

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Hall, Rye,
on Monday 19 March 2007**

PRESENT Councillors Granville Bantick, John Breeds, Roger Breeds, Paul Carey, Peter Dyce, Frank Palmer, Sonia Holmes, John Izod, Jo Kirkham, **Paul Osborne (Mayor)**, **David Russell (Deputy Mayor)**, Sam Souster, Keith Taylor

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; George Brown – Town Sergeant; The Reverend Hugh Moseley – Mayor’s Chaplain; Rye County Cllr Keith Glazier; Cllr Wendy Miers – Rother DC Chairman; Andy Hemsley – *Rye Observer*; 5 members of the public

The meeting commenced at 6.00.

95 PRAYERS

Prayers were said by The Reverend Hugh Moseley.

96 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllrs Jonathan Breeds, Ian Potter and Eric Streeton.

97 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Cllr Jo Kirkham	<i>personal</i>	item 102	Director of Rye Partnership
Cllr Sam Souster	<i>personal</i>	item 102	Director of Rye Partnership
Cllr David Russell	<i>personal</i>	item 102	Director of Rye Partnership

98 MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Elections The Mayor observed that this was the last scheduled meeting of Members’ term of office and thanked them, the Clerk, the Assistant to the Town Clerk, Town Sergeant, Mayor’s Chaplain and *Observer* reporter for their support. The Mayor advised Members that Nomination Packs were available in the Chamber.

Ian Gill As Speaker and Rye Mayor, Cllr Osborne would be attending the memorial service for Gloria Gill - wife of the former Confederation Registrar, Ian Gill – who was killed in a road traffic accident on 23 February. The service would be held at St Peter’s Church, Broadstairs, on 21 March at 11am.

Charity cycle ride The sponsor form had been circulated. The Mayor outlined the itinerary for the two-day event and advised that he would assisted by Rye Wheelers.

6.08 *The Mayor adjourned the meeting for Public Question Time and the Reports of the County and District Councillors (Appendices A-C).*

6.50 *The meeting reconvened.*

99 COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED To adopt the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2007 (C9).

100 COMMITTEE MINUTES

(a) Planning & Townscape

RESOLVED Adoption of the Minutes of the meetings held on 5 February 2007 (PT19), 19 February 2007 (PT20) and 6 March 2007 (PT21).

(b) Policy, Resources & General Purposes

RESOLVED Adoption of the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2007 (PR06).

(c) Leisure & Tourism

RESOLVED Adoption of the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2007 (LT04).

101 DEVOLVEMENT: THE NEXT STEP

RESOLVED To suspend Standing Orders 28j) (not speaking more than once) and 29 (requirement to stand).

Cllr Souster invited Members to consider how to progress the Council's desire to take on devolved services from the principal authorities. He summarised the situation thus far:

- RTC had obtained Quality Town Council status
- RTC had launched a local action planning process which could draw on a range of existing relevant research – including the Rye Market Towns Healthcheck, Rye Town Initiative Review and Plans produced by other parishes.
- The completed Rye Local Action Plan would inform the Local Development Framework.
- A RTC-RDC liaison committee had been established

Cllr Souster added that the both Councillors, prospective Councillors and members of the community needed to be certain they understood the financial implications of taking on devolved services and suggested that a local campaign group had made unrealistic claims – eg the return of the freeholds of public buildings/property, rubbish collection and planning control.

Cllr Taylor (a member of the Campaign for a Democratic Rye) was pleased devolution was again up for debate but suggested that, with the election of a new Council fast approaching, it was not an appropriate moment to discuss the issue in any detail. Elements of the Campaign's work had been misunderstood but its intended election literature would clarify its position.

The Mayor observed that many Members had sympathy with the view that more services should be controlled locally. Some groundwork had been prepared – notably, the establishment of the RDC-RTC liaison committee and both parties' wish to avoid 'double taxation'. He emphasised that Members were not being asked to make a decision and suggested that candidates in the forthcoming elections should be careful to substantiate any claims.

Cllr Carey observed that some of the functions exercised by the former Rye Borough Council were practically and legally outside of the Town Council's reach – eg environmental health and refuse collection. However, RTC did have the power to run sports facilities and car parks.

