



## **RAMSGATE TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Radford House & Custom House Committee**

**Venue:** Virtual via Microsoft Teams

**Date:** Wednesday 30th September 2020 at 7pm.

**Present:** Councillors; Albon (Chairman), Campbell, Crittenden, Green, Hetherington, Makinson Nixey and Young.

Cllr K. Constantine KCC

Also, in attendance; R. Styles – Town Clerk & D. Williams – Digital communications and marketing officer- Fiona Raley Heritage Architect – Ivan DelRenzo Architect.

028 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Rusiecki, Huxley, and Wing.

029 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None declared.

030 **MINUTES**

Proposed by Cllr Albon, seconded by Cllr Makinson that, the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd August 2019 (minutes 089 to 093) be approved as a true record.

**RESOLVED**

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031 **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Clerk produced a terms of reference document for the committee.

Cllr Green proposed the following amendments to the document:

*New 1. Responsibility for the promotion of the facilities, and to maximise the use of Radford House and Custom House by the community in Ramsgate.*

*Renumber 1. and 2. to 2. and 3.*

*New 4. To receive reports at each meeting regarding the capital and recurrent expenditure occurred within the remit of the committee and recommend accordingly.*

*Renumber 3. onwards accordingly.*

Cllr Hetherington seconded, and it was RESOLVED.

Cllr Albon proposed that the amended terms of reference be adopted, and Cllr Campbell seconded the motion. RESOLVED.

The document will be sent to Council for approval and to the F+GP Cttee for information and noting.

032 **RADFORD HOUSE – DURING LOCKDOWN**

The Town Clerk gave a report via a presentation showing how Radford House had been used as collection and distribution hub to supply various food banks in Thanet. The Clerk is keeping the matter under review, but any future service is likely to be restricted to supplying Ramsgate foodbanks and hubs.

NOTED

033 **RADFORD HOUSE CHANGE OF USE AND LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION**

The Clerk gave an update of progress made to date and informed the committee that an application to TDC planning had been submitted and that it was going through its process.

Mr DelRenzo gave a presentation on the changes to the building that have been in the design process. Key amongst those changes are the use of the escape tower as a lift shaft to all floors and a new design of the front doors based on designs found during the study on Radford house's earlier uses.

Ms Raley gave details of the information and evidence she has uncovered during her investigations into Radford House. These details will be used by RTC in its planning application and in its application to the Architectural heritage Foundation for funding.

NOTED

034 **RADFORD HOUSE – ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION**

The Clerk reported that the AHF had taken great interest in Radford house and had awarded RTC £15,000 to fund architectural and heritage investigations and a business case.

A transforming heritage project grant will be applied for, but it will not be considered by the AHF until next year. Once all the investigation work is completed, the Clerk will start working on a transforming heritage grant application this autumn.

The work done by delRenzio + delRenzio, Fiona Raley and Counterculture will form part of this application documentary evidence.

NOTED

035 **RADFORD HOUSE – IMPROVEMENTS TO THE OUTSIDE SPACES AND EV CHARGING POINTS.**

The Clerk reported that RTC had applied to the KCC EV charging point scheme for a grant to help with cost of providing to EV charging points for the public and 2 charging points for RTC's own vehicles. The cost of the scheme is likely to be in excess of £10,000 overall.

The Clerk went on to outline various other proposals to make the best use of the yard at the rear, but Cllr Albon suggested that these should form part of the planning application.

NOTED

036 **USE OF RADFORD HOUSE DURING UPTO AND DURING THE REFURBISHMENT**

The Clerk touched on various parts of this subject during his presentation, but until the coronavirus emergency is ended, it is not possible to see a possibility of using the building, as Covid -19 regulations are constantly changing.

Cllr Green asked for a report on the likely running costs of Radford House after the refurbishment work is completed.

NOTED

037 **CUSTOM HOUSE REPAIRS AND TENANT ACTIVITIES.**

The Clerk described activities at Custom house as follows:

- ❖ Custom house was closed from March till May when tenants and staff worked or stayed at home. During this time RTC functioned effectively by remote means.
- ❖ Staff based at Custom house have returned, but no visits from the public are made, except by appointment and following Covid regulations and guidelines.
- ❖ The RNLI shop opened on 29<sup>th</sup> September.
- ❖ The Visitor Information Service operates with a limited service.
- ❖ The Thai restaurant operated a takeaway and now opens as before.
- ❖ Increased cleaning of the public spaces is being carried out.
- ❖ The exterior woodwork has been repaired and painted.
- ❖ A fan in the restaurant kitchen was replaced because of its noise levels causing a nuisance.

Cllr Albon asked were the staff happy to work from the office. The Clerk replied that he had consulted all office staff and asked for their opinion, and he had found that they wished to work from the office. Should matters take a turn for the worse, then Custom House will be closed until it is safe to reopen. The situation is being closely monitored.

Cllr Makinson asked if all staff could be transferred to Radford House and that Custom House be leased off or disposed of in some way. The Clerk replied that he was looking into the matter but reminded the Cttee that Radford house was acquired for community purposes. A report would be forthcoming shortly to look at the issue again.

NOTED

**038 HIRE CHARGES AND FEES AT RTC VENUES.**

The Clerk said that the scale of fees and hire charges had not changed in a decade. The Counterculture business plan is likely to report that Radford house cannot cover all of its costs on that basis and that a review is necessary. In the presentation the Clerk asked the committee to consider whether it might be better to set a range of hire charges that are competitive, but not excessive, with discounts applied to qualifying community bodies. No firm conclusion was reached and a report outlining the issues and opportunities would be written shortly.

NOTED

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8 pm.