**MINUTES OF THE CHARTER TRUSTEE MEETING**

**HELD 27TH JANUARY 2025**

**PRESENT:** Cllr Jack Packman., Cllr Harry Scobie., Cllr Leo Britcher., Cllr John Edwards., Cllr Katie Pope., Cllr Ruth Duckworth., Cllr Marc Rattigan.

**MINUTE 19** APOLOGIES:

 Cllr Heather Keen., Cllr Alan Currie.,

 **NO APOLOGIES RECEIVED:**

Cllr Rob Yates., Cllr Martin Boyd., Cllr Alysa D’Abbro., Cllr John Dennis., Cllr Barry Manners., Cllr Cedric Towning., Cllr Helen Whitehead., Cllr John Worrow.

**MINUTE 20** **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

 The Clerk declared an interest in respect of the RBL

**MINUTE 21** **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING**

 The minutes of 18th November 2024, previously circulated, were approved.

 Proposed: Cllr Harry Scobie

 Seconded: Cllr Marc Rattigan

 Passed nem con

The minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held 13th January 2025, previously circulated, were approved.

 Proposed: Cllr Leo Britcher

 Seconded: Cllr Ruth Duckworth

 Passed nem con

 The minutes of the Finance sub-committee held 20th January 2025 were approved

 Proposed: Cllr Marc Rattigan

 Seconded: Cllr Jack Packman

 Passed nem con

 The minutes of the HR committee held 21st January 2025 were approved

 Proposed: Cllr Katie Pope

 Seconded: Cllr Leo Britcher

 Passed nem con

**MINUTE 22** **MAYOR’S REPORT**

The Mayor had been extremely busy attending a number of local events and engaging with stakeholders.

The Mayor reported that the Margate branch of the Royal British Legion had officially been closed by County in July 2024 after a number of attempts to encourage the formation of a new branch. Lt Col Martin Neame had convened a meeting of interested parties, including County Chairman Caye Gould to see if there was enough interest to form a new branch. This inaugural meeting was held in the Mayor’s Parlour. The necessary paperwork has been submitted to HO. The Mayor reported a request had been received from Lt Col Neame for initial funding for the new branch. It was agreed that a letter of support be sent to Lt Col Neame requesting that once the branch has been officially established and bank accounts etc opened, then to contact the Mayor’s office again.

 The Mayor has written to Colin Carmichael at TDC on two matters:

1. To have ownership of both the Old Town Hall and Museum transferred to the Charter Trustees/Town Council for the consideration of £1.
2. To have the date of the intention to commence a Community Governance Review confirmed as 28th April.

The Mayor has met with Clive Stevens DL who is meeting with all the Thanet towns to encourage the submission of names to be included on the New Years honours list and Kings Birthday list. He reported that no-one in Margate has received the BEM. Submissions should go through the DL’s office to carry weight.

The Sunken Garden Society has requested the Mayor of the day should become an Honorary Member of the Society. The Charter Trustees approved. This stands alongside the Mayor being an honorary member of Rotary, Honorary V-P of the Sea Cadets and on the committee of Margate Cemetery. In the event of applications for funding from any of these groups, the Mayor to abstain.

The Mayoress’s Valentine Ball will take place on 15th February and approximately 100 tickets have been sold. They hope to raise in the region of £3k from the event for the Mayor’s Fund.

VE Day celebration will take place on 8th May when the beacon will be lit on Fort Hill at 9.30pm.

Dunkirk commemoration will take place on Sunday 25th June.

Mayor Making will be held on Thursday 22nd June at St John’s Church.

Mayor’s Ball, provisional date 17th May at Holy Trinity.

**MINUTE 23** **OFFICE & FINANCE REPORT**

 The Cash Book for November, December and up to 27th January was approved

 Proposed: Cllr Marc Rattigan

 Seconded: Cllr Harry Scobie

 Passed nem con

 Variances and Anticipated Outrun

The schedule previously circulated was discussed. The Mayor had received a request from Margate Yacht Club for £1000 to enable the purchase of a double-handed boat. To fund this, monies would have to be vired from the national historic underspend to the Mayor’s Community Grants. A vote was taken with 3 abstentions but 4 in favour. A further request for £500 was refused.

The Clerk requested permission to change from Guardian Security to Westgate Security & Electrical Ltd for future service/maintenance of the vault alarm in the Old Town Hall. Approval given.

**Budget 2025-2026**

The draft budget previously circulated, had to be read in conjunction with the notes to the budget and the minutes of the finance sub-committee and HR committee.

