

RAMSGATE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting duly convened and held in the Council Chamber, Albion House, Albion Place, Ramsgate on 2 November 2009

Present: Councillors Byne, Dark, Doyle, Fenner, Hault, Green, Kirby, Landi, Moore, Nicholson, O'Donnell, Rogers, Todd and Ward.

Harvey Patterson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, TDC.

Eileen Richford, Senior Democratic Services Officer, TDC.

Janet Dale, Town Mayor's Secretary, RTC

48 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Carr and Poole.

49 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared for this meeting of Council.

50 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 5 October 2009 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

51 POLICING RAMSGATE

The Chairman welcomed Sergeant Rhiannan Simpson from Kent Police who addressed Council. Formerly policing Ramsgate and Broadstairs, Sergeant Simpson was now solely in charge of the Ramsgate area of Thanet.

She advised Members that she now has a compliment of six police officers – two based in the Central Harbour area, two in the Eastcliffe Area and two based in Newington.

Members noted the following;

- ❖ The Dispersal Orders introduced for the town centre had helped, as had the night bus service, to reduce crime in the area. The main problems had been 'criminal damage' and 'crimes against persons'. The temporary night bus service had helped to get people out of the town centre quickly and prevent crimes taking place. This service was to be reintroduced.
- ❖ The Ramsgate statistics were improved and the peak in crime during July and August 2009 was now reduced.
- ❖ After talking to youths it had been found that they felt they did not have enough to do. Funding had been put in with 'Pie Factory' and other projects being created.
- ❖ The night time atmosphere had improved and police being seen on the streets had helped.

- ❖ Police officers were working with Licensees and bar staff with the police being contacted immediately anything untoward happened.
- ❖ Schools were being visited talking to the pupils about litter and parking problems. This had the effect of involving parents as well.

Members were concerned that calls to the Police were going through to a Maidstone call centre where local knowledge was lacking and wanted to know if there was to be a local area control centre. They were concerned that responses were delayed because of this.

Sergeant Simpson advised that it was a dedicated line at Maidstone and there were no plans to bring it back to a local point of call. She advised also that there were a high number of calls and these were graded (after a series of questions were asked of the caller) according to the nature of the crime and responded to accordingly.

Members were also concerned that businesses were pulling out of the area partly due to crime. Sergeant Simpson advised that the Police were making progress and were going out with the Licensing Officers (TDC), viewing CCTV and looking into the problems. Progress was being made and it was hoped that businesses would return.

On behalf of Council the Chairman thanked Sergeant Simpson for attending the meeting saying that her presentation had been helpful and informative.

52 **TOWN MAYOR'S AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S REPORT**

Since his last report the Mayor had represented the Town Council at the following events;

- Fegan's open day
- British Home Stores opening at Westwood
- St Lawrence Scouts Centenary Celebrations
- Eastways Bus Company – launch of two new buses

The Mayor had presented Ramsgate Fund cheques to;

- Pie Factory Music
- Carnival
- St Lawrence Scouts
- Dumpton Youth Project
- Fegan's Whitehall Project
- Ramsgate Taekwondo

The Mayor thanked Councillors Byne, Moore and Ward for their support when presenting cheques and encouraged more Members to attend the presentations.

The Mayor advised Members that now there was a Carnival Committee it was hoped that things would be taken forward and a carnival would go ahead in the coming year.

The Mayor had represented Ramsgate at the following events outside of the area;

- Speaker at the Cinque Ports Civic Day in Dover
- Deal Charter Day

- Kent County Council (KCC) Poppy Appeal launch
- TDC – Parish Forum
- Medway – Rochester Tour of Royal Engineers
- Hythe Mayor's Charity Event
- Fordwich Civic Service

The Mayor and Councillor Nicholson had met with Councillor Ezekiel, the Leader, and Richard Samuel, the Chief Executive, of TDC to discuss the Ramsgate Town Partnership (RTP). The dissolution of the RTP had left a huge gap in the town with the loss of functions performed.

Although there had been no commitment on either side the meeting had been positive, agreeing 'in principle' that TDC would provide sizable funding, that RTC would match the funding and events that take place being jointly managed.

