

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Hall, Rye, on Monday 21 January 2008**

**PRESENT** Councillors Granville Bantick, John Breeds, Jonathan Breeds, Brian Elliott, Bernardine Fiddimore, Sonia Holmes, Jo Kirkham, Paul Osborne (**Mayor**), Frank Palmer, Ian Potter, Shaun Rogers, David Russell, Sam Souster (**Deputy Mayor**), Sylvia Willgoss, David Wright

**IN ATTENDANCE** Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; George Brown – Town Sergeant; Hugh Moseley – Mayor’s Chaplain; County Cllr Keith Glazier; Maggie Boulter – Participation Worker (Hastings & Rye); Richard Harding – Rye Youth Services Manager; Andy Hemsley – *Rye Observer*; 29 members of the public – including 8 students from the Thomas Peacocke Community College.

*The meeting commenced at 6.30.*

**81 PRAYERS**  
Prayers were said by The Reverend Canon Hugh Moseley.

**82 APOLOGIES**  
Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllr Lorna Hall.

**83 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Cllr Jo Kirkham	<i>personal</i>	<b>item 91</b>	Director of Rye Partnership
Cllr Sam Souster	<i>personal</i>	<b>item 91</b>	Director of Rye Partnership
Cllr David Russell	<i>personal</i>	<b>item 91</b>	Director of Rye Partnership

In relation to item 91 the Clerk asked for it to be noted that he is a Director of Rye Partnership.

**84 MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor observed that at the last Council meeting he had neglected to announce that a nephew had been born in October.

6.35 *The Mayor adjourned the meeting for a presentation by students from the Thomas Peacocke Community College on the needs of young people in Rye; Public Question Time; the Reports of the County and District Councillors; and the appointment of a Mayor Elect and Deputy Mayor Elect for 2008-09 (Appendices A-B).*

6.38 *Cllr Jonathan Breeds arrived.*

7.39 *The meeting reconvened.*

**85 COUNCIL MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** To adopt the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2007 (C10).

**86 COMMITTEE MINUTES**

(a) **Planning & Townscape**

**RESOLVED Adoption of the Minutes of the meetings held on 26 November 2008 (PT15), 10 December 2008 (PT16), 18 December 2007 (PT17) and 7 January 2008 (PT18).**

(b) **Policy, Resources & GP**

**RESOLVED Adoption of the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2007 (PR04).**

(c) **Leisure & Tourism**

**RESOLVED Adoption of the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2007 (LT04).**

(d) **Public Services**

**RESOLVED Adoption of the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2007 (PS03).**

**87 BUDGET 2008-09**

**RESOLVED To approve the Recommended Draft Budget 2008-09 (as presented to the PRGP Committee on 14 January).**

Cllr Potter wished it to be recorded that – particularly given that ESCC's Council Tax increase was likely to be 3.9% - he could not support a precept rise of 4.9%, regardless of how little it would cost a household.

**88 HORAC**

Members considered an invitation from the Harbour of Rye Advisory Committee (HORAC) to nominate a representative to serve on it until September 2009.

**RESOLVED To nominate Cllr Souster.**

**Clerk**

**89 TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS**

In the light of the Cabinet decision to recommend to the full Rother Council on 3 March that land north of Udimore Road be released for development, Members were invited to consider moving the Planning & Townscape Committee meeting scheduled for 3 March to Tuesday 4 March to allow Members to attend the Rother meeting.

**RESOLVED To move the Planning & Townscape Committee meeting scheduled for 3 March to 4 March.**

**90 NALC CONFERENCE**

The Council was asked to consider whether to appoint delegates to attend the National Association of Local Councils Conference to be held in Eastbourne, 20-22 May.

**RESOLVED Not to attend the Conference.**

**91 RYE PARTNERSHIP**

(a) **Reports from representatives**

The meeting was invited to receive any report/s from the Council's representatives and, if appropriate, to agree a course of action.

Cllr Wright spoke to his notes of the Members' Meeting of 29 November – he believed the Minutes were not yet available.

A replacement rep for Camber was being sought and it had been reported that the *Rye Guide 2008* had been published. The Partnership AGM – for Members and Directors - would be held on 31 Jan, with a public event being held on a separate date. There is an intention to update the web site and a report was given on the project to upgrade Rye Fisheries. He had attended the Marketing and Town Management Discussion Evening on 17 January.

