

## RAMSGATE TOWN COUNCIL

### Minutes of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE duly convened and held in

the Council Chamber, Albion House, Albion Place, Ramsgate on 23 September 2009

Present: Councillors Nicholson (Chairman), Byne, Houlton, Kirby, Rogers (substitute for Carr) and Ward.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Carr and Moore.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

3. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2009 were proposed by Councillor Ward, seconded by Councillor Houlton and signed by the Chairman as a true record

4. **RAMSGATE FUND**

The Chairman proposed the committee take a formal stand on this and make its recommendations to full council for ratification.

1. Agreed that the advertising of the Ramsgate Fund allocations on the Ramsgate Town Council website be the remit of the Town Clerk.
2. Agreed that grants be available:
  - i – up to £500
  - ii – over £500 up to a maximum of £5,000
3. Agreed monies be distributed as:
  - i above £10,000 per annum approximately
  - ii above £30,000 per annum approximately but sums could be transferred from one to the other subject to demand

It was agreed that applications will be discussed on a quarterly basis (June, September, January and March) and money will also be allocated on a quarterly basis to avoid early overspend. *The Ramsgate Fund for 2009/10 is £46,100.*

4. Match funding to be encouraged and given priority for grants over £500.
5. Application forms to be simplified, particularly for smaller grants. All applications to be received by the given deadline – failure to do so will result in them being held over to the next meeting.
6. There is already a comprehensive audit trail in place. The RFO had also produced a 'feed back' form and it was agreed the front sheet only should be used for grants up to £500, with the complete form issued for grants over £500. The form to be sent with the award cheque and must be completed and returned within 6 months. *(Members will each receive a copy of the audit trail and feed back form).*
7. Delete this item as the feed back form is sufficient.

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Attention was drawn to the amounts previously awarded to the Ramsgate Town Partnership for decorative lighting in the town (a total of £13,000) for which Thanet District Council now had responsibility. Ramsgate Town Council to ensure TDC do not charge for the maintenance as it is thought this is the responsibility of the installer.

Councillor Nicholson also raised the question of the whereabouts of the log cabins for which the Ramsgate Charter Trustees had donated £10,000 in 2007. Councillor Hoult thought Darren Simpson had them stored at a theatre in Herne Bay. The Chairman will write, via RTC, to Councillor Pat Doyle on this matter.

No report had been received from TDC regarding the Beach Within Reach wheelchairs.

5. **BUDGET 2010 – 2011**

In the absence of a Town Clerk, it will be necessary for the Chairman of the F & G P Committee and the RFO to produce the main figures for the budget by 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009. Councillor Kirby asked if the F & G P Committee could have the figures beforehand.

Annual costs plus on-costs are needed including election and allotments. Councillor Nicholson to speak with the Chief Executive at TDC regarding the proposed rent for the building, what is included and what liabilities there are.

The total precept will need to be agreed by full council in January 2010.

Councillor Nicholson reported that TDC are recommending a zero pay rise. Ramsgate Town Council to discuss the matter.

Councillor Kirby asked why the Nat. Ins. and Pension contributions had increased from £8,000 to £12,500. The RFO to report back.

It was agreed to compare the Mayor's allowance with those of Margate, Broadstairs & St. Peter's and other coastal towns nearby.

No decision had been made by full council regarding members' allowances. The Chairman to speak with Councillor Green about this.

Allotment money needed to be monitored.

6. **APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT 22 JUNE TO 23 SEPTEMBER 2009**

The RFO answered various questions. Records will be kept as now until the next financial year. Cheque payments need to be changed to the BACS system.

Proposed by Councillor Ward, seconded by Councillor Rogers, the Expenditure Account 22<sup>nd</sup> June to 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009 was approved.

7. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Councillor Ward reported that the Town Improvement Committee Chairman will be writing to the F & G P Committee regarding suggestions and requests.

Councillor Rogers said it was unlikely local traders will help fund events.

The Audit Commission has appointed Alun Williams as External Auditor to Ramsgate Town Council for a three-year period commencing with accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. The RFO requested that a new Internal Auditor be appointed who

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will be capable of auditing town council accounts. She will liaise with the Town Clerk of Broadstairs to ascertain likely costs and a suitable company.

Councillor Hoult asked if a member from each group could meet on an informal basis. He was advised that, as Deputy Mayor, he could informally invite whomever he wished.

Councillor Byne pointed out that Ramsgate Town Council is in a difficult position – if the precept is increased it will be unpopular, but to make no improvements will be as bad. Councillor Kirby suggested RTC make improvements but only what it can afford and money must be spent properly.

Councillor Nicholson reported there may be money available from KCC for town notice boards.

8. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 20 October 2009. at 7 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Albion House.

The meeting closed at 8.43 p.m.

  
Chairman – 11 November 2009