

CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR THE CITY OF DURHAM

At the **Special Meeting** of the **Charter Trustees for the City of Durham** held in the Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham on Thursday 25 July 2019 at 11.00 am.

Present: The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Durham, K Corrigan (in the Chair) and Councillors D Bell, J Blakey, L Brown, K Corrigan, S Dunn, D Freeman, A Hopgood, L Hovvels, J Lethbridge, E Mavin, L Mavin, M Simmons, A Simpson, F Tinsley, J Turnbull and M Wilkes.

Also Present: Councillor O Johnson

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Chaplow, D Hall, B Kellett, C Marshall, M McKeon, R Ormerod, E Scott, P Taylor and M Wilson.

2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

Matters Arising

Referring to item 4 of the minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2019, the Treasurer advised that the finance team were in the process of changing the bank account for the Charter Trust and would provide an update at the next meeting.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Officers of Dignity Appointments

Charter Trustees considered a report of the Clerk detailing recommendations of the working group regarding the criteria for the appointment of Officers of Dignity for the Charter Trustees, and to vary the Standing Orders relating to voting on appointments on appointments of Officer of Dignity (for copy see file of minutes).

The Clerk reported that the working group met on 17 July 2019 to explore options relating to the selection criteria to be applied for future appointments of honorary position and agreed the following criteria:

- Close links to Durham City;
- Contribution to Durham City;
- Support for charitable and/or good causes.

In addition, each honorary role has historic origins and traditional links to certain professions and the working group agreed to the following special criteria:

- Pant Master – Links to technical services such as engineering/water supply;
- Billet Master – Links to the police and/or uniformed services;
- Recorder – Links to the legal profession;
- Judicial Recorder – Links to the Judiciary of Durham.

The Clerk advised that the working group discussed voting arrangements when appointing honorary positions and it was preferred that voting takes place by way of paper ballot which would require a motion to be moved and seconded in order to make the variation to the standing orders.

Councillor Wilkes asked if the ballot vote was purely for ceremonial positions and voting for the Deputy Mayor would still be by show of hands. Councillor Hopgood explained that the working group to discuss the appointment of Deputy Mayor would take place later in the year which would then be reported to a future meeting of the Charter Trustees.

Councillor Hopgood referred to paragraph 14 of the report and clarified that the working group agreed that the two candidates that had come forward for the Pant Master position would meet the criteria therefore it would not be necessary to ask for further expressions of interest on this occasion.

Councillor Turnbull had concerns that only two people were aware of the vacant position and there could be other suitable candidates from the former Durham City Council that would be interested. The Clerk advised that it was a matter for Charter Trustees to debate and explained that the report allowed for the possibility that other Charter Trustees may have had expressions of interest from other suitable candidates.

Charter Trustees noted a correction to paragraph 11 of the report, Councillor Hopgood advised that the working group agreed that the general criteria was essential criteria, and the special criteria was desirable.

Seconded by Councillor Dunn, the Mayor proposed to offer the two interested candidates a shared role position.

Charter Trustees discussed the options and it was agreed that the two interested candidates be appointed as primary and secondary Pant Master which would rotate on an annual basis. It was clarified that the shared option was purely for this occasion. The Clerk then advised that determining who would be primary and who would be secondary Pant Master would be by way of paper ballot which would require a variation to the standing orders. The ballot vote would take place at the meeting in October 2019.

Resolved:

- i) That the selection criteria with the amendment that the general criteria would be essential criteria and not desirable and the special criteria would be desirable be approved;
- ii) That it was not thought necessary to invite further expressions of interest;
- iii) That the two candidates who have expressed interest were suitable against the criteria and would be invited to be Primary and Secondary Pant Master on an alternating basis. That is, one would be in post for one year post the Annual Meeting and Mayor making and then the other person in the following year;
- iv) That the Standing Orders be varied to allow for a vote by ballot when considering one or more candidates for an honorary position. This would stand adjourned until the next ordinary meeting.

5 Update on CDALC Abolition of Charter Trustees

Charter Trustees considered a report of the Clerk that provided an update on correspondence from the County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC) regarding the abolition of the Charter Trustees (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor Freeman asked if there was any desire for Charter Trustees to write to government in support of the abolition of Charter Trustees which would ensure that civic traditions return to the City of Durham Parish Council. Councillors Tinsley and Hopgood highlighted that the City of Durham Council does not cover the full Charter Trustee area and it was felt that as long as there were unparished areas within the Charter Trustee boundary, there should still be a Charter Trust.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.