



MINUTES OF RYDE TOWN COUNCIL'S FINANCE AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2023 AT 7.00PM
IN RYDE BAPTIST CHURCH, GEORGE STREET

Members Present: Cllr Simon Cooke, Cllr Jess Higgins, Cllr Richard May, Cllr Jo Elliott, Cllr Tom Hanley, Cllr Georgie Carter (Chair), Cllr Malcolm Ross and Cllr Michael Lilley.

Also in Attendance: Tara Bloomfield (Responsible Financial Officer), Robert Clark (Finance Assistant), Cllr Diana Conyers

Members of the Public - 5

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A member of The Ryde Society expressed their support for item 12 on the agenda.

It was asked what the payment to Haylands Farm for 38 hanging baskets was for as the member of the public had not seen the baskets in the town. The RFO explained that this was a scheme run with shop owners where they contributed £10 towards a hanging basket for their shopfront. It was further explained that these baskets had been on display on various shopfronts throughout the town since May.

Another member of the public firstly asked if Ryde Town Council could provide a grant to save Oakfield Football Club (and in turn the services that run from there), and secondly wanted to make it known that the seats at the bus station are too high for the elderly. Cllr Lilley explained that officers are currently in talks with Oakfield Football club about their future, and Cllr Cooke informed the audience that the issue with seating at the bus station is being addressed by the Isle of Wight Council.

A question was submitted to the RFO ahead of the meeting by a member of the public and read out:

I note from page 6 of the Budget Monitor Half Year report that Beach Hire Equipment Income has been a paltry £3,339 for the summer months compared to a budget of £14,000. Last summer's income was £8,351 compared to a fantasy budget of £46,000.

Does Ryde Town Council admit that their ambition to "explore new revenue streams" and "create additional income" [quotes from 2023/24 RTC Budget Report] has utterly failed and instead actually added to the tax burden for Ryde precept payers?

The RFO responded both at the meeting, and in writing to the member of the public:

As everyone is aware, this year the Island faced an extremely wet summer, which in turn, did not allow many operating days for the beachfront hire.

Costs incurred this year included £590 of replacement equipment, staff training and advertising costs, all of which were incurred prior to the season being a complete wash out. Also, within these costs were £1,683 of capital expenditure on a new trailer that will allow the council to expand the area in which the deckchairs are hired out and open opportunities for corporate hire.

The direct operating costs of staff time vs revenue saw a £362.08 loss for the summer period.

84/23 APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Cllr Jordan

85/23 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTEREST

None declared.

86/23 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None requested.

87/23 MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Cllr Cooke asked for an update on the loan repayment from the Armed Forces Day Committee. The RFO explains that it had not yet been repaid but that it is being chased on a regular basis.

Cllr Lilley asks if contact has been made with Seaview & Nettlestone regarding a contribution to the beach cleaning. This was to be followed up.

88/23 MINUTES

The minutes to the previous meetings held on 18 July 2023 were reviewed.

RESOLVED:

THAT, the minutes to the meetings held on 18 July 2023 were approved and were signed off by the Chair.

89/23 LIST OF PAYMENTS

The list of payments for 01/06/2023 – 30/09/2023 were presented and approved.

90/23 BANK RECONCILIATION

The bank reconciliations for the period ending 30 June 2023, 31 July 2023, 31 August 2023 and 30 September 2023 were presented and approved.

91/23 FIXED ASSET REGISTER

Members were presented with the updated Fixed Asset Register for the council as at 30 September 2023. Cllr Lilley asked why the palm trees were still listed, the RFO is still awaiting confirmation that they are to be disposed of.

92/23 PURCHASING CARD POLICY

Members were provided with a new policy for approval which is for the use of corporate purchasing cards. The RFO explained that since moving bank there is no longer a debit card facility for online payments. A select number of staff members have been given the cards with restricted credit limits based on their roles.

RESOLVED:

THAT, the policy was approved.

93/23 BUDGET MONITOR

The committee were presented with a half year budget monitoring and report.

94/23 CLASSIC CAR SHOW GRANT

Members were asked to consider the current 5-year grant agreement made with Vic Gallucci for the Classic Car event due to his passing in May 2023.

In the report there were 4 options given to committee, however, after discussion a new option was proposed by Cllr May.

RESOLVED:

THAT, the current 5-year grant agreement that runs until 2026 is now null and void due to the passing of Vic Gallucci, however, officers should continue contact with the new organisers and encourage them to put in a grant application for the future events.

95/23 SKATEPARK PROJECT

The committee were asked to consider approval of £5,000 match funding for a £10,000 "DIY" skatepark project that would act as an interim provision for the town. The project is being led by Zoe Thompson of John Cattle Skate Club CIC.

There were the following options proposed in the report:

- Option 1: Agree to contribute up to the remaining £2,000 budget for the project.
- Option 2: Agree to match fund up to £5,000, of which, £3,000 will be taken from the Earmarked Reserve.
- Option 3: Do not provide any funding for the project.

RESOLVED:

THAT, option 2 was voted on with the conditions that a RTC grant agreement was signed and that the committee received a full specification of works that would be carried out for the sum of £10,000.

96/23 CYBER INSURANCE

Members were asked to decide if the RFO should continue with the quotation process for Cyber Insurance which was triggered by a member of the Council being a victim of a scam via email.

Cllr Cooke spoke to the committee from an IT background and explained that cyber insurance is not something that a council would require due to no online trading.

Cllr Elliott suggested that all councillors should undertake cyber security and GDPR training, and maybe that could be provided by IWALC (Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils).

RESOLVED:

THAT, cyber insurance is not required by the council and the RFO can stop the quotation process.

97/23 INFORMAL FINANCE MEETING

Members were asked to agree on a date for an informal meeting of the Finance Committee in which to discuss the budget requirements for 2024/25.

RESOLVED:

THAT, the informal finance committee meeting be held at 10am on 28th November at Lind Street Offices.

98/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

THAT the proposed next scheduled meeting will be held on Tuesday 23 January 2024 in the Ryde Baptist Church, George Street, at 7pm.