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NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR HARROGATE

- To:** Councillors Chris Aldred, Philip Broadbank, Sam Gibbs, Michael Harrison, Paul Haslam, Peter Lacey, John Mann, Mike Schofield, Monika Slater and Andrew Timothy.
- Date:** Thursday 30th May 2024
- Time:** 9.15 am
- Venue:** Council Chamber, Civic Centre, St Luke's Avenue, Harrogate HG1 2AE

All Members of The Charter Trustees for Harrogate are summoned to attend this meeting to consider the items of business set out on the agenda below.

Members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting as observers for all those items taken in open session. Please contact the named democratic services officer supporting this committee, details at the foot of the first page of the Agenda, if you have any queries.

Recording is allowed at Council, committee and sub-committee meetings which are open to the public. Please give due regard to the Council's protocol on audio/visual recording and photography at public meetings. Anyone wishing to record is asked to contact, prior to the start of the meeting, the named democratic services officer supporting this committee. We ask that any recording is clearly visible to anyone at the meeting and that it is non-disruptive.

BARRY KHAN
CLERK TO THE CHARTER TRUSTEES

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Election of Charter Mayor**
To elect a Mayor for 2024/25
3. **Election of Deputy Charter Mayor**
To elect a Deputy Charter Mayor for 2024/25
4. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 December 2023** (Pages 3 - 4)
5. **Declarations of Interest**
All Members are invited to declare at this point any interests they have in items appearing on this agenda, including the nature of those interests.
6. **Charter Mayor's Report**
A verbal update on the activities of the Charter Mayor and Deputy Charter Mayor since the last meeting of the Charter Trustees.

7. Calendar of Meetings

To approve meetings for the remainder of the 2024/25 municipal year being 22 July 2024 at 10.30 am and 24 October 2024 at 10.30 am.

8. Appointment of External Auditor

(Pages 5 - 6)

To approve the appointment of an external auditor for the Charter Trustees

9. Any Other Items

Any other items which the Charter Mayor agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances

Members are reminded that in order to expedite business at the meeting and enable Officers to adapt their presentations to address areas causing difficulty, they are encouraged to contact Officers prior to the meeting with questions on technical issues in reports.

Contact Details:

For enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Elizabeth Jackson, Principal Democratic Services Officer.

Tel: 01423 556409 or email Elizabeth.jackson@northyorks.gov.uk

Website: www.northyorks.gov.uk

Barry Khan
Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services
County Hall
Northallerton

21 May 2024

The Charter Trustees for Harrogate

Minutes of the meeting held at the Civic Centre, Harrogate on Monday 11 December 2023 commencing at 10.30 am.

Councillors: Councillor Michael Harrison in the Chair. Councillors Philip Broadbank, Sam Gibbs, Paul Haslam, Mike Schofield and Monica Slater.

Officers present: Karen Iveson, Assistant Director Finance (remote attendee); Pamela Barnes, Mayor's Secretary; Harriet Clarke, Democratic Services Officer and Elizabeth Jackson, Democratic Services Manager.

Apologies: Councillors Chris Aldred, Peter Lacey, John Mann and Pat Marsh.

21 Apologies for absence

Councillor Michael Harrison, the Charter Mayor of Harrogate, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Chris Aldred, Peter Lacey, John Mann and Pat Marsh.

22 Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 October 2023

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Charter Trustees held on 23 October 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

23 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

24 Questions and Statements by the Public

No public questions or statements had been received.

25 Charter Mayor's Report

The Charter Mayor gave an update on his activities since the October meeting. The Mayor had maintained the civic traditions of Harrogate and had led the commemorations on Remembrance Sunday with the Parade and Service at the War Memorial followed by the service at the Wesley Chapel. The Mayor had also attended the Service of Remembrance at Stonefall Cemetery, the Closing Ceremony of the 100th Anniversary of the War Memorial and the Festival of Remembrance at St Peter's Church. The Mayor had been invited to the Local Fund Celebration which recognised the achievements of local organisations. More recently the Deputy Mayor had attended the Starbeck Christmas Lights Switch on and the Mayor had opened the Harrogate Christmas Market.

26 Finance Report

A report by Karen Iveson, Assistant Director Finance, presenting the in-year budget position to the end of Quarter 3 of 2023-24 for approval.

