

CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR THE CITY OF DURHAM

At the **Meeting** of the **Charter Trustees for the City of Durham** held in the Main Hall, Town Hall, Durham, on Wednesday 8 January 2014 at 5.00 pm

Present: The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Durham, Councillor P Charlton (in the Chair) and Councillors J Blakey, J Armstrong, A Bonner, P Conway, N Foster, S Guy, A Hopgood, N Martin, B Moir, R Ormerod and M Plews

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Bell, K Corrigan, D Freeman, D Hall, G Holland, M Nicholls, M Simmons, D Stoker, P Taylor, J Turnbull, M Wilkes and M Williams.

2 Recording of Proceedings

Resolved:

That the Charter Trustees consent to the taking of photographs during the meeting.

3 To swear in Mr T S Dixon as a Member of the Mayor's Bodyguard

Resolved:

Mr. Thomas S Dixon, was duly sworn in as a Member of the Mayor's Bodyguard.

The Mayor informed Trustees that Sharon Spence, Clerk to the Charter Trustees for the City of Durham would be retiring on 31 January 2014. She requested that appreciation for the service she had provided to all former Mayors of the City of Durham be recorded.

The meeting adjourned at 5.10 pm and reconvened at 5.30 pm

4 Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

5 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

6 Pant Master

At a previous meeting of the Charter Trustees held on 11 November 2013 it was noted that the Pant Master had not been present at a number of ceremonial occasions and it was subsequently agreed that the post holder be asked if he still wished to continue as Pant Master.

Charter Trustees considered a report of the Clerk informing Trustees that a response had been received from the Pant Master and to consider a way forward in respect of this position (for copy see file of minutes).

The Clerk informed Charter Trustees that the post holder had provided an explanation as to why he had been unable to attend a number of ceremonial events and why he was unable to predict when he may be in a position to return as Pant Master. He remains in full support of the ceremonial traditions of the City of Durham being continued and, in this respect, has indicated that he fully understands should the Trustees wish to appoint another willing supporter to the post.

Councillor Hopgood suggested that the Pant Master position be considered at the next meeting in order for Charter Trustees to suggest other suitable candidates.

Councillor Armstrong acknowledged that the post had been vacant for a number of years and agreed that the position should be considered at the next meeting. He requested that a letter be sent to the Pant Master in appreciation of his service to the Mayor of the City of Durham.

Councillor Blakey suggested that a meeting be arranged in March 2014 in order for the Pant Master to be in place before the Annual meeting in May 2014.

Resolved:

- (i) That a meeting of the Charter Trustees be arranged in March 2014 to suggest suitable candidates for the position of Pant Master.
- (ii) That a letter be sent to the Pant Master in appreciation of his service to the Mayor of the City of Durham.

7 Past Mayor and Mayoress/Consort Jewels

Charter Trustees considered a report of the Clerk which sets out a number of options in view of the increasing costs of continuing tradition of presenting the retiring Mayor and Mayoress/Consort with 'Jewels' in the form of Medals in recognition of their service to the City (for copy see file of minutes).

Charter Trustees considered the options presented and discussed the importance of maintaining the history and traditions of the role.

Councillor Bonner moved and Councillor Guy seconded Option 1, to continue the tradition as in previous years.

Resolved:

That the Past Mayor and Past Mayoress/Consort continue to be presented with Gold and Silver Medals, in recognition of their services to the City be approved (Option 1).

8 Revenue Budget 2014/15 - Report of the Treasurer

Charter Trustees considered a report of the Treasurer which provided information to enable Charter Trustees to approve the appropriate budget requirement for the Charter Trust for 2014/15 and basic level of council tax required for 2014/15 (for copy see file of minutes).

At the last meeting of the Charter Trustees, it was agreed that a budget working group be established with responsibility for considering alternative budgets for 2014/15 and recommending their preferred options to be presented to Charter Trustees for approval.

Charter Trustees considered the options presented and thought it prudent in the current economic climate to recommend Option 3, a precept of £1.90 as the preferred option.

Councillor N Foster moved and Councillor A Hopgood seconded Option 3, which would set the basic level of council tax at £1.90.

Resolved:

- (i) That the budget requirement for 2014/15 be approved.
- (ii) That the basic level of council tax of £1.90 be approved (Option 3).