**MINUTES OF THE MARGATE CHARTER TRUSTEES**

**MONDAY 13TH NOVEMBER 2023**

**PRESENT:** Cllr Rob Yates (Chair), Cllr John Edwards, Cllr Harry Scobie, Cllr Martin Boyd, Cllr Jack Packman,

 Cllr Katie Pope, Cllr Leo Britcher, Cllr Marc Rattigan.

**MINUTE 24** **APOLOGIES**:

 Cllr Heather Keen, Cllr Alan Currie, Cllr Ruth Duckworth, Cllr John Worrow, Cllr Helen Whitehead

 Cllr Cedric Towning, Cllr Barry Manners

 **NO APOLOGIES:** Cllr John Denis, Cllr Elysa D’Abbro

**MINUTE 25 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 11th SEPTEMBER 2023** (previously circulated)

 The minutes of the meeting held 11th September 2023 were approved.

 Proposed: Cllr Harry Scobie

 Seconded: Cllr Marc Rattigan

 Passed nem con

**MINUTE 26 MAYOR’S REPORT**

1. Old Town Hall update

The Mayor informed the meeting that a report on the OTH would be on the agenda for the January cabinet meeting. However, as Charter Trustees the Mayor and Cllr Keen will have to declare an interest and not take part. A condition statement report is being undertaken and should be ready in the New Year.

The alarm in the OTH has been serviced and is now working.

1. The event held at Turner Contemporary to bestow the Freeman of Margate on Arnold Schwartzman went well with some high-profile guests in attendance which reflected well on Margate.
2. Community Governance Review.

An email had been received from the Leader of TDC stating a CGR would be undertaken by TDC for the whole of Thanet following the boundary changes with the aim of a Town Council, for Margate and alterations to Town and Parish boundaries coming into effect on 1st April 2027 to coincide with the 2027 district elections.

After discussion, it was agreed that the Mayor would write to the Leader and stress that the Charter Trustees want a CGR undertaken for a Margate Town Council, notwithstanding the boundary changes. It is feasible for a CGR to be undertaken during 2024; the process has to be completed within a year, and for the current Charter Trustees to become the first Town Councillors for a Margate Town Council. Assuming a MTC is formed from 1st April 2025, the Charter Trustees would be in post for 2 years until the normal district election cycle in 2027.

The Charter Trustees agreed it would be prudent to start working now on establishing the costs involved for a Town Council together with staffing and pay.

Proposed: Cllr Leo Britcher

Seconded: Cllr Marc Rattigan

Passed nem con

1. Christmas

The Charter Trustees have budgeted for a Christmas tree in the Old Town. The lights are now working, including those on the trees in the Old Town. The tree will be put up on 22nd November ready for the light switch on Saturday 25th November at 5.00pm. Wildes in the Old Town is putting on a Christmas event on the 25th with singers and stalls. The Mayor has arranged with the Headmaster of St Johns and Holy Trinity primary school, for the year 1 (5-6 year old) to produce a Mayor’s Christmas card. The mayor will choose the winner on 4th December. The winner will receive a presentation, goodie bag and will switch on the lights on the 25th. The Mayor would like to see local shops selling the cards with the proceeds being split between the shops and the mayors fund. There’s a quantity of cards left over from last year which could also be sold.

1. The Mayor reported on a ‘welcome to Margate event’ he attended at the Glenwood, in support of asylum seekers. A number of organisations attended and the asylum seekers are now receiving help and advice.
2. Charter Trustee membership of the Margate Town Deal Board to be tabled for the January meeting.
3. An event has been arranged for the mayors fund at Hornby Hobbies on the 29th November. Bookings have been good. However, there is confusion at Hornby’s end which may impact on the event. The office is endeavouring to sort out the muddle.
4. Turner has been asked to quote for a Mayor’s Ball to be held there on 16th March 2024. Turner wants to give recognition to Cllr Mike Hill who was instrumental in getting the Turner project to fruition. The Mayor is in discussion with A Perfect Place to Grow and Botega to provide the food at a discount. Sponsorship will be sought from Thorley Taverns and other organisations. The Mayor would like to keep the price to guests at about £35.00
5. The Charter Trustees would like confirmation from the Margate Museum, that it has the Winter Gardens posters in its possession.
6. The Charter Trustees would like to register and interest in respect of linen, crockery and cutlery at the upcoming auction of Winter Gardens equipment.
7. The Mayor would like to hold a soiree at The Parlour to display our newly conserved Charter of Incorporation and Act creating the new Borough of Margate. Possibly before Christmas.

**MINUTE 27 OFFICE & FINANCE REPORT**

1. Cash Book previously circulated. There were no matters raised

Proposed acceptance: Cllr Rob Yates

Seconded: Cllr Leo Britcher

1. The Interim Auditors Report (previously circulated) was presented. In accordance with the auditor’s recommendation, Cllr Edwards and Scobie agreed to attend the office every month to check invoices and verify bank reconciliation.
2. The current internal auditors, Audit Solutions Ltd, will be retiring next year. The final audit at 31st March 2024 will be completed. The Clerk has contacted other councils in the area to ascertain whether they would recommend their auditor. The Clerk will obtain quotes for the Charter Trustees’ consideration.
3. The safe and vault door in the Media Centre is now installed and operational. The safe weighs 835kg and is bolted to the floor. The Mayor reported that TDC may be interested in storing the Chairman’s chains in the new safe. Logistics to be worked out. The total cost came in under budget; budgeted figure £15,000, total net cost £9665.00
4. Work on the flagpole to be undertaken in late November. As previously reported, the maintenance cost will exceed the budgeted figure of £2000 in addition there is the cost of flags. Currently, the flagpole is service bi-annually. An alternative quote will be sought for the maintenance. Given the cost involved, it was queried whether the flagpole should be retained or removed.
5. As reported at the September meeting, advice was sought from Chris Blundell (TDC) in respect of the reclaim of input VAT in respect of fund-raising events and Blessing of the Seas. As advised, the Charter Trustees should not have been reclaiming input VAT on events. As this has been the practice for many years, it is proper to advise HMRC of this oversight. TDC is signed up to PSTAX – specialist advisers on taxation to local councils. TDC to be asked to consult with the Charter Trustees and PSTAX on the careful wording of communication with HMRC. TDC to bill the Charter Trustees for the service.
6. The Mayor raised the possibility of employing an experienced Town Sergeant/driver who would also undertake the Mayor’s diary. An informal meeting over coffee would be arranged soon. Cllr Packman advised against employing under such circumstances as it could be regarded as discrimination. The CT’s have twice advertised this job this year, and once last year.
7. The finance sub-committee to meet on **January 15th 2024**, to run-through the draft 2024/25 budget prior to presentation at the budget Charter Trustee meeting of 21st January 2024.

**MINUTE 27** **APPLICATIONS TO THE MAYOR’S FUND**

1. CT’s were informed that The Perfect Place to Grow had received £250 from the Mayor’s Fund.
2. Application from Margate Yacht Club. The Charter Trustees approved a grant of £200 when funds permit.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 8.30pm.