Resolved (unanimously) –

That the Charter Trustees note the expenditure incurred to the end of December 2023.

27 Charter Trustees Budget and Precept 2024-25

Considered –

A report by Karen Iveson, Assistant Director Finance (ADF), presenting the budget and precept for the Charter Trustees for Harrogate for 2024-25 for approval, which was attached at Appendix A. The ADF advised that this was a roll forward budget, which included a 6% inflation increase where appropriate.

The Charter Trustees considered various items which had been included in the budget and it was agreed that ACTT membership and mileage claims be removed from the budget, and the officer support budget be increased by a corresponding amount. This would give an overall budget of £12,800 and a Band D precept of 46p for 2024-25, an increase of 2p from 2023-24.

Resolved (unanimously) –

That (1) the budget and precept of £12,800 for 2024-25, as amended, be approved; and

(2) North Yorkshire Council be notified of the 2024-25 precept of £12,800.

28 Charter Mayor and Deputy Charter Mayor for 2024-25

In accordance with the procedures of the Charter Trustees, the Mayor submitted the nominations of Councillor Chris Aldred as Charter Mayor and Councillor Mike Schofield as Deputy Charter Mayor. The Mayor congratulated them both and advised that a formal vote would be taken at the Annual Meeting.

29 Any other items - such other business which the Chair agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances.

There was no urgent business.

30 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Charter Trustees would be the Annual Meeting and would be held on 21 May 2024 at 10.30 am.

The meeting concluded at 10.50 am.

The Charter Trustees for Harrogate

Annual Meeting

30 May 2024

Appointment of External Auditor

Report of the Responsible Financial Officer

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval to the appointment of the external auditor of the Charter Trustees through the national framework overseen by the Small Authorities' Auditor Appointments body.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Charter Trustees are advised that they are required to appoint an external auditor to undertake a limited assurance review. The use of the Smaller Authorities' Auditor Appointments (SAAA) national framework for this appointment, provides a compliant and appropriate approach commensurate with the necessary governance and oversight arrangements required.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments was formally appointed in January 2016 by the Minister for Local Government as "a person specified to appoint local auditors" to:

- procure and appoint external auditors to smaller authorities in England;
- perform the functions set out in the relevant legislation; and
- monitor delivery of the ongoing audit contracts.

- 3.2 The Charter Trustees are advised that all smaller authorities, (those with income/ expenditure under £6.5 million), require an external auditor to be appointed to undertake a 'limited assurance review' at the conclusion of the financial year and in case an objection is received from a local elector. Smaller authorities mainly comprise of Town and Parish Councils although Charter Trustees are also included within the definition of a smaller authority.

- 3.3 The current 5-year national contract runs from the financial years 2022/23 to 2026/27.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Charter Trustees use this national procurement and appointment framework. If newly created authorities opted out of this approach they would be required to procure and appoint their own external auditors.

- 4.2 Auditors are appointed by area – for North Yorkshire, the auditor to be appointed under the current framework is PKF Littlejohn.

5.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

- 5.1 No consultation has been undertaken.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 The Charter Trustees may appoint an external auditor independently, but an appropriate procurement exercise would be required, and on-going additional oversight would be needed. Given the requirements for smaller bodies, this is not recommended.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There is a fee charged for external audit work which is governed by the national framework. The published scale fee for an authority with income or expenditure in the bracket £0 - £25,000, is £210. This fee may be subject to review during the life of the contract and will be confirmed on formal notification of appointment.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 SAAA is specified as the sector led body with powers to procure and appoint auditors and set audit fees for smaller authorities in compliance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, and the Local Audit (Smaller Authority) Regulations 2015.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no equalities implications.

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no climate change implications.

11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 To ensure that the Charter Trustees comply with their legislative obligations in a way which is proportionate and sustainable.

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) That the Charter Trustees for Harrogate agree the use of the Smaller Authorities' Auditor Appointments framework for the appointment of the external auditor.

APPENDICES: None

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

Karen Iveson
Responsible Financial Officer to the Charter Trustees
County Hall
Northallerton

30 May 2024

Report Author – Karen Iveson, Responsible Financial Officer