

Taunton Charter Trustees - 29 June 2021

Present: Councillor Sue Lees (Mayor)

Councillors Brenda Weston, Lee Baker, Chris Booth, Simon Coles, Caroline Ellis, Marcia Hill, Richard Lees, Libby Lisgo, Derek Perry, Hazel Prior-Sankey and Francesca Smith

Officers: Jo Comer and Marcus Prouse

(The meeting commenced at 6.02 pm)

12. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Peters and Smith-Roberts

13. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Taunton Charter Trustees

(Minutes of the meeting of the Taunton Charter Trustees held on 25th May 2021 circulated with the agenda)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Taunton Charter Trustees held on 25th May 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

14. Declarations of Interest

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

| Name | Minute No. | Description of Interest | Reason | Action Taken |
|---------------------|------------|-------------------------|----------|-----------------|
| Cllr L Baker | All Items | Cheddon Fitzpaine & SWT | Personal | Spoke and Voted |
| Cllr C Booth | All Items | Wellington and SWT | Personal | Spoke and Voted |
| Cllr S Coles | All Items | SCC & SWT | Personal | Spoke and Voted |
| Cllr C Ellis | All Items | SWT | Personal | Spoke and Voted |
| Cllr Mrs Hill | All Items | SWT | Personal | Spoke and Voted |
| Cllr R Lees | All Items | SWT | Personal | Spoke and Voted |
| Cllr S Lees | All Items | SWT | Personal | Spoke and Voted |
| Cllr L Lisgo | All Items | SWT | Personal | Spoke and Voted |
| Cllr D Perry | All Items | SWT | Personal | Spoke and Voted |
| Cllr H Prior-Sankey | All Items | SCC & SWT | Personal | Spoke and Voted |
| Cllr F Smith | All Items | SWT | Personal | Spoke and Voted |
| Cllr B Weston | All Items | SWT | Personal | Spoke and Voted |

15. **Public Participation**

No members of the public had notified of a wish to speak or ask questions.

16. **Petitions**

The Charter Trustees were advised that no petitions had been submitted.

17. **Motions to the Charter Trustees**

The Charter Trustees were advised that no notice of any motions had been submitted.

18. **Communications**

The Mayor advised the Charter Trustees of her activities since her election on the 25th May 2021;

- Attended the opening of the offices of NEST@Mallard
- Attended the 77th Anniversary events commemorating D-Day, laying a wreath at the Normandy Stone in Vivary Park.
- Attended the induction of the new Vicar at Creech St. Michael.
- Attended a lunchtime concert at St. John's Church.
- Supported the Armed Forces Day event.
- Attended an evening event with the Young Sea Cadets.
- Launched the Love Windows Trail.
- Opened the Rainbow Trail.

These were just a snapshot of events.

19. **To answer questions under Standing Order 8**

No Charter Trustees requested to ask a question under Standing Order 8.

20. **Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21**

This had been added to the Agenda on 25th June 2021 when received - Under Access to Information Procedure Rules "*Where there are special circumstances requiring an item to be added to the agenda after publication, the revised agenda will be open to inspection from the time the item was added to the agenda.*"

The purpose of this item was to receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21. This was not mandatory but was recommended by the External Auditors in their review last year. There were some suggested improvements that were to be recommended and these were going to be addressed now identified.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and asked questions which included:-

- A concern was raised that these matters had not been addressed by the Finance Team.
- *Officers worked closely with the Finance team at SWT in terms of extracting a statement of accounts.*
- Why had the Charter Trustees not engaged South West Audit Partnership?
- *They were emailed and did not respond to a request to quote.*
- It was stated that an Action Plan to address these points needed to be put in place.
- *This was a good idea and it was considered that nothing in this report could not be addressed.*
- The discussion on risks to the Charter Trustees had felt to be considered but this would need to be formally recorded in a Risk Register.
- It was suggested that looking at what other Charter Trustee areas did in this regard would be a good idea.

RESOLVED that the Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21 was received and noted.

21. **Annual Governance Statement 2020/2021**

The Clerk advised that the report had been circulated and it was a requirement for the Charter Trustees to acknowledge certain statements as part of the Annual Governance Return. The Clerk advised that part of the requirements for a Charter Trustee body, which had been established in the Unparished Area in 2019 by Statutory Instrument, was an offer to become part of the Small Auditors Appointments Regime (SAAA), which the Charter Trustees had accepted previously to be a part of. Every year the Charter Trustees needed to submit an Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements for audit, to ensure that the proper use of public funds was being discharged.

RESOLVED to approve the Annual Governance Statement 2020/2021 for submission to the Taunton Charter Trustees External Auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP.

22. **Accounting Statements 2020/21**

The Mayor of Taunton advised that the Draft Accounting Statements for 2020/2021 had been circulated as part of the Agenda.

RESOLVED to approve the Draft Accounting Statements 2020/2021 for submission to the Charter Trustee's external Auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP.

(The Meeting ended at 6.37 pm)