The Mayor had brought this to Members with the view that Council agrees in principle the proposals above. Members noted that more discussions were needed, that a Working Party may need to be set up, an agreement would need to be drawn up, administration costs looked into and that for RTC this would come under the remit of the Town Clerk.

Proposed by Councillor Green, seconded by Councillor O'Donnell and resolved that Council agreed 'in principle' that TDC would provide a sizeable sum, match funded by RTC to provide functions lost following the dissolution of the RTP.

The Deputy Town Mayor reported that since the last meeting of Council he had taken part in;

- The Kent Association for the Blind (KAB) and the Thanet Lions 'World Blind Awareness Day' event held at Westwood Cross on Thursday 8 October. Twelve attendees, including the Mayor of Margate and Mayor of Broadstairs, were blindfolded for two hours. They then had to shop, travel up and down an escalator and take lunch. The Deputy Mayor said that this had been quite an experience and made those taking part more aware of the problems encountered by the blind. He extended his congratulations to the Thanet Lions for a successful event.
- Friday 16 October – attended the 'World Food Day' event held at the Winter Gardens. This included exhibitions and a buffet.

53 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from members of the public.

54 **THANET LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION**

TDC is preparing a planning strategy (known as the Local Development Framework) for the District. The key document within this strategy will be the "Core Strategy". They are inviting comments on the Draft Core Strategy.

Proposed by Councillor Green and seconded by Councillor Hoult that;

"RTC forms a Working Party of three Members to develop a draft response to the Draft Core Strategy reporting back to Full Council at an Extraordinary meeting of Ramsgate Town Council to be held on Monday 7th December 2009".

Amendment moved by Councillor Kirby and seconded by Councillor O'Donnell that;

“Membership of the Working Party to be seven Members”

Amendment Lost.

Amendment moved by Councillor Ward and seconded by Councillor Dark that;

“Membership of the Working Party to be five Members”

Amendment Agreed.

The Chairman asked for nominations for the membership of the Working Party. Nominations received were for Councillors;

Dark
Hoult
Landi
Moore
O'Donnell
Rogers

Resolved that Councillors Dark, Hoult, Landi, Moore and Rogers be elected as members of the Working Party;

The Chairman advised that the Core Strategy document was available on the TDC website and gave the members of the new Working Party a hardcopy of the document.

55 **COMMITTEE MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

Town Improvement Committee – 21 September 2009

There were no matters arising from the approved minutes.

The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor O'Donnell gave Members an update on the work of the Committee as detailed below;

Future Arrangement for Town Allotments

I attended meeting with Paul Verrall, TDC on the 29 September in company with Dave Nimmo to discuss future arrangements of the Town Allotments and the costs thereof. For the year 2010/11 this will amount to £27,000.00.

I attended the Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting on the 1 October as did Councillor Rogers in her capacity as District Councillor. With respect to the Manston Road Allotments – it appears that TDC had made a request to GOSE to allow it to use the monies from the sale for other capital expenditures.

The provision of compost toilets at Chilton is ongoing. We noted the gates at Chilton West. It is difficult to see how this can be dealt with without any alteration of the road layout.

Councillor Rogers and I had discussions with Southern Water about the improvement of the water supply at the Chilton Allotments. The costs of improved supply could prove prohibitive though we discussed an alternative supply from Chilton Lane. The supply of an additional 5 standpipes at Jackey Bakers would involve considerable cost.

We could ask TDC to continue the administration of the allotments for a further year at a cost of £27,000.00. In the meantime we are investigating self-administration for 2011 onwards.

Consulting the Electorate.

This is an on-going issue. We have had a number of welcome initiatives from other groups, ERA and Love, Hate, Hope. I had two meetings with the ERA, the second of which with Peter Landi. Also I met with the Love Hate Hope executives. I suggested that they might help us with Consulting the Public. We identified, especially with Love Hate, Hope, a number of issues that the public already agree as being of particular importance: the beaches, harbour, architecture, heritage, and cafes/restaurants. These five items alone rated well above any of the other issues. Also similarly they rated litter, empty shops, the council (TDC), and anti-social behaviour as causes of concern. What the people hoped for was more complex.

