the logo the Twinning Association has was based on the old Borough of Poole Council logo which was out of date and the Association was keen to relaunch the Association. He reported that the Association fully understand and accepts the advice reported from the College of Arms. Councillor Andrews indicated that the Association was now thinking what alternative could be used.

Councillor Judes Butt suggested that maybe a competition could be run to design a logo involving the community. Councillor Hadley suggested the image used by the Poole Flag Trust which belongs to the people of Poole could be used as it was about linking the two towns together. Councillor Stribley asked if part of the Coat of Arms could be used. Councillor Andrews indicated that the Association would give the issue further consideration.

21. Notices of Motion

The following motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13 of the Charter Trustees was proposed by Councillor Felicity Rice and seconded by Councillor Hadley:

As the Poole Charter Trustees we ask, on behalf of our residents, that Barclays use the IEA NZE (International Energy Agency Net Zero Emissions scenario) as a minimum standard to properly reflect the climate risks it is exposed to, as Europe's second largest provider of financing to top oil and gas expanders.

Poole Charter Trustees has already recently agreed to use Barclays for their banking services.

However, Barclays ranks 1st on oil sands financing among European banks and 7th globally over the period 2016 to 2020. Barclays and Credit Suisse are now the only European banks that have not committed to exclude financing for oil sands projects.

Barclays is Europe's largest financier of fracking companies and the world's fourth largest. ShareAction, an organisation that drives change at the heart of the financial system so that financial services serve the planet and people, have stated 'it is concerning that despite recent grave climate warnings from the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), Barclays still resists fully committing to 1.5C targets. Barclays has set an emission range for its 2030 Power, Cement and Steel targets with the lower target being 'Business as Usual' and is not considered an option for a liveable planet. If we continue on business as usual emissions, then we will be looking at 3-10 metres of sea level rise within 200 years – which is not consistent with protecting the future inhabitants of Poole.

Therefore, as stated, we call on Barclays bank to use the IEA NZE (International Energy Agency Net Zero Emissions scenario) as a minimum standard to properly reflect the climate risks it is exposed to, as Europe's second largest provider of financing to top oil and gas expanders.

Councillor Rice outlined the purpose of the motion as detailed above emphasising on behalf of residents and in conjunction with the Dorset Youth Climate Action Network Dorset Barclays be called on to use the IEA NZE which was the International Energy Agency Net Zero Emissions scenario as a minimum Standard. Therefore, asking that Barclays adjust its climate policies, so its climate action plan was fully Paris agreement compliant. Councillor Rice indicated that many residents in Poole work for Barclays Bank and she understood that they had been reassured by the Corporate messages explaining some of the action that Barclays was taking to tackle climate change. She advised that Barclays had failed to update its oil and gas policies, so it was still able to finance new oil and gas

projects that Barclays had classified as non-compliant with the Paris Agreement. Councillor Rice explained the approach being taken by Barclays and its impact on Climate change was unacceptable and therefore requested that its policies were updated. She also extended an invitation to the Chairman of Barclays to meet with the Charter Trustees to discuss the issue.

Councillor Hadley in seconding the motion explained that the proposal was compatible with the declaration that BCP Council had made for a climate and ecological emergency. He explained that there were very direct climate impacts for the area of burning fossil fuels and other measures that included the Council's Coastal Protection team working on the need to accommodate a 4-metre sea level rise within their future modelling because of inadequate action by Governments, Local Authorities, Corporations and individuals. Councillor Hadley reported that the oil sands financing was hugely destructive to the natural environment particularly in Canada and there were enormous areas that were laid to waste by it. He also outlined the impact of fracking and the need to invest properly and strategically in renewable energy. Councillor Hadley emphasised the social responsibility that Barclays has.

Councillor Judes Butt indicated that the motion read out by Councillor Rice was more extensive than the wording set out on the agenda and requested a copy of her wording. Councillor Rice confirmed that the motion was the first paragraph as set out on the agenda but had added extra comments in introducing the item.

Councillor Stribley indicated that she felt that the motion was outside of the remit of the Charter Trustees. The Head of Democratic Services reported that it was considered whether or not the motion was permitted and as Barclays was a service provider to the Charter Trustees it was accepted that it would be appropriate if the Charter Trustees wished to make a representation to a service provider as a customer.

Charter Trustees discussed the implications of the motion and the potential options including the financial impact for local residents. Councillor Rice in summing up responded to the issues raised including indicating that the motion was not designed to have any impact on energy bills.

Councillor Stribley left at 18:34

RESOLVED that the motion detailed above be agreed.

Voting – For – 8, Against – 2, Abstentions – 2

The meeting ended at 6.40 pm

MAYOR