

ASSOCIATION OF CHARTER TRUSTEE TOWNS AND CHARTER TOWN COUNCILS

Mr A Martin
Hon Secretary
Mayor's Office
Guildhall
BATH
Somerset
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MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CHARTER TRUSTEE TOWNS AND CHARTER TOWN COUNCILS HELD AT ELLESMERE PORT CIVIC HALL ON FRIDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 10.00 AM

Present:

Chairman of the ACTT & CTC
Hon Secretary, ACTT & CTC

Cllr Jim Anderson (Retford)
Mr. Anthony Martin (Bath)

Representatives of other Charter Trustees
Chester
Ellesmere Port
Ellesmere Port

Ms Andrea Thwaite
Mayor, Cllr Lisa Denison
Ms Jenny Howard

Minute Ref		Actions
858	<p><u>WELCOME & EMERGENCY EVACUATION</u></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed all executive committee members present to the meeting and gave the emergency evacuation briefing.</p>	
859	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>Apologies were received from the following. Ms Carolyn Troop, Vice Chairman & Mr B Upton Honorary Treasurer and the following Charter Trustees: Bournemouth, Durham, Grantham, Margate, Poole, Taunton & Wycombe.</p>	
860	<p><u>MINUTES</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the previous executive meeting of the ACTT held on 6th July 2022 held remotely via Zoom were received and approved.</p>	B Upton to add minutes to website.
861	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</u></p> <p>There were none.</p>	
862	<p><u>CHAIRMANS REPORT</u></p> <p>Thank you all for joining us this morning, and a special thank you to the Mayor and officers at Ellesmere Port and Cheshire West and Cheshire for hosting our Annual General Meeting of the Association of Charter Trustees Towns and Charter Town Councils, ACTT for short).</p>	

My name is Jim Anderson; I'm a District Councillor in Bassetlaw - the most Northerly part of Nottinghamshire. When Bassetlaw was 'created' in 1974, the two principal towns of Worksop and Retford were granted Charter status under the 1972 Act and have remained unparished since. I serve the ACTT as chair - an elected position that is open each year for election - I live in hope.

Many cities and towns have expanded well outside their unparished areas, and there are presently only about a dozen functioning Charter Trustee bodies - the ACTT exists to help them work well in accordance with their Regulated statutes, and if necessary, guide and advise them about how they can change their status to parished areas via Community Governance Reviews.

As the wave of Devolutions sweep across England, more Charter Cities and Towns are being created - what tends to happen is that their Officers will contact the ACTT and ask procedural questions to ensure the legal and efficient functions of a new group within their existing structures.

You won't be surprised to hear these next two points

1. virtually every new creation of Charter Trustees has varied (just a little, sometimes rather more) from earlier Regulations or Statutory Instruments. The key point to consider (for new ones, and for us gathered here as well) is that the Charter Trustees are a precepting authority, and if they exercise that power they will need the services of a RFO and an Audit trail.
2. The main obligations of Charter Trustees are always set out in Regulations - preserving the traditions and history of your local Mayoralty, including the maintenance of any associated items - that doesn't include the Town Hall by the way. New Charter Trustee bodies - and indeed some older ones - sometimes are unclear about how much or how little they can do. The ACTT is here to help - by way of an illustration, Rochester's Charter Trustees lost its Royal status (held since the Cinque Ports era) principally because they didn't take on board the ACTT advice offered by our former ACCT Exec led by Charles Talbot MBE. Only a reigning Monarch can choose to return that status to Rochester.

We do live in mercurial times at present - those of you who read the LGC news (Local Government Chronicle) will have seen a roller-coaster cascade of headlines. I understand that LGC is a news outlet and so tries to capture readers by dramatic headlines - well here are four from the last few days!

Councils face further budget cuts after the government reportedly shelved plans for this year's spending review.

The government plans to extend the committee stage of the Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill, amid speculation about major changes to the legislation.

After being named as Liz Truss's levelling up secretary, Simon Clarke tweeted that "delivering on levelling up for communities in all parts of our country" was central to the new government's mission

The chancellor's silence on public service funding was deafening amid tax cuts and increased borrowing, writes the chief executive of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy. The new chancellor hasn't got off to the best of starts.

So whilst Councillors, Officers and Cabinets up and down England are dealing with that, the additional burden of Civic duties and responsibilities based on in some case hundreds of years of history might seem at worst inappropriate, or at best irrelevant. Indeed, it is neither - quite the opposite in fact, and it is essential that Charter Trustees apply themselves diligently and exclusively to those matters which fall within the remit of the Mayoralty and Mayoral tradition in your area. This varies dramatically and I can only speak for Bassetlaw and Retford. Retford gained a Charter in 1246, and has had a long succession of Mayors, who in times of famine, crisis, war and wealth have served the public of Retford and created a legacy that a 'District Chair' cannot either equal or indeed compare with - this on a precept that is a fraction of the surrounding parished areas of the town.

