

Minutes of the meeting of the Civic Hall Advisory Committee
Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Hall on 20th March 2023

Present: Cllr W Jones, Cllr A Powell, Cllr R Spooner, Cllr R Welton (Chair), Cllr A Foster and Cllr M Hanrahan

In attendance: J. Mitchell (Town Clerk) and A. Mott (RFO)

1. Appointment of Chair & Vice-Chair

Cllr R. Welton was nominated and seconded as Chair of the Civic Hall Advisory Committee and Cllr R. Spooner was nominated and seconded as Vice-Chair of the Civic Hall Advisory Committee.

It was RESOLVED to appoint Cllr R. Welton as Chair and Cllr R. Spooner as Vice-Chair of the Civic Hall Advisory Committee.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr R. Hall.

It was RESOLVED to note these apologies.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Terms of Reference

Members reviewed the draft Terms of Reference for the Civic Hall Advisory Committee.

It was RESOLVED to recommend to council to adopt the Terms of Reference for the Civic Hall Advisory Committee, following two small amendments – see appendix A.

5. Exclusion of the press & public

It was RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the item to be discussed, the committee pass the formal resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 section 1 paragraph 2 and the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (due to the sensitive commercial nature of the issues being discussed).

6. Civic Hall Lease

The RFO presented a report to members, which detailed that a past administration had entered an agreement at an extraordinary council meeting on 13th July 1998 to develop the Civic Hall. The lease of the hall which began in December 1999 included an option for the Town Council to purchase the Civic Hall for £1 at the end of the 25 years. In 2017 the Town Council were informed by the Town Clerk at the time, that the option had not been registered, with Land Registry, within the three-month window specified within the lease and was therefore invalid. Since 2017 the Town Council have sought legal advice to rectify the matter, however the advice received confirmed that it was past the statutory timeframe within which a claim could be made and that the option was now invalid.

Members then discussed the next actions to take.

It was RESOLVED that a letter is sent from the Town Council to the owner of the Civic Hall to establish what their position is with regards to the future of the Civic Hall and request a response within five weeks.

It was RESOLVED to make a formal complaint to the solicitor that handled the case at the time.

It was RESOLVED to make enquiries with potential companies, who could act on behalf of the council going forwards.

7. Date of next meeting

It was RESOLVED to hold the next meeting on Monday 3rd April at 10am in the Council Chamber.

CONFIDENTIAL

APPENDIX A

DRONFIELD TOWN COUNCIL CIVIC HALL ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Membership

The Committee shall consist of five members of the Council. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are ex officio members of this Committee.

Chairman

At the first meeting of the Committee after the Annual Meeting of the Council the first business will be to appoint a Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee.

Frequency of Meetings

Meetings will be held on an ad-hoc basis.

Quorum

A quorum at each meeting shall be 3 members.

Staff Attendance

The Town Clerk shall normally be required to attend all meetings. Other staff may, at the Chairman's discretion or the Committee's request, attend meetings as required.

Terms of Reference

The Advisory Committee is appointed to make decisions relating to the Civic Hall, not already being dealt with by other advisory committees, subject to budget and expenditure limits decided by the Council.

1. To ensure that Civic Hall is properly maintained and managed.
2. To ensure that all Civic Hall logistics and procedures are maintained.
3. To ensure that any matters relating to Civic Hall are dealt with quickly and correctly.
4. To ensure that all requests for capital purchases are referred to the Council.
5. To ensure that if any legal issues arise these are handled in consultation with the Council.
6. To have powers of spending up to £5,000 for a single or group of transactions from the Civic Hall earmarked reserves fund.