



MINUTES OF RYDE TOWN COUNCIL'S FINANCE AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY, 28 FEBRUARY 2023 AT 7.00PM
IN RYDE BAPTIST CHURCH, GEORGE STREET, RYDE

Members Present: Cllr Phil Jordan (Chair), Cllr Georgie Carter, Cllr Simon Cooke, Cllr Tom Hanley (substitute for Cllr Jo Elliott), Cllr Charles Chapman, Cllr Richard May, Cllr Michael Lilley, and Cllr Jenna Sabine.

Also in Attendance: Tara Bloomfield (Responsible Finance Officer), Allan Bridges (Business Development Manager and Deputy Clerk), Robert Clark (Financial Assistant), Cllr Ian Dore, Cllr Diana Conyers

5 Members of the public in attendance.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A member of the public asked a question regarding the £310,000 loan application for Ryde Marina. They asked if the loan application had been successful, and if so when will it be drawn down.

The Chair responded by saying that a written response would be provided after the meeting.

Another member of the public commented that they had read that there was an item on the agenda to discuss the location of the meetings going forward. They wanted to make councillors aware that having the meetings at Ryde Baptist Church allows the public to hear the contents of the meeting more clearly, and that at times at the Methodist Church the public struggle to hear dialogue even with the PA system.

16/23 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Jess Higgins, Cllr Jo Elliott, and Cllr Jenna Sabine.

17/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Carter declared an interest in items involving allotments as she is an allotment holder at Quarry Road. In light of this she refrained from voting on the associated items.

18/23 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None requested.

19/23 MEMBERS QUESTION TIME

None.

20/23 MINUTES

The minutes to the previous meeting held on 17 January 2023 were reviewed.

RESOLVED:

THAT, the minutes to the meeting held on 17 January 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record and were signed off by the Chair.

21/23 LIST OF PAYMENTS

The list of payments for 1 - 31 January 2023 were presented and noted.

22/23 BANK RECONCILIATION

The bank reconciliations dated 31 January 2023 were presented and noted.

23/23 DECORATIVE LIGHTING CONTRACT EXTENSION

Members were asked to approve a 2-year contract extension for the decorative lighting contractor NDLE Limited. This was to allow the council to change to a hired-in contract for the decorative lighting over the next 5 years.

Cllr Hanley asks if we are getting the best value for money and why do we stay with just one contractor, the contract should be put out to tender. The RFO explained that Ryde Town Council have strict procurement rules that involves tenders being advertised UK wide. The RFO further explained that due to the nature of the Isle of Wight, we receive a very limited number of tenders for the lighting contract and that NDLE Limited provide best value for money.

Cllr Cooke asks what are the changes that are being made in the contract, for example the number of lights expected, and will the council have sight of the amended version. The RFO explained that the finalised contract is currently being refined, working alongside the contractor to determine what level of lighting is achievable within the budget. Once the contract has been finalised it will be presented to the council.

After a proposal, seconder, and a vote via a show of hands, the following was:

RESOLVED:

THAT Ryde Town Council agrees to the proposed contract extension with a new end date of Jan 2027.

24/23 YEAR END FORECAST

The members were presented with an updated financial year end forecast which showed the removal of the budgeted spend of £40,000 for St Johns Wood. The RFO detailed that this was the only considerable movement against the 9+3 forecast presented at the previous meeting and that everything remains mostly on track.

25/23 APPELTY COMPENSATION MONIES – SOUTHERN WATER

The committee was informed that the compensation monies from Southern Water had been transferred to Ryde Town Council from Natural Enterprises. The total of this transfer was £5,541.67. Transferring the compensation money to the Council allows a level of scrutiny when awarding funds to applicants by using their grants policy.

The committee was asked to approve the proposed grant policy for distribution of the funds.

RESOLVED:

THAT the Finance and community Resources Committee approves the grant policy for distribution of the Southern Water compensation money.

26/23 CCLA INVESTMENT BANKING

The members were asked to approve the proposed change in investment banking from Nationwide to CCLA. This move would allow the Council to capitalise on increased interest rates with CCLA and make use of improved liquidity of CCLA's account provision.

RESOLVED:

THAT Ryde Town Council agrees to the proposed Option 3, namely:

To withdrawal funds from the Nationwide account and invest an increased amount of £350,000 with CCLA.

27/23 TERMS OF REFERENCE: VECTIS HALL WORKING GROUP

The committee was asked to approve the terms of reference for the Vectis Hall Working Group.

RESOLVED:

THAT the terms of reference were approved.

28/23 CONTRACT WAIVER – IT SUPPORT

Members were asked to approve a one-year contract extension for the provision of the IT Support Services provided by PC Consultants at a total cost of £4,800 a year.

After a proposal, seconder, and a vote via a show of hands, the following was:

RESOLVED:

THAT the contract extension was approved.

29/23 ACCOUNTING AND ALLOTMENT SOFTWARE

The committee considered a request to invest in new accounting and allotment software that is specifically designed for local authorities. The RFO explained that the current method of managing the administration of the allotments was cumbersome and used a lot of staff hours. The RFO further explained that the current SAGE accounting software was not specifically written for local authorities and therefore does not easily produce the required reports and that these have to be manually prepared.