I'm sure that our Exec meeting in a little while will hear more from other cities and towns, but I mention Retford because of the likelihood of a Regional Mayor arriving for the whole of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire - two unlikely bedfellows.

HM Govt Levelling Up bill

	<p>Here's the summary; I see no mention of forcing unparished areas to become parishes in this overview. That's not to say that lobbyists will probably seek to insert it.</p> <p>Our own position and DLUHC was set out earlier this year, but things can change in politics</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-and-regeneration-further-information/levelling-up-and-regeneration-further-information</p> <p>Mr Simon Clarke MP is adamant sometimes that change will not be enforced from above, but it is incumbent of Charter Trustees bodies to deliver well what they are regulated to deliver, and those same Charter Trustees, when they serve as parent authority councillors must protect the history and dignity of the historic office of City or Town Mayor.</p> <p>So once again, thank you for joining us, and we will proceed with the AGM agenda.</p>	
863	<p><u>FINANCIAL REPORT</u></p> <p>A. It was noted that at the AGM of the Association it was proposed and resolved that the Honorarium for both the Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer had been increased to £950 & £450 respectively.</p>	
864	<p><u>TOWN REPORTS</u></p> <p>A Martin gave a verbal report on activities in Bath.</p> <p>A Thwaite gave a verbal report on the activities in Chester.</p> <p>Cllr Denison gave a verbal report on the activities in Ellesmere Port.</p> <p>I Spencer, submitted a written report on the situation in Margate:</p> <p>Some years ago, the Turner Contemporary Gallery was built in order to 'kick-start' the economy of Margate. It opened in 2011, and although it has taken some years Margate can now boast a thriving cultural community with new cafes, bars, a thriving night life and new Art schools and galleries. We have a new acronym 'DFL' - Down from London! This turn-around has seen house prices in Margate increase by 102.5% over the last ten years, which is a mixed blessing. However, this influx of new blood has brought with it a new positivity and a willingness to embrace change.</p> <p>In 2014, TDC (Thanet District Council) undertook a CGR to gauge the interest in a Town Council for Margate and a separate Town Council for Westgate (Westgate being part of the Charter Trustee area of Margate at the time). Out of >30,000 on the electoral register for the two areas, only 337 responses to the consultation were received. 134 were from Westgate and 81 (or 68.1%) voted yes for a separate TC for Westgate; Westgate Town Council was duly formed 1st April 2015. 190 responses were received for Margate (30100 on the electoral register) and only 27.9% voted in favour of a town council for Margate.</p> <p>Although originally willing to undertake a CGR, TDC in October 2020 informed the Charter Trustees that it required a petition supporting the formation of a TC for Margate before undertaking a new CGR. After a number of obstacles, (covid lockdown not being the least) an on-line petition was launched in September 2021. Having recently established that a petition signed by 7.5%, or 2325, of the electorate would be required, we are very pleased that we have some 1970 e-petition signatures and 265 paper signatures; we are therefore confident that in the next few months, we will have reached our target and TDC will undertake a CGR and we are looking forward to 1st April 2024 being the date for the formation of a new Margate Town Council. This would be an auspicious date for the birth of a Margate Town Council as it will be the 50th anniversary of the demise of the Old Borough. Unfortunately, it comes too late for us to save our historic Old Town Hall as the principal authority has decided to let it out on a commercial lease.</p>	

865	<u>ANY OTHER ITEMS</u> The possibility of setting up a WhatsApp group for Charter Trustee Towns was discussed. It was felt that this would enable each area to share best practices and gain support from other authorities. The secretary would gauge the level of support among over Charter Trustee contacts before setting this up.	
866	<u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u> The next Executive Committee meeting will be held remotely in January 2023 date and time TBC.	

APPENDIX A

Income & Expenditure up to 5 July 2022

2022			INCOME	EXPENDITURE
SUBSCRIPTIONS	30 January 2022	HIGH WYCOMBE CT	£150.00	
SUBSCRIPTIONS	01 February 2022	BATH CT	£150.00	
SUBSCRIPTIONS	04 February 2022	E. RETFORD CT	£150.00	
SUBSCRIPTIONS	04 February 2022	DURHAM	£150.00	
SUBSCRIPTIONS	04 February 2022	GRANTHAM	£150.00	
SUBSCRIPTIONS	14 February 2022	TAUNTON CT	£150.00	
SUBSCRIPTIONS	03 March 2022	POOLE CT	£150.00	

SUBSCRIPTIONS	03 March 2022	BOURNEMOUTH CT	£150.00	
SUBSCRIPTIONS	16 March 2022	CLEETHORPES	£150.00	
Audit	02 March 2022	THE FOCUS COLLECTION		£96.00
Officer Payment	24 March 2022	A. MARTIN		£750.00
Officer Payment	24 March 2022	B. UPTON		£350.00
Bank balance at 5th July 2022	£1016.84			
Nine Paid Memberships to date: as listed above.				

