

THE CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR BOURNEMOUTH



Report subject	Report of the Bournemouth Civic Working Group
Meeting date	4 December 2024
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report summarises the issues discussed at the Civic Working Group meetings held since the last Charter Trustee meeting in July and seeks support for any recommendations arising
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that: Following acceptance of legal advice regarding the remit of the Charter Trustees, that the proposed amendments to the Standing orders and Handbook be approved.
Reason for recommendations	To seek support of the Charter Trustees for the recommendations arising from the Civic Working Group
Report Authors	Neil Fraser, Deputy Head of Democratic Services
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. At the meeting held on 23 June 2022, the Charter Trustees (CT) established a Civic Working Group (CWG) to make recommendations to the Charter Trustees at Meetings.

Purpose of the Civic Working Group

2. The establishment of the CWG provided an opportunity for earlier discussion of relevant matters and to allow members of the Charter Trustees to shape proposals for submission and consideration at the full Charter Trustee body.
3. The remainder of this paper draws upon those matters discussed and includes, where appropriate, a recommendation for determination.
4. The Civic Working Group agreed that they would meet six to eight weeks before each Charter Trustee meeting.

4. Since the Charter Trustee meeting held on 17 July 2024, the CWG has met on 24 July, 5 September and 22 October 2024.

Recommendations of the CWG:

CT Remit, Twinning, and amended Standing Orders and Handbook

5. Trustees will recall that the agenda for the CT meeting on 17 July 2024 included a motion to end the twinning arrangement between Bournemouth and Netanya, Israel. The motion was included on the agenda following King's Counsel (KC) advice procured by the Honorary Clerk that advised that pre-existing twinning arrangements were matters that fell under the remit of the Charter Trustees, while any new twinning arrangements were to be determined by the prevailing authority (i.e. BCP Council).
6. On the day of the meeting, conflicting advice was received from the KC advising that twinning was not a matter for the Charter Trustees, and in addition that, upon review of the current CT Standing Orders the Charter Trustee was likely operating outside of its remit. The motion was therefore removed from the agenda, and further advice was sought from the KC regarding twinning and Charter Trustee remit.
7. The advice regarding remit had similar implications for the Charter Trustees of Poole, and a similar review process was therefore undertaken for that body.
8. Throughout this review process, the Bournemouth CWG met regularly and was kept informed of progress, and at the meeting on 22 October 2024, the Honorary Clerk confirmed the final position in respect of the advice received from the KC.
9. The CWG was informed that, in the opinion of the KC, the Charter Trustees' basic legislative remit was "very limited, and related to ceremonial and historical matters only."
10. CT functions are therefore limited to:
 - Appointing a Charter Mayor and Deputy Charter Mayor
 - Ensuring the safe custody of the Charter of Incorporation; and
 - Acquiring, holding, administering, maintaining and improving historic property of a ceremonial nature.
11. Any functions currently being undertaken by the Charter Trustees that are outside of this very limited remit, such as the undertaking of Remembrance Sunday events or Mayor's Awards, are therefore not permissible and are to be stopped with immediate effect. (For the avoidance of doubt, the Remembrance events in Bournemouth and Poole for 2024 were underwritten by BCP Council).
12. This also includes matters relating to twinning which, as per the above, fall outside of the remit of the Charter Trustees. In addition, the KC considered that the motion was deemed to be political, when the CT is to be apolitical. Determination of twinning matters is a matter for BCP Council by way of a resolution.
13. The CT Standing Orders and Handbook therefore require minor amendment to better reflect this advice. At the same time, it was felt this was an opportunity to tidy

up the Standing Orders and Handbook to clarify certain matters following lessons learned since the CT was formed in 2019, (e.g. clarity on the order of precedence or the mechanism by which a Trustee may be removed).

14. These amended Standing Orders and Handbook were presented to the CWG at its meeting on 22 October 2024, and can be found appended to this report under Appendices A-D. The CWG accepted the advice as provided and recommends that the amended Standing Orders and Handbook be approved.

It is RECOMMENDED that:

Following acceptance of legal advice regarding the remit of the Charter Trustees, that the proposed amendments to the Standing orders and Handbook be approved.

Summary of financial implications

15. There are no financial implications arising from this report and the recommendations before the Charter Trustees. A reduced remit will be reflected in the forthcoming budget for 2025/26.

Summary of legal implications

16. The roles and responsibilities of the Charter Trustees is defined in legislation, standing orders and the handbook. The issues raised in this report are in accordance with these provisions.

Summary of human resources implications

17. There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

18. There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Summary of public health implications

19. There are no public health implications arising from this report.

Summary of equality implications

20. There are no equality implications arising from this report.

Summary of risk assessment

21. The Charter Trustees maintain a separate risk register which is reviewed annually by the Charter Trustees as a body. Any implications arising from decisions of the Charter Trustees which may have an impact on the register will be updated accordingly.

Background papers

22. [Current CT Standing Orders](#)
23. [Current CT Handbook](#)

Appendices

Appendix A: CT Standing Orders (proposed w/ tracked changes)

Appendix B: CT Standing Orders (proposed/clean)

Appendix C: CT Handbook (proposed w/ tracked changes)

Appendix D: CT Handbook (proposed/clean)