

## **CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR THE CITY OF DURHAM**

At the **Meeting** of the **Charter Trustees for the City of Durham** held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham, on Wednesday 4 December 2019 at 11.30 am

**Present:** The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Durham, Councillor K Corrigan (in the Chair) and Councillors D Bell, L Brown, J Chaplow, S Dunn, A Hopgood, L Hovvels, B Kellett, J Lethbridge, R Ormerod, E Scott, A Simpson, F Tinsley and M Wilson

**Also Present:** Councillor O Johnson

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Mayor formally reported the death of former Mayoress, Mrs Margaret Gibbon. Trustees stood for a moments silence as a mark of respect.

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors J Blakey, D Freeman, D Hall, C Marshall, E Mavin, M McKeon, M Simmons, P Taylor, J Turnbull and M Wilkes.

### **2 Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

### **3 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **4 2020/21 Budget**

Charter Trustees considered a report of the Treasurer that provided information to enable Charter Trustees to determine the appropriate budget requirement for the Charter Trust for 2020/21 and the basic level of council tax required for 2020/2021 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Treasurer reported that the level of council tax has been set at £1.90 since 2014/15 and Charter Trustees agreed in 2017 to maintain that level until

2021/22. He advised that the council tax base for 2020/21 would increase from £25,890.60 for 2019/20 to £26,073.10 for 2020/21. Consequently the council tax receivable would increase from £49,192.14 to £49,538.89 at the current Band D Council Tax rate of £1.90.

The Local Council Tax Support Scheme Grant for 2020/21 had increased by £554 from £6,121 to £6,675. In order to maintain the precept at £1.90, a transfer of £13,890 from reserves would be required, with the total level of reserves estimated to reduce to £43,233 as at 31 March 2021.

Councillor Hopgood queried the general office expenses at Appendix B of the report as the forecast of outturn was almost double what had been budgeted for. The Treasurer explained that this was due to an extra one-off expense in 2019/20 which would not occur in 2020/21.

**Resolved:**

That the council tax requirement of £49,539 and a £1.90 precept for 2020/21 be approved.

The Mayor agreed that in order to keep members informed, the next items of business could be reported.

## **5 Freedom of the City Parade**

The Clerk updated Charter Trustees on requests received from the RAF 67<sup>th</sup> Squadron and the British Army Rifles to exercise the Freedom of the City.

He informed Charter Trustees that the RAF 67<sup>th</sup> Squadron were planning to parade in Durham City in March 2020 and were combining the parade with their 90<sup>th</sup> Annual celebrations. The Rifles were also planning an event in Wharton Park in June 2020.

The Clerk advised that both the RAF and the Rifles had requested a financial contribution of around £2,000/£2,500 towards expenses, however full details of costing had not been received yet.

Charter Trustees discussed the programme of events and the possibility of exploring the potential to expand the Wharton Park event. The Clerk clarified that both events would be supported in the Mayor of the City of Durham capacity and not as County Council events. The Treasurer added that funding was available from the hospitality budget and highlighted the reserves forecasted for 2021/22 which could be utilised if required.

The Clerk advised that he would provide an update to Charter Trustees when he received costings and evidence would be provided.

Charter Trustees were happy to support the celebrations in Durham City and it was proposed to contribute up to £2,500 each to support the high profile events in Durham City.

**Resolved:**

- i) That financial contributions up to £2,500 each be made towards expenses to exercise the Freedom of the City;
- ii) That details of costings be reported to a future meeting.

## **6 Working Group – Appointments of Deputy Mayor**

The Clerk informed Charter Trustees that the Governance Solicitor would be circulating proposed dates for the Working Group to discuss appointments for the Deputy Mayor.