**MINUTES OF THE MARGATE CHARTER TRUSTEES**

**HELD MONDAY 22ND JANUARY 2024**

**PRESENT:** Cllr Rob Yates (Chair), Cllr John Edwards., Cllr Heather Keen., Cllr Harry Scobie., Cllr Leo Britcher., Cllr Marc Rattigan (remote).

**MINUTE 28** Cllr Alan Currie., Cllr Martin Boyd., Cllr Katie Price., Cllr Jack Packman., Cllr Ruth Duckworth.

 **NO APOLOGIES:** Cllr Helen Whitehead., Cllr Aleysha D’Abbro., Cllr John Worrow., Cllr John Denis., Cllr Cedric Towning.

**MINUTE 29** **Declaration of Interest**: Cllr Marc Rattigan under budget item.

**MINUTE 30** **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 13TH NOVEMBER 2023 AND MATTERS ARISING**

 The minutes were accepted.

 Proposed: Cllr Leo Britcher

 Seconded: Cllr Harry Scobie

 Passed nem con

**MINUTE 31** **MAYOR’S REPORT**

1. Margate Town Council

The Mayor stated that a timeline for a CGR should be received from TDC by the end of the month. TDC are looking at the formation to take place on 1st April 2026. Once details have been received, the Mayor would set up a meeting with KALC. A press release would be made but shared with all Charter Trustees beforehand. Cllr Keen suggested an update be made on the MCT’s Instagram account (on MCT’s mobile)

Cllr Marc Rattigan to raise a question at TDC full council. Cllr Edwards stated that the delay was due to staffing issues at TDC.

1. TDC had written to the Mayor in respect of MCT’s involvement with the Regeneration Partnership. Only one representative of the MCT’s would be permitted. The Mayor informed the meeting that a Charter Trustee who is a current Board member, there by virtue of holding a cabinet post, would like to continue. The Mayor suggested a closed vote via zoom. Cllr Harry Scobie proposed that the Mayor should represent the Charter Trustees and membership of the Board should go with the incumbent of the role of Mayor, Cllr Marc Rattigan seconded. The proposal having been made and seconded it was put to the vote and passed nem con. The Mayor was duly elected as the MCT’s representative on the Regeneration Partnership.

**MINUTE 32 OFFICE AND FINANCE REPORT**

1. The cash book for November and December 2023, previously circulated, was approved.

Proposed : Cllr Heather Keen

Seconded : Cllr Leo Britcher

Passed nem con

1. The difficulty in attracting staff for the position of Town Sergeant was raised by Cllr Keen who suggested a meeting of the HR committee be held to discuss the next move. Cllr Keen also stated that in her opinion, extending the role to include the Mayor’s secretarial role was positive.
2. Variances and anticipated outrun previously circulated, together with the supporting notes of explanation. The large underspend was in part due to the change in TDC’s requirement that the MCT’s remove all furniture, paintings etc from the OTH lapsing and ultimately changing following the May elections, and in part through the underspend on salaries.
3. Proposed Budget 2024-25.

The draft budget and supporting notes – previously circulated were discussed; together with the minutes of the finance sub-committee and outcome of its deliberations and explanations of 15th January 2024.

* 1. Mayoral Allowance. The clerk explained that the cost of events had risen substantially over the last year. There are other expenses that the Mayor is expected to meet eg gifts to care homes, prizes to children, which, when the Mayor’s allowance stood at £12000 (£9400net/£800pm) could be met from the allowance. However, the allowance was reduced the previous year to £6300per annum (£420pm net) which did not cover the full costs incurred by the Mayor in carrying out his role as ambassador for Margate. Cllr Keen stated that during her time as Mayor on the reduced allowance, she was out of pocket. The clerk proposed transferring say £500 from one or more contingency accounts to the form a mayor’s contingency to meet the sundry other costs. This was accepted. However, the level of the Mayoral allowance increase was discussed and the CT’s agreed that it be reduced to £7000 with the excess £200 being transferred to the Mayor’s Contingency. The effect on the overall budget of a Mayor’s Contingency would be nil.
	2. The other cost centres under ‘Mayoral Allowances’ were agreed.
	3. Civic events. The modest increases were agreed. The CT’s agreed that the budget for BOS would be kept to that of 2023-24 despite rising costs. The Clerk explained she had been asked to meet with the Greek community to discuss future BOS events and they should be informed that our budget of £1500 should not be exceeded.
	4. Mayoral Events. 2024 being the 80th anniversary of the D Day landings, the Ct’s were of the opinion that an event should be held to commemorate the day. Cllr Keen liked the proposal of a 1940’s themed event. The budget of £8000 was approved.
	5. The Jubilee budget £2530. This covers watering of the jubilee trees for 2024-25.
	6. The inclusion of a budget for the Mayor’s community event was approved.
	7. Civic Expenses – no change to budget of 23-24.
	8. Overheads. Internal audit. The current auditors are retiring at the end of the financial year 2023-24 and a replacement has been found (recommended by Dover TC) with a reduction in cost.

Ceremonial Attire. A new TS tricorn is required (the ‘spare’ having been given to Tracey Emin) and more ladies’ tricorns are required. Hopefully, when a new TS is appointed, one of the two TS ceremonials will suffice.

Rent. TDC had been approached in respect of any pending rent increase, but no reply had been received.

Rates. A refund of rates should be explored with TDC.

Salaries. The Clerk explained that for a number of years, a figure had been put in the budget to cover the wages and pension of a Town Sergeant, and for 2023-24, also in respect of a qualified Town Clerk for 6 months. Due to the ongoing uncertainty regarding these two roles, rather than budget for them, the clerk has ring-fenced £66000 from the anticipated year end reserves of £143,000.

Training. This budget has largely been under-utilised and most cost was in respect of the Guild of Mace-bearers annual training/AGM/gala dinner. The CT’s queried whether a reduced budget figure of £250 down from £750 would be sufficient in the event of a TS being appointed but were assured that with a salary contingency of £3000, this would be adequate.

**MINUTE 33** The budget having been approved at £151,860, this would give rise to a precept of £152045 or a Band D rate of £11.25, a 4.2% increase on 2023-24.

 Proposed Acceptance: Cllr Leo Britcher

 Seconded: Cllr John Edwards

 Passed nem con

**MINUTE 34** **APPLICATIONS TO THE MAYOR’S FUND**

* 1. Power of Women £250 approved

ii. Festival of Cats £250 approved

iii. Margate Civic Society (Cllr Harry Scobie declared an interest) £500 approved

iv. Inkling £400 approved

 The Clerk advised that Lucy Gray had that day chased a decision on an application submitted the previous summer which had been held over as being the second application made within 12 months. The CT’s suggested the Clerk request a new submission be made as costs etc would have changed since the application had been received.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.45pm