1. Mayoral Allowance. Increased from £7000 to £7200. This would give a monthly figure of £600 which at BR tax code would yield £480pm. No proposed increase to the Deputy allowance
2. Mayor’s Floral Enhancements. Quotes have been received from Youngs nursery for the provision of extra troughs around the clocktower as well as the replacement of worn brackets. Youngs provided details of hanging baskets owned but unused by TDC. Cllr Scobie proposed and it was agreed that it be left to the Clerk to work with Youngs/TDC to see what can be done in Margate.
3. Chauffeur Travel/Subsistence. The allowance for motor costs for driving the Mayor has been substantially reduced as there will be occasions when the Mayor will drive him/herself.
4. Mayor Making. Uplift for inflation included.
5. Blessing of the Seas. Depending upon circumstances around the current venue, this figure may be substantially less budgeted for. However, given the circumstances it will be prudent to include the estimated net cost for the current year.
6. Civic Service Uplift for inflation included
7. Civic Events Contingency . The initial draft budget figure of £1200 has been reduced to £1100
8. National Historic Celebrations. Two budgeted for; VE Day and Dunkirk, both in.May.
9. Jubilee Prudent inclusion for 3rd year of watering the jubilee trees throughout Margate. The trees are well established but may need support in the event of hot weather.
10. Contingency. Reduced from £2000 in original draft to £1000
11. Mayor’s Community Event Reduced from £3000 in original draft to £2000
12. Ceremonial Attire Reduced from £1000 in original draft to £500- postpone purchase of new tricorns
13. Honours Board Ongoing updating of board included but purchase of board for Mayoress/Consort -if agreed to be taken from Contingency. Reduction in original budget figure from £500 to £125.
14. Media Centre Rent. Rent increased by TDC December 2024,

xv. Media Centre Rates. Still awaiting increased rate demand from TDC for addition of room E

1. Media Centre phone Now billed direct from BT.
2. Mobile. Out of offer period now paying full rate.
3. Postage – Stamps Less postage being used so reduction in budget.
4. Printing- Copies Less being produced, reduction in budget
5. Stationery Less being bought, mainly paper.
6. IT New computer required.
7. Legal Fees and Consultancy Qualified professional advice will be required for both the

Old Town Hall and formation of a new Town Council.

1. Flags and Flagpoles. New Margate flag and Union Flag for standards required
2. Repairs and Renewals Secondary glazing required in secretary’s room – very cold; but

Overall reduction in budget.

1. Storage Furniture from Old Town Hall now stored and insured at Pettmans.
2. Advertising Promotion of CGR
3. Following discussions between Finance s-c and TDC officers, TDC officers, officers stated it would be acceptable for the Charter Trustees to use £150k of reserves to explore opportunities for the OTH. Rather than commit all reserves, the Clerk explained that £75000.00 has been ring-fenced from reserves for the OTH.
4. Contingency Increased from £5000 to £7500 in the light of developments in respect of the OTH/CGR and devolution
5. Salaries The full salary breakdowns had been submitted to the HR committee along with the pension calculations and all calculations. The HR report had been circulated to Charter Trustees.
6. Town Clerk Designate

The point LC4-46 is the lowest scale point and dependant upon when a town clerk is appointed may require revising. The Charter Trustees expressed a wish for the appointment to take place early in the new financial year if possible.

xxxi. Pension Costs The Charter Trustees had asked in the November meeting that the Clerk explore the possibility of leaving the Kent Pension Fund. Her findings hade been reported to the HR committee who agreed the Charter Trustees should remain in the fund. The budget figure of £24000 covers the employers contributions for 2 staff members.

xxxii. Part-time Staff Cover. Making more use of part-time town sergeant role.

**MINUTE 24** **PRECEPT**

The precept figure of £254,275.00 would be supported by £2653.18 from Reserves reducing the precept to £251,621.82 giving a Band D rate of £18.00

Given the anticipated reserves as at 1st April of £163,900, less the use of reserves of £2653.18 and the ring-fenced £75000 for the OTH, this gave a reserve balance of £86246.82 which is a prudent level.

Proposed Acceptance of Budget: Cllr Marc Rattigan

Seconded: Cllr Harry Scobie

Passed nem con

**MINUTE 25** **APPLICATIONS TO THE MAYOR’S FUND**

POW The application was discussed and Cllr Scobie was in support. However, the Charter Trustees requested the costs be broken down and the application would then be re-considered.

Women’s Basketball The application form had been sent but as yet no reply received.

**MINUTE 26** The Clerk reported that following on from the previous meeting where Cllr Keen had suggested putting monies on deposit, the Clerk had re-visited Unity Trust Bank. Unity is more familiar with dealing with Town and Parish Councils than main stream high street banks. The Clerk to explore whether Unity would permit the Charter Trustees to open a short-term deposit account and report back to the CT’s at the April meeting.

There being no further matters arising, the meeting ended at 8,30pm.