**(b) Marketing & Town Management Review**

The Clerk drew Members' attention to the (tabled) notes of the Discussion Evening. Unfortunately, there had been no representation from HotCats, the Chamber and RTS which meant that the conclusions drawn by those present would need to put to these organisations for further consultation. It was likely that this course of action would be ratified at the next Partnership Board meeting.

Cllr Glazier stated that he hoped the Chamber and HotCats would engage with the review – which was being undertaken for the benefit of everyone in Rye.

Cllr Kirkham – who had been present – had found the absence of the organisations cited to be somewhat embarrassing because a number of officers had traveled from Hastings and Bexhill.

Cllr Jonathan Breeds reported that the Discussion Evening had been discussed at the last Chamber meeting and that a representative was selected.

**92 URGENT ITEMS**

**(a) ETHICAL CONDUCT CONSULTATION**

**RESOLVED To accept Cllr Potter's offer to review the latest consultation paper, Consultation on Orders and Regulations Relating to the Conduct of Local Authority Members in England (deadline: 15 Feb).**  
**Cllr Potter**

**(b) COPYRIGHT REQUEST**

**RESOLVED To grant West Sussex County Record Office's request for permission to use an image of the Gibbet Cage in one of its local history publications.**  
**Clerk**

**93 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED To consider the next item whilst taking care not to disclose the identity of the applicant.**

**94 RYE RELIEF IN NEED: APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE**

Members considered a request from a local resident for financial assistance towards pursuing a course of study.

**RESOLVED Given that there was no consensus on how to deal with the application – as well as the fact that members of the public present were waiting for the next meeting – it was agreed to defer further consideration of this application until the next meeting.**

*The meeting ended at 8.04.*

Date ..... Chairman .....

## PRESENTATION BY THOMAS PEACOCKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

The presenting students highlighted the issues following:

- Students may not be familiar with bus timetables. There had been a problem recently getting to bus stops because the level crossing had been closed unexpectedly.
- They are not aware of pub/bar opening times.
- The Sports Centre facilities are unaffordable for older students. Could students be allowed two free visits a month?
- There is nowhere for younger people to gather safely.
- There is a lack of street lighting – particularly on the Tilling Green Estate.
- There is nowhere to go immediately after school hours – such as a soda bar (with music) or performing arts centre.

Cllr Souster, Chairman of the Sports Hall Management Committee advised that he would be happy to pursue the point about Centre fees.

Cllr Glazier advised that the Partnership was working with Richard Harding to maximise use of Animate.

John Izod outlined the facilities available at the Youth Club in Mermaid Street. Typically around 20 young people (up to 14 years) attended twice a week. The proposed new Scout Hut could be designed as an 'all purpose' building for youth-related activities.

Maggie Boulter advised the students had not been notified that the level crossing footway would be closed.

Cllr Palmer advised that he has suggested a climbing wall for the Sports Centre at its pre-development phase but this had been rejected in favour of an emphasis on ball games. Cllr Souster offered to explore Cllr Palmer's suggestion.

The Mayor thanked the students for their contributions, advising them that the issues raised would be considered by Councillors at future meetings.

## PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

*Petition* Keith Taylor reported that a petition calling on the National Audit Office (NAO) to investigate the affairs of the Rye Partnership, signed by 503 dissatisfied residents, had been posted that afternoon. On behalf of the signatories he was asking the Council to recognise that there was a high degree of dissatisfaction with the Partnership. If a public inquiry resulted he hoped that the Council would use the opportunity to examine the role of the Partnership and its relationship with the Town Council.

Cllr Glazier, Chairman of the Rye Partnership, advised that a public event would be held in mid-late February – at which the Partnership would present its achievements to date and answer any queries/concerns. He was still pursuing information in response to Cllr Hall's question in relation to InterReg funding and the Rye & District Bonfire Society. He had not been Chairman at the time of the project and needed the assistance of the accountable body (RDC).

Cllr Potter congratulated the petition organisers on the significant improvement – in terms of signatories – on the original petition. He suggested that the Council should note that a

petition has been sent to the NAO and consider the matter again when the response had been made known.

