

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**CABINET SUB-COMMITTEE (COUNCIL CHARITIES)**

**MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERONON  
ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, SG6 3JF  
ON TUESDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER, 2024 AT 6.30 PM**

**MINUTES**

- Present:** *Councillors: Amy Allen (Chair), Mick Debenham and Dave Winstanley.*
- In Attendance:** *Faith Churchill (Democratic Services Apprentice), Ian Couper (Service Director - Resources), Susan Le Dain (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer) and Douglas Traill-Stevenson (Property Solicitor).*
- Also Present:** *At the commencement of the meeting there were no members of public present.*

**1 ELECTION OF CHAIR**

*Audio Recording – 1 minute 8 seconds*

Councillor Mick Debenham proposed, and Councillor Dave Winstanley seconded and, following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Amy Allen be elected as Chair of the meeting.

**2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

*Audio recording – 2 minutes 27 seconds*

There were no apologies for absence received.

**3 MINUTES - 14 NOVEMBER 2023**

*Audio Recording – 2 minutes 23 seconds*

The Chair advised that the Minutes of the previous meeting could be moved and seconded by members who were not present at that meeting, although it is preferable that those who were not present should abstain from voting and commenting on the motion.

Councillor Amy Allen, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Mick Debenham seconded and, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 14 November 2023 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

**4 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS**

*Audio recording – 3 minutes 18 seconds*

There was no other business notified.

## 5 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Audio recording – 3 minutes 30 seconds*

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded.
- (2) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.

## 6 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

*Audio recording – 3 minutes 50 seconds*

There was no public participation.

## 7 ANNUAL RETURNS AND ACCOUNTS FOR COUNCIL CHARITIES 2023/2024

*Audio recording – 3 minutes 54 seconds*

The Service Director – Resources presented the report entitled 'Annual Accounts and Returns for Council Charities' along with the Appendices 1-5 and advised that:

- This report detailed the returns required for the four Charities/Charitable Trusts administered by the Council.
- This Sub Committee was required to approve the accounts and annual reports prior to them being submitted to the Charities Commission.
- The two larger charities with a gross annual income of more than £25k would require their accounts to be externally verified and details of the returns could be found in the appendices.
- It had been discovered that returns for a fifth charity, Mrs Howard Memorial Hall, in Letchworth, had incorrectly ceased in 2010.
- Accounts for Mrs Howard Memorial Hall would have to be completed to cover the missing 14-year period as the charity is operating and currently rents out a hall as highlighted in paragraph 8.8 of the report.
- Advice was being sought from the Charities Commission whether individual returns would need to be produced for the whole 14-year period, or only to cover the last few years.

In response to a question from Councillor Amy Allen, the Service Director – Resources advised that there would be no detrimental effect on the Mr Howard Memorial Hall charity going forward, as it was the responsibility of the Council to bring the accounts up to date and to ensure they were kept on track going forward.

Councillor Mick Debenham proposed and Councillor Dave Winstanley seconded, and following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the Cabinet Sub-Committee (Council Charities):

- (1) Approved the information required by the Charities Commission for the four registered charities, so that the returns can be submitted prior to the 31st January 2025 deadline.
- (2) Noted the requirement for those charities with gross income of more than £25k in their financial year to have their accounts independently examined and, as this applies to King George's Field and Hitchin Town Hall Gymnasium and Workmans Hall, instructs this to be undertaken for those accounts for 2023/24. This will be undertaken by the Shared Internal Audit Service (SIAS).

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- (3) Delegated to the Service Director: Resources, in consultation with the Chair of the Sub-Committee, authority to provide the required information to the Charity Commission to rectify the position in relation to the Mrs Howard Memorial Hall charity.

***REASONS FOR DECISIONS:***

- (1) To facilitate the submission of approved returns to the Charities Commission.
- (2) To rectify the position in relation to the Mrs Howard Memorial Hall Charity.

The meeting closed at 6.43 pm

Chair