

CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR THE CITY OF DURHAM

At the **Meeting** of the **Charter Trustees for the City of Durham** held in the Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham, on Wednesday 28 October 2015 at 1.00 pm

Present: The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Durham, Councillor J Blakey (in the Chair) and Councillors B Moir, J Chaplow, K Corrigan, N Foster, D Freeman, G Holland, B Kellett, N Martin, M Plews, M Simmons, J Turnbull, M Wilkes and M Williams

The Clerk advised Trustees of the deaths of the following past Mayors and Aldermen and members of the Mayor's Bodyguard – Duggan, Gibbon, Dickie and Donnegan.

Trustees stood for a minutes silence as a mark of respect.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Armstrong, D Bell, A Bonner, P Conway, O Gunn, D Hall, A Hopgood, R Ormerod, J Robinson, D Stoker and P Taylor.

2 Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on the 17 June 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

3 Declarations of interest, if any

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Update Report

Charter Trustees considered a report of the Clerk that gave an update of events since the last meeting (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Clerk advised that there were two elements to address from the BDO external audit of 2014. The first being the compilation of an assets register and the second issue was completion of the risk assessment process for internal governance arrangements.

Following the last meeting the Transfer Agreement between the Trustees and Durham County Council for transfer of assets held at Town Hall Durham had been signed and sealed on 22 July 2015.

In addition a valuation of the Mayoral chains had been completed and the chains of office had been added to the Assets Register. A copy of the valuation was available for inspection at the meeting.

Referring to the Risk Assessment matrix the Clerk advised that although approved by Trustees on 1 April 2015, BDO had noted in their report that this was one day late and should have been considered and minuted by 31 March 2015. Trustees were informed that this would be reported in January next year.

Since the last meeting the Clerk reported the number of Trustees and Officers robes which may be available for use by Past Mayors in ceremonial meetings and processions. Trustees discussed who should be offered the robes when attending ceremonial events and noted that if all attended there may be a shortfall but this was unlikely.

Councillor G Holland suggested that all former mayors that attend should be offered the black with silver trim robes and that alderman be offered the alderman robes.

Councillor N Foster added that where people qualify that they should be entitled to carry on wearing the appropriate robe.

Resolved:

That the updates be noted and accepted.

5 Conclusion of Audit for the year ended 31 March 2015

Charter Trustees considered a report of the Treasurer that advised of the completion of the audit of the annual return for the financial year ending 31 March 2015, which was carried out by BDO LLP (the external auditor of the Charter Trustees) (for copy see file of minutes).

The Treasurer reported the audit findings and advised on the actions that were required in order to satisfy the external auditor in the future, including earlier reporting of the risk assessment to the Trustees at their January meeting next year.

Resolved:

- (i) That the audited annual return for 2014/15 be approved;
- (ii) That a risk assessment review of internal controls be reported annually at future meetings before the end of each financial year.

6 Revenue Outturn for the period ending 30 September 2015 and Projected Outturn to 31 March 2016

Charter Trustees considered a report of the Treasurer that provided information on the actual expenditure compared to the profiled budget for the period ending 30 September 2015; and the forecast of expenditure to 31 March 2016 in comparison to the 2015/16 original budget (for copy see file of minutes).

The Treasurer reported that at 30 September 2015 actual net expenditure was £28,684; an underspend of £4,891 against a profiled budget of £33,575. It was anticipated that actual expenditure at 31 March 2016 would be slightly lower than the

original budget, therefore the sum required to be drawn from reserves to balance the budget would therefore be expected to reduce from £6,883 to £1,405

Councillor N Martin asked about the Civic Dinner income as had assumed it was a charity fundraising exercise with the proceeds going to the Mayors charity. Trustees were advised that there was a fundraising section during the evening and the Treasurer advised that he would be happy to isolate from the Mayors hospitality budget the costs associated with the event. Councillor Martin said that there should be a note in the accounts.

Referring to allowances for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, Councillor M Williams asked that this be included in the accounts should they wish to claim in the future. The Treasurer advised that this would be a discussion when setting the budget. Councillor Martin agreed that this should be included as the budget was set before the postholders were appointed. The Treasurer suggested that the flexibility of reserves could be used. The Mayor suggested that a working group be set up to look at future budget years.

Resolved:

- (i) That the outturn position for the period ended 30 September 2015 be noted;
- (ii) That the forecast outturn to 31 March 2016 be noted;
- (iii) That costs for the Civic Dinner be reported back to Trustees; and
- (iv) That a Working Group be set up regarding setting the budget.

7 Mayoral Robes

The Mayor informed Charter Trustees that the costs for purchasing new Mayoral robes had been sought. Only one supplier had provided a costing and sample fabric. The robes would be more lightweight to enable easier movement outdoors but would be replicas of the current robes. The change in fabric would mean that the robes could be cleaned locally and therefore reducing the costs. The Mayor advised that the original robes would be displayed in the Town Hall.

Councillor M Wilkes asked that costings are brought back to the Trust regarding displaying the original robes at the Town Hall. Councillor N Foster said that he would look into this and report back.

Councillor M Simmons expressed concern about the fabric proposed as she felt that it did not have enough weight for this type of garment. The Major invited Councillor Simmons to join her and the Deputy Major during their meeting with the supplier.

After a detailed discussion Trustees **Resolved:-**

That purchase of robes for the Major and Deputy Major be agreed.