John Izod suggested that the petition organisers' energies could be more constructively directed elsewhere. Dr Taylor emphasised that the petition was about looking ahead – not just looking back.

**George Shackleton** apologised to Cllr Souster for incorrectly challenging Cllr Souster's assertion made at a previous meeting that he had been elected Chairman at the first meeting of the Rye Partnership.

*Land north of Udimore Road* George Shackleton suggested that RDC was not being compelled by Government to release this site and asked how the District Councillors present would be voting when the matter came up again at the full Rother Council meeting on 3 March.

Cllr Russell responded by reading from the relevant section in his report (*see Appendix B*).

Mr Shackleton suggested that the basis of the Cabinet recommendation to release the land was principally a report from a Rother Officer of a GOSE meeting at which it was suggested that 'best estimates' of future housing supply did not provide enough certainty in relation to housing targets.

It was noted that an ESCC Officer had – in an email to a local resident – suggested that Udimore Road was wide enough to accommodate two vehicles traveling in opposite directions.

The Mayor advised that the site would be discussed at the Planning & Townscape meeting following this one.

## **REPORT OF THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

Cllr Glazier began by congratulating the students on their presentation.

He would contact the ESCC Officer who had made the unsupportable remark in relation to traffic flow on Udimore Road.

*New Library* Cllr Glazier thanked the Friends of Rye Library for identifying a possible alternative site (The Monastery) but advised that the Library Service's preference continued to be the former Central Garage site. He understood that a timetable (to be confirmed) had now been agreed with the developer.

*Council Tax* The Government Settlement had been a little higher than expected. Consequently – and subject to full Council approval on 12 Feb – the increase for 2008-09 was likely to be 3.9%.

Cllr Glazier advised that legal advice had been obtained in relation to Cllr Bantick's comments about the 'Partnership petition' made at the 12 November meeting and expressed his disappointment that Cllr Bantick had declined to supply a full transcript of his prepared contribution.

## **REPORT OF THE ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

### **Cllr David Russell**

Council Russell read from his written report (*see Appendix B*).

## **Cllr Sonia Holmes**

*Planning Committee* Cllr Holmes reported that she was encouraging the Committee to visit Rye more often.

*Rye Fisheries planning application* She had suggested that the owner of Ferry Cottage invited RDC to look at the situation of his property. They had done so and agreed that the 6m 'buffer zone' should be preserved.

*Code of Conduct* Rother has a copy of a Standards Board instructional DVD which it will loan to parishes. The Clerk advised that the copy had recently been lost in the post.

*Housing benefit* Changes were about to be introduced.

## **APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR ELECT AND DEPUTY MAYOR ELECT 2008-09**

Cllr Potter advised that he had discovered a message - intended for Cllr Rogers - on his answermachine from Cllr Bantick, seeking support for the candidature of Cllr Hall for Deputy Mayor Elect. The Clerk confirmed that canvassing support for candidates contravened the Council's Standing Orders.

Cllr Bantick responded that he had not realised this and apologised for his oversight.

The Clerk suggested that if there were more than two candidates for either of the positions, the fairest voting method would be 'absolute' - rather than 'simple' majority. This was the method used for co-options.

### **Mayor Elect 2008-09**

The Mayor invited nominations.

Cllr Potter proposed - and Cllr Russell seconded - Cllr Souster.

There being no other nominations, Cllr Souster was declared duly appointed

### **Deputy Mayor Elect 2008-09**

On behalf of Cllr Hall - whose delayed travel arrangements had prevented her from attending the meeting - the Clerk asked Members if they would allow her to vote for herself in her absence (assuming she was nominated). It was agreed generally that this was not acceptable because no-one would know how she would wish to cast her vote if she was knocked out of a first round voting.

The Mayor invited nominations.

Cllr Palmer proposed - and Cllr Potter seconded - Cllr John Breeds

Cllr Bantick proposed - and Cllr Elliott seconded - Cllr Hall

Cllr Russell proposed - and Cllr Fiddimore seconded - Cllr Wright

It was agreed to vote on a show of hands - the result of which was as follows:

Cllr John Breeds	9 votes
Cllr Hall	3 votes
Cllr Wright	2 votes

Cllr John Breeds was declared duly appointed.