



RAMSGATE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of an Ordinary Council Meeting

Venue: The Council Chamber, The Custom House, Harbour Parade, Ramsgate

Date: Wednesday 29th June 2022 at 7pm

Present: Councillors: Albon (Chair), Austin, Crittenden, Green, Hetherington, Huxley, Makinson, Nixey and L Piper

Also in attendance

Miss L Fidler; Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer (Minutes)

134/22 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Wing (personal commitment), Cllrs S Piper and Young (unwell). No apologies were received from Cllrs Ara, Knight, Moore or Rusiecki.

135/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Austin declared an Other Significant Interest in matters relating to the Skatepark (Minute 139/22 (xi)), as a member of the Skatepark Group. A dispensation was agreed allowing Cllr Austin to stay and answer questions about the proposal, but leave the room when the vote was taken.

136/22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

(i) **PUBLIC REQUESTS TO SPEAK**

There were no requests to speak.

(ii) **REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS ON MATTERS DIRECTLY RELATED TO RAMSGATE**

It was confirmed that the purpose of this agenda item is for receiving updates that affect the entire parish.

(iii) **REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS ON MATTERS DIRECTLY RELATED TO RAMSGATE**

No updates were received.

137/22 MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25th May 2022 (Minutes 104/22 – 113/22) were received and considered.

RESOLUTION: The Minutes were approved as accurate and signed.

138/22 COMMITTEES

- (i) Appointment of a Vice Chair for the Town Promotion Committee was considered. Appointment to this post had not been confirmed at the previous council meeting.

RESOLUTION: Cllr Huxley was appointed as Vice Chair of this committee.

- (ii) Members considered a written report from Miss L Fidler, Town Clerk & RFO, regarding voting on appointments.

RESOLUTION: When voting on appointments, all nominations will be received. Councillors will be asked to vote on each candidate that has been nominated and seconded, in the order of nominations received. Where there are two nominations only, the candidate with the most votes will be elected. Where there are more than two nominations, the candidate with the most votes will be elected unless no candidate receives an absolute majority of those voting, then the candidate receiving the lowest number of votes will be removed and voting repeated.

139/22 FINANCES (INCL. GRANTS)

- (i) Members received a report of payments.

RESOLUTION: The list of payments over £1,000 was approved (total £63,777.56), and the payments under £1,000 that had already been authorised by the Town Clerk (total £12,458.47) were noted.

- (ii) Members received a written report from Miss L Fidler, Town Clerk & RFO, regarding authorisation of Radford House Project Manager invoices, and authorisation of work to be funded by the Architectural Heritage Fund Project Development Grant.

RESOLUTION: Power was delegated to the Town Clerk & RFO (in conjunction with Cllrs Nixey & Green, or the Chair) the authority to approve:

a. Invoices received from AP Cost Consultants for pre-approved Project Management work at Radford House.

b. Work to be paid for from the AHF Project Development Grant.

- (iii) As per the Financial Regulations, Council was asked to reconfirm that staff salary payments should continue to be made by BACs.

RESOLUTION: Salary payments by BACs should continue.

- (iv) As per Financial Regulations, Council was asked to reconfirm that payment by variable direct debit is acceptable in relation to payments for electricity, gas, water, internet/broadband, phone charges, IT, HR & HS support, photocopier contract, Vehicle tax, fuel, Technician orders (Screwfix) and Security monitoring.

RESOLUTION: Payment by variable direct debit was approved in respect of the aforementioned bills.

- (v) Councillors received the "Financial Statement – Cash Book" for the 2021/2022 financial year (the details contained therein informed the Annual Governance & Accountability Return).

RESOLUTION: This information was agreed.