Cllr Dyce considered that it was reasonable for Rye (and Camber) to insist that they were entitled to a greater share of the benefits to RDC associated with running the town's public car parks. Cllr Holmes agreed. Cllr John Breeds supported the return of property to Rye but on a freehold rather than leasehold basis. The subsidy (although reduced) to the De La Warr Pavilion was galling.

Cllr Bantick expressed support for the 'Area Committee' concept which would see Rother divided into 3 areas – each with delegated resources and decision-making.

Cllr Russell advised that, at the last RDC-RTC liaison committee meeting, Cllr Gabby had suggested that Rye could act as a 'devolution pilot'. Cllr Russell reminded Members that there were costs associated with running both area committees and car parks. Members would also need to bear in mind that there may be areas where Rye benefits from RDC's involvement to a greater degree than other parishes.

Cllr Taylor advised that the Campaign's manifesto would contain no irrational promises and costed proposals. It had no wish to return to 'Borough Days'.

The Mayor was uncertain of the procedure for joining the Campaign.

Cllr Souster suggested that services would need to be negotiated as part of 'packages' and that the Campaign would need to be clear how much its proposals would cost the tax payer.

RESOLVED To reinstate the Standing Orders suspended temporarily.

RESOLVED To note the content of the discussion.

Cllrs Kirkham, Russell and Souster re-stated their personal interest in the item following:

102 RYE PARTNERSHIP

Cllr Souster advised that the work of the Partnership was being hampered somewhat by the expiration of major funding streams. The Partnership's Board was looking at way of restructuring the organisation in order to re-engage with its members.

Cllr Kirkham advised that the Rye Town Initiative Review was nearing completion and Cllr Russell reported that the Partnership had taken on the refurbishment and re-structuring of Animate.

103 URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items to consider.

The meeting ended at 7.36

Date Chairman

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from the members of the public present.

REPORT OF THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR

New Primary School The Clerk confirmed that the Council had received the full application – including supporting documentation.

Council Tax Cllr Glazier confirmed that the County Council had set a Council Tax increase of 3.7%. £1,420,000 of additional monies had been identified for ‘young people’ via the Youth Opportunities Capital Fund, supporting the Youth Cabinet and Youth Members of Parliament, bursaries for ‘looked after’ children, and respite care to benefit carers.

Landgate Arch Date for re-surfacing awaited.

Local Action Plan Launch Cllr Glazier had attended this, helping to staff the Partnership stand. Two members of the public and asked for Deadman’s Lane to be made one-way.

Cllr Dyce *Given that the lower school site has been derelict for c10 years, when could the community expect to see a development of some sort?*

Cllr Glazier The site had actually been declared surplus in 1999. ESCC is continuing to negotiate with a national supermarket chain. The new Primary School could not be located on this site because it was considered unsuitable (mainly for reasons of inadequate access) under the required ‘sequential test’ process.

Responding to an observation made by Cllr Russell, Cllr Glazier confirmed that he hoped that the successful proposal he moved recently asking RDC officers to investigate brownfield sites in Rye for housing development before the Council considers releasing land north of Udimore Road, would reach produce a desirable outcome.

REPORT OF THE ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Cllr Souster

Members received Cllr Souster’s written report. *See Appendix B.*

Cllr Carey asked if the Rother Waste Management Working Group had examined the problem of eastern residents having to take bulky waste to Mountfield or Pebsham. Cllr Souster considered that a previous proposal to site a waste transfer facility in Harbour Road could be considered again in the near future.

Cllrs Carey and Dyce highlighted the existence of temporary general waste facilities provided by Shepway DC at the western end of its territory.

Cllr Souster advised that RDC was aware that special waste collection arrangements would need to be introduced in the Citadel.

Cllr Bantick

Members received Cllr Bantick’s written report. *See Appendix C.*

Addressing a point made by Cllr Carey, Cllr Bantick confirmed that, in relation to the land north of Udimore Road, the full RDC Council had overturned a Cabinet recommendation.

Responding to a question from Cllr Roger Breeds, Cllr Souster advised that the new wheelie bins would be chipped but that the electronic information contained within them would be used solely to identify their allocated dwelling.