

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 7 December 2016 at 12.00 pm

Present: The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Durham, Councillor E Bell (in the Chair) and Councillors J Armstrong, J Blakey, J Chaplow, P Conway, N Foster, D Freeman, G Holland, A Hopgood, B Kellett, N Martin, M Plews, M Simmons, P Taylor, J Turnbull and M Wilkes

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Bell, K Corrigan, O Gunn, B Moir, and R Ormerod.

2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on the 26 October 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

Referring to item 4 from the minutes of the meeting held on the 26 October 2016, Councillor Hopgood enquired if any quotations had been obtained regarding the commissioning of purpose built display cabinets to store Mayoral robes. The Clerk advised that the matter was ongoing and he would endeavour to provide details for the next meeting.

Referring to item 5 from the minutes of the meeting held on the 26 October 2016, the Clerk informed Charter Trustees that there had been correspondence with the Secretary to the Bodyguard regarding a protocol and amicable arrangements have been made.

4 Date for Mayor making and AGM 2017

Charter Trustees considered a report of the Clerk to Charter Trustees proposing the new date for Mayor Making 2017 after a request was made at the meeting held on the 26 October 2016 to consider a later date (for copy see file of minutes).

The Clerk advised that the Mayor had agreed and the Town Hall had been provisionally booked for Mayor Making to be held on Wednesday 7 June 2017.

Resolved:

That the information contained in the report be noted.

5 2017/18 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 2017/18 and the basic level of council tax required for 2017/18 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Treasurer referred to the meeting on 8 January 2014 where Trustees agreed to the utilisation of reserves to maintain the Band D equivalent council tax at £1.90 in each financial year from 2014/15 to 2018/19.

It was reported that the council tax base for 2017/18 would increase slightly and the Local Council Tax Support Scheme Grant for 2017/18 had decreased by £1,289. In order to maintain the precept, a transfer of £11,962 from reserves would be required, with the total level of reserves estimated to reduce to £56,161 from 31 March 2018.

Trustees agreed to formally accept the council tax requirement of £47,534 and precept of £1.90 for 2017/18.

Resolved:

That the council tax requirement of £47,534 and a £1.90 precept for 2017/18 be agreed.

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

6 Councillor Mac Williams

The Mayor placed on record his thanks and appreciation to Councillor Williams for his dedicated service and it was agreed that a formal letter be sent to Councillor Williams on behalf of Charter Trustees.

Resolved:

That a formal letter of thanks and appreciation be sent to Councillor Williams on behalf of Charter Trustees.

Councillors Holland and Martin left the meeting.

7 Award of Honorary Freeman of the City

Councillor Wilkes suggested that consideration be given to whether the award of Freeman of the City would be suitable for anyone of three possible candidates in recognition of their services to the community which was within the remit of the Charter Trustees to gift.

The Clerk advised that he would examine the statutory criteria and consider when a suitable report could be presented to Charter Trustees. Councillor Wilkes offered to prepare a biography for each member.

Councillor P Taylor suggested that advice be sought to ensure there would be no implications regarding purdah.

Resolved:

That the Clerk would examine the relevant criteria and consider when a suitable report could be presented to Charter Trustees for consideration.