- (vi) Councillors considered the findings of the review of effectiveness of the system of internal control (Page 3 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2022), and a covering letter from the internal auditor.
RESOLUTION: This information was noted.
- (vi) Councillors considered the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 / Page 4 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2022).
RESOLUTION: It was approved that all questions should be answered in the affirmative, with 'N/A' to the question about Trust funds, of which the Council has none.
- (viii) Councillors considered the Accounting Statements for 2021/2022 (Section 2 / Page 5 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2022).
RESOLUTION: The accounting statement was approved.
- (ix) To review and approve the Financial Risk Assessment.
RESOLUTION: The Financial Risk Assessment was approved. The F&GP Committee will consider this document in greater detail.
- (x) Councillors considered a written report from the Miss L Fidler, Town Clerk & RFO regarding the role of the Independent Internal Auditor.
RESOLUTION: The Council will tender for an Independent Internal Auditor to undertake greater scrutiny of the accounts than has previously been arranged.
- (xi) Councillors received a written report from Miss E Richford, Deputy Town Clerk, regarding the Ramsgate Fund and considered the application contained therein, along with the request to vary the project timeline for a previous application.
RESOLUTIONS:
- a. **A grant of £3,000 was awarded to Ramsgate Skatepark Project for the purchase of a second-hand mobile skate park; funding is given with the caveat that this equipment should only be used within Ramsgate.**
Cllr Austin left the room when the vote was taken.
 - b. **It was resolved that the previously agreed grant for East Kent Mencap could be used by 31st January 2023 (the previously approved deadline was the 17th September 2022).**

140/22 OPEN SPACES & BINS

- (i) Councillors received a written report from Miss L Fidler, Town Clerk & RFO, regarding pocket parks; a proposal had been received from the Technicians that overall benefit to the town could be achieved by taking on management of several smaller neglected area (that are often overlooked by the other authorities). Nine potential sites had been suggested by the Technicians.
RESOLUTION: An audit of such sites should be undertaken (incl. who owns them) and consideration given as to whether the Council's staff have the capacity to take over these sites.

- (ii) Councillors received a written report from Miss L Fidler, Town Clerk & RFO, regarding a request from TDC in respect of town centre bins. Mr Mark Greening at TDC was thanked for meeting with RTC officers, a better relationship is warmly welcomed, and support will be given where possible.
RESOLUTION: A request for the Technician's to empty the town centre bins mid-afternoon was not approved; this is the remit of TDC and TDC should find a solution to the problem, for example with split shifts.

141/22 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

- (i) **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC & PRESS**
It was recommended that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.
RESOLUTION: To exclude the public and press for the following items of business.
- (ii) **ASSETS**
- a) **ALBION GARDENS**
Councillors received a written report from Miss L Fidler, Town Clerk & RFO, regarding the transfer of Albion Gardens. It was recommended that this matter be considered confidentially due to the contract negotiation to be discussed.
RESOLUTION: It was confirmed that the Council is only receptive to taking ownership of the Albion Gardens and the War Memorial; not the Madeira Waterfall and Pulhamites.
- b) **EAST CLIFF LIFT**
Councillors received a verbal report from Cllr S Albon regarding the seafront Lift and a proposal received verbally from TDC regarding the future of the lift. It was recommended that this matter be considered confidentially due to the contract negotiation to be discussed. Two condition survey's from TDC were enclosed.
RESOLUTION: If the town council was to take ownership of the East Cliff Lift the concession should also be included in the transfer. The Clerk will seek a quote for a renewal of the lift mechanism.
- c) **LAND ADJACENT TO CHILTON LANE WEST ALLOTMENTS**
Councillors received a written report from Miss L Fidler, Town Clerk & RFO, and considered the recommendation contained therein from the Finance & General Purposes Committee. It was recommended that this matter be considered confidentially due to the contract negotiation to be discussed.
RESOLUTION: A sum was agreed, to be offered in respect of this land.

A record of the specifics can be found in the confidential recording of this section of the meeting.

d) **THE CUSTOM HOUSE**

d.1 Councillors receive a written report from Miss L Fidler, Town Clerk & RFO, and consider the counter-proposal contained therein from the Landlord of The Custom House. It was recommended that this matter be considered confidentially due to the contract negotiation to be discussed.

RESOLUTION: The counter-proposal from the Landlord was accepted, it was agreed that an increment to £43,000 per annum pro-rata would commence from September 2022; a further rent increase to £45,000 per annum from 25th March 2023 would take place; and the next rent review to take place in March 2025.

d.2 Councillors received a written report from Miss E Richford, Deputy Town Clerk, and consider the proposal contained therein relating to a former tenant of The Custom House. It was recommended that this matter be considered confidentially due to the financial agreement under negotiation.

RESOLUTION: The former tenant's outstanding liability was confirmed to be £1632.56, which can be repayed at £200 per month, or sooner if the debtor wishes.

142/22 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 27th July 2022 at 7pm