From this, taken in conjunction with ERA's proposals, it can be inferred that we already know what the questions should be. It was suggested that we identify no more than 12 questions to be put to the public otherwise. It has been suggested that the survey should be conducted on a Ward by Ward basis, perhaps with at least one or two questions identifying the needs of each Ward. We must ensure that everyone feels included.

What did emerge is that we need to do more than just consult but to have a programme of initiatives. What all this is leading to, I think, is that we need to have a professional and ongoing marketing programme. With the loss of the Town Partnership, this is a matter of urgency

Lavatory Provision.

On the 1 October I had a meeting with Mark Seed, TDC. We discussed the closure of the Bathing Station lavatories during the summer and their re-opening dates for 2010. It was explained to me that TDC is short of funding and must find savings.

Later on that evening I attended the Overview and Scrutiny committee meeting where I heard for the first time the possible future arrangements for the Cavendish Street lavatories. I have no doubt that we must set a contingency budget to ensure the continued provision of lavatories in Ramsgate, especially the Bathing Station lavatory where I fully expect that TDC will require a 'contribution' next year.

Whatever we think about the morality of the people of Ramsgate paying twice for the same service, the reality is we are between the rock and a hard place.

I received a letter from the Town Clerk of Broadstairs Town Council who outlined his thoughts on future lavatory provision. He also suggested that both Ramsgate and Broadstairs should negotiate together with TDC about future lavatory provision.

Lastly, I would like the Full Council to think seriously about a recommendation I made to the last TIC meeting that we consider appointing a marketing manager and having our own visitors' website.

Proposed by Councillor Ward, seconded by Councillor Hoult and resolved that;

"Standing Order 27.1 (The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting before the end of the month of November. Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Clerk a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than 30th October) be rescinded for the rest of the financial year".

The Chairman advised Council that this would allow the Town Improvement Committee to put its proposals to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Planning and Conservation Committee – 28 September 2009

There were no matters arising from the approved minutes.

The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor Kirby advised Members that the Extraordinary meetings of the Committee would only take place if a planning application submitted to TDC was called in by a Member of RTC and reminded Members of the rules of call in.

Councillor Kirby requested that the thanks of the Committee be formerly passed on to Nick Dermott, Heritage Development Advisor, TDC, for his attendance at Committee and for all information supplied.

56 APPLICATIONS TO THE RAMSGATE FUND

The Mayor's Secretary advised that the total funds available were £22,750.10 to year end 31 March 2010.

Members were advised that two applications had been received beyond the deadline for this meeting but would be put on the agenda of the Extraordinary meeting of Council to be held on 7 December 2009.

Council considered three applications, details of which are available from the Town Mayor's office, and resolved the payments as detailed below;

Organisation	Agreed Financial Assistance £	Purpose of grant awarded and reason for refusal of grant as necessary
Reflections Support Group for the Blind	£0	Grant refused as the Group had received £400.00 in 2008 and Members viewed this further application as being for revenue purposes
The Chocolate Factory Art Workshop	£0	Grant refused as Members viewed this application as being partly for revenue purposes
Ramsgate Arts Festival	£1,800.00	The grant awarded to go towards equipment and materials only

57 OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Members received the report of Councillor Carr regarding the provision of Technology for the Mayor's office and the Town Clerk.

Councillor Carr had been tasked by the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to assess the current state of the computing and associated technology provision for the Mayor and Town Clerk's office.

Proposed by Councillor Green, seconded by Councillor Hault and resolved that the report be referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for implementation.

58 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

It was resolved that the public and press were *not* excluded from the meeting for Item 12 Appointment of Town Clerk – Progress Report.

59 **APPOINTMENT OF TOWN CLERK – PROGRESS REPORT**

Councillor Nicholson, Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, advised Members that there was now a short list of six candidates for the post of Town Clerk.

Interviews were to be held on the afternoon of Tuesday 24 November 2009.

At least two final candidates would make a presentation to an Extraordinary meeting of Council to be held on the same date – Tuesday 24 November 2009.

The final decision of appointment would be made by Council.

It was resolved that the Extraordinary meeting would commence at 6.15 pm.

Meeting concluded at; 8.45 pm.



Chairman – 4 January 2010