APPENDIX B



Club, Charity And Trust Account statement

Printed: 05 July 2022

**Association of Charter
Trustees and Charter
Town Councils**
3 ASHFIELD COURT
SLUICE LANE
EVERTON
DN10 5ES

Sort code:301700
BIC:TSBSGB2AXXX

Account number:26386468
IBAN: GB97TSBS30170026386468

The data shown on your statement was correct at the time of printing. Please remember, this isn't an official bank copy.

Please check your statement. If you think that something looks incorrect, please call us on **0345 835 3858** Monday to Friday, 7:00am - 8:00pm; Saturday, 9:00am - 2:00pm (+44 (0) 203 284 1576, from outside the UK). Or Textphone 0345 835 3852.

Date	Description	Type	In (£)	Out (£)	Balance (£)
2022-04-01	Service Charges Ref:704108133	PAY	0.00		1,016.84
2022-03-24	BARRY UPTON TREASURER 2022	FPO		350.00	1,016.84
2022-03-24	A.J.MARTIN CLERK 2022	FPO		750.00	1,366.84
2022-03-18	RETFORD	CHQ	150.00		2,116.84
2022-03-03	THE CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR BOURNEMOUT INVOICE 2022B01	FPI	150.00		1,966.84
Date	Description	Type	In (£)	Out (£)	Balance (£)
2022-03-03	THE CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR POOLE INVOICE 2022P01	FPI	150.00		1,816.84
2022-03-02	000021	CHQ		96.00	1,666.84
2022-02-24	SWT REFERENCE: SUP30237	DC	150.00		1,762.84
2022-02-04	RETFORD	CHQ	300.00		1,612.84
2022-02-03	Charter Trustees o EAST RETFORD	FPI	150.00		1,312.84

2022-01-28	CHART.TST BA Annual Sub 2022	FPI	150.00		1,162.84
2022-01-25	CHARTER TRUS Invoice	FPI	150.00		1,012.84
2021-12-02	000020	CHQ		99.00	862.84
2021-09-10	000019	CHQ		96.00	961.84
2021-07-15	000017	CHQ		750.00	1,057.84
2021-06-03	000016	CHQ		350.00	1,807.84
2021-05-03	Service Charges Ref:702883746	PAY	0.00		2,157.84
2021-04-27	GRANTHAM CHARTER T B UPTON INV 2021	FPI	150.00		2,157.84
2021-04-06	RETFORD	CHQ	300.00		2,007.84
2021-04-02	Service Charges Ref:702774259	PAY	0.00		1,707.84

APPENDIX C



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

*Department for Levelling up, Housing and
Communities*

2 Marsham Street London,
SW1P 4DF

Cllr Jim Anderson Chair
Association of Charter Trustees & Charter
Town Councils
Email: mrjimanderson162@gmail.com

Tel: 030 3444 0000
Fax: 020 7035 0018
Email: correspondence@levellingup.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/dluhc

Our Ref: 12936552
Your Ref:

Date: **31 January 2022**

Dear Cllr Anderson

Thank you for your email of 8 November to the Secretary of State and Minister of State for Minister for Levelling Up Communities attaching a submission sent on behalf of the Association of Charter Trustees & Charter Town Councils. This has been passed to me for reply as I work in the unit in the department which is responsible for local government reorganisation. Please accept my apologies for the delay in my reply.

Your submission urges the Government to ensure that the history and traditions of our cities and towns is preserved and secured for future generations to enjoy and appreciate, especially in the context of the forthcoming Levelling Up White Paper and any current priorities it sets out for devolution and local government reorganisation.

The Levelling Up White Paper will be published shortly, setting out plans for strengthening local leadership through devolution to give local politicians control of the levers they need to level up and deliver better outcomes and services for local residents. Devolution must be locally-led, not imposed by Government. We look forward to working constructively with areas interested in a devolution deal over the coming months.

Similarly, the Government will not impose top-down restructuring of local government; reorganisation will remain a locally-led avenue available where there is broad local support but will not be a requirement for devolution deal. The Government intends to follow an incremental approach, using existing legislation to work with areas which are seeking to establish reformed local governance structures..

I can assure you that the Government attaches great importance to the history and traditions of this country. Our history helps to define who we are and where we come from, and we are stronger as a nation when we cherish and champion our local traditions. Understanding the past and how we have developed helps us to face the future with confidence and as a shared experience.

In relation to Charter Trustees, officials work closely with local areas to ensure local identities are protected through local government reorganisations, including through creation of Charter Trustees where necessary. For example, the consequential legislation for the reorganisation of Dorset and council merger in Somerset established Charter Trustees for the unparished parts of the Boroughs of Bournemouth, Poole and Taunton, which were abolished on 1st April 2019, ensuring that any historic rights and privileges associated with local government areas which will be abolished could be maintained in the new unitary and merged areas and vest in the Charter Trustees for the relevant areas. The Government has no current proposals to amend the existing legislation.

Thank you again for sending Ministers the Association's submission, I hope this reply is helpful in addressing the issues it raised.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Scanlan

DRAFT