

THE CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR BOURNEMOUTH



Report subject	Report of the Bournemouth Civic Working Group
Meeting date	23 October 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report summarises the issues discussed at the Civic Working Group meetings held since the last Charter Trustee meeting and seeks support for any recommendations arising
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that Charter Trustees: a. accept the gifting of the Mayoral portrait from Councillor Farquhar; and b. consider whether the 2022 decision that no additional portraits are to be hung in the Mayor's Parlour should be overturned, so that Cllr Farquhar's portrait may potentially be hung in the Parlour, subject to costs.
Reason for recommendations	The Civic Working Group is responsible for making recommendations to the Charter Trustees at Meetings
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 to, and consideration by, the full Charter Trustee body.
3. The Civic Working Group agreed that they would meet six to eight weeks before each Charter Trustee meeting, where possible.
4. The remainder of this paper draws upon those matters discussed and includes, where appropriate, a recommendation for determination.

Mayoral Portrait of Councillor George Farquhar

(Please note, this item was deferred from the CT meeting of 24 June at the Mayor's request, due to her absence at that meeting)

5. At the CT meeting of 20 May 2025, then Charter Mayor Councillor George Farquhar confirmed that he was gifting his Mayoral portrait to the people of Bournemouth, through the Charter Trustees. Councillor Farquhar has since confirmed he would like the portrait to be hung in the Mayor's Parlour.
6. However, at the CT meeting held on 24 October 2022, Trustees resolved that no additional portraits were to be hung in the Mayor's Parlour. The 2022 resolution has been reproduced as follows:

RESOLVED that:-

(a) no additional portraits be hung in the Mayor's Parlour in accordance with Bournemouth's history and tradition;

7. The Civic Team lack appropriate space for the portrait's safe long-term storage. An offer to display and store the portrait has been received from the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum. Alternatively, the CWG has requested that the civic team explore the feasibility of replacing a current Parlour portrait, for example the portrait of Captain Lewis Tregonwell, with Cllr Farquhar's. To facilitate this, associated measurements and redecorating costs will need to be procured, alongside a review of any other considerations inherent to the hanging of portraits in the room.
8. It is requested that Charter Trustees consider whether they wish to overturn the 2022 decision to allow for measurements and costings to be undertaken. If agreed, further information will be provided to the CWG.

RECOMMENDED: That Charter Trustees:

- a. **accept the gifting of the Mayoral portrait from Councillor Farquhar; and**
- b. **consider whether the 2022 decision that no additional portraits are to be hung in the Mayor's Parlour should be overturned, so that Cllr Farquhar's portrait may potentially be hung in the Parlour, subject to costs.**

Service Level Agreement & Community Governance Review

9. Work continues on the drafting of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) which sets out the provision of support to the Charter Trustees from BCP Council.
10. However, the CWG has recommended that any further discussion on the contents or implementation of the SLA should be deferred until Trustees can consider the outcome of the Community Governance Review and its impact on the Charter Trustees, determined at the Council meeting of 14 October 2025.
11. At that meeting, Council approved the creation of a new Bournemouth Town Council. The Head of Democratic Services will provide a verbal update on the implications of that decision, including the abolition of the Charter Trustees and civic roles and the transitional arrangements being considered, under agenda item 7.

Trustee attendance at meetings

12. Trustees have resolved that attendance at meetings is to be reviewed at each subsequent meeting by way of a standing item. This is set out as agenda item 8, which includes a recommendation from the CWG to be determined.

Civic Events and Communication Improvements

13. The CWG noted a new process introduced by officers that automatically adds key civic events to Trustee diaries. It is hoped that this new process will promote earlier awareness of events and therefore greater attendance. For example, Trustees will see that Remembrance events for 2025 have been added to diaries.
14. In addition, the CWG requested that officers review forthcoming events with the Mayor to allow for relevant Ward Councillors to be invited to attend events alongside the Mayor, subject to practical and other considerations (such as rules applicable during election periods.)

Mayoral Robes

15. The CWG has requested that officers procure quotes for new robes for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, to replace historic robes that are in a state of disrepair. Quotes will be sought from the Arts University and local tailors, and design options will be presented to a future meeting of the CWG.
16. Officers will also review the potential for the historic robes to be displayed at the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum or other suitable venue.

Summary of financial implications

17. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Summary of legal implications

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

Summary of human resources implications

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

Summary of sustainability impact

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

Summary of public health implications

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

Summary of equality implications

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

Summary of risk assessment

23. There are no risk implications arising from this report.

Background papers

24. Published works.

Appendices

25. None.