Moving to the new software from Rialtas Business Solutions, the council would be required to invest an initial cost of £4,375, but that over the three year contract period the council would see significant savings in staff cost.

Cllr Cooke asked if the Council would have to pay for the upfront software costs again at the end of the 3 year period, the RFO confirmed that she believes this would not be the case.

Cllr Cooke further asked if we were tied into a contract with SAGE, the RFO informed him that we are on 30 days notice.

Cllr Jordan took the opportunity to reiterate that this would be a 3 year investment and that any savings would not be seen in the first year.

After a proposal, seconder, and a vote via a show of hands, the following was:

RESOLVED:

THAT the purchase of the accounting and allotment software from Rialtas Business solution was approved

30/23 MEETING LOCATIONS

Members were asked to consider and make a decision on the location of future meetings from May 2023.

Cllr Carter commented that initially she was against moving the meetings permanently to the George Street Centre due to the approximate increased costs, however after the comments from the public she explained that she now considers both venues appropriate.

Cllr Cooke asked the RFO that whilst we are talking about the costs of meetings, please could he be provided with the total costs of preparing and running a meeting, including staffing hours, so that he is aware of the cost to the council when meetings are not quorate. The RFO said this would be provided to all councillors via email.

Cllr Lilley asks if the timings of meeting can be reviewed at the next Full Council meeting in May.

RESOLVED:

THAT meeting from May 2023 would be held at the George Street Centre subject to availability.

31/23 QUARRY ROAD LAND

The committee were asked to approved the cost of £5,000 to cover legal costs of entering into a 25 year lease with SSE for land adjoining the Quarry Road Allotments. The Business Development Officer/Deputy Clerk explained that the land will be used to offer accessible allotments sites, a community orchard and wildlife space, which all supports the Councils corporate plan.

RESOLVED:

THAT the committee approves the spend of £5,000.

32/23 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

In view of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed and the public and press were excluded for the following item:

33/23 EVENT FUNDING REQUEST

A request for event funding of £5,000 was made by Cllr Dore, who in turn gave a presentation to the committee detailing the rationale for his request.

RESOLVED:

THAT the committee approves the spend of £5,000

34/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

THAT the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 25 April 2023 in the Methodist Church, Garfield Road, Ryde at 7.00pm



MINUTES OF RYDE TOWN COUNCIL'S FINANCE AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY, 22 MARCH 2023 AT 7.00PM
IN RYDE BAPTIST CHURCH, GEORGE STREET, RYDE

Members Present: Cllr Phil Jordan (Chair), Cllr Georgie Carter, Cllr Charles Chapman, Cllr Simon Cooke, Cllr Jess Higgins, Cllr Michael Lilley, Cllr Richard May, and Cllr Jenna Sabine.

Also in Attendance: Jon Baker (Committees Coordinator), Allan Bridges (Business Development Manager and Deputy Clerk), Cllr Diana Conyers, Cllr Ian Dore, Lisa Dyer (Clerk), Keith Penny (Woodland Sessions) and Neil Roberts (Woodland Sessions).

1 Member of the public in attendance.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions were asked.

35/23 APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

36/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

37/23 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None requested.

38/23 EVENT FUNDING REQUEST

A request for funding was made for an event proposed for Ryde Beach from the team behind The Woodland Sessions. The team gave a short talk to Councillors highlighting their experience in running successful events both on the Island and on the mainland.

It was noted that the event would be held over a weekend and would feature well known acts in popular music, classical music, and comedy. The stage would be sited on the beach and facing the Solent, mitigating any potential noise issues.

The committee were advised that the event would now likely be in Summer 2024 (possibly July) as it would be problematic to organise it for 2023 given the tight timescales.

Members agreed that Summer 2024 would be a suitable time and any possible contribution could be budgeted for in 2024-2025 financial year and not be taken from current reserves. Councillors were supportive of the ambition to deliver high quality events in Ryde.

However, in order to make any informed decision about supporting an application, members would need to be appraised of more details of the event as well as how any possible concerns from local residents would be addressed. The request would therefore be deferred for further consideration at the next scheduled meeting to be held on 25 April 2023.

RESOLVED:

THAT Ryde Town Council are supportive of the application for funding in principle for an event in the Summer of 2024 subject to receiving a completed application and additional financial details. The application would be considered at the next meeting on 25 April 2023.

39/23 REQUEST FOR FUNDING

Members considered a request for £10,000 to contribute towards a Conservation Deficit Survey on Ryde Town Hall.

The survey report would be an essential element should any future grant funding be applied for regarding the Town Hall.

It was noted that the total cost of the survey would be in the region of £20,000 and that the remaining amount would be covered by the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) Project. Ryde Town Council's contribution would be drawn from its reserves.

RESOLVED:

THAT the request of £10,000, to be drawn from Town Council reserves, for a contribution towards a Conservation Deficit Survey on Ryde Town Hall, be agreed.

40/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

THAT the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 25 April 2023 at 7pm.