

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Hall, Rye, on
Tuesday 28 August 2007**

PRESENT Councillors Granville Bantick, John Breeds, Jonathan Breeds, Brian Elliott, Bernardine Fiddimore, Lorna Hall, 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; Andy Hemsley – *Rye Observer*; 3 members of the public; Andrew and Stephen Jempson

The meeting commenced at 6.31.

41 PRAYERS

Prayers were said by The Reverend Canon Hugh Moseley.

42 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllr Sonia Holmes.

43 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Cllr Bernardine Fiddimore	<i>personal</i>	item 48	On South Undercliff Allotments waiting list
Cllr Jo Kirkham	<i>personal</i>	item 51	Director of Rye Partnership
Cllr Ian Potter	<i>prejudicial</i>	adjournment	Agents of Jempsons Ltd are considering 3 legal actions against him
Cllr Sam Souster	<i>personal</i>	item 51	Director of Rye Partnership
Cllr Shaun Rogers	<i>personal</i>	item 48	Has Love Lane allotment plot
Cllr David Russell	<i>personal</i>	item 51	Director of Rye Partnership

44 MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hythe Venetian Fete The Mayor had attended this, together with the Deputy Mayor. For the first time in 40 years the Lord Warden had been present.

Cinque Ports Bowls Tournament, Sandwich Rye entered a team but did not win.

6.35 *The Mayor adjourned the meeting for a presentation by Andrew and Stephen Jempson, Public Question Time and the Reports of the County and District Councillors (Appendices A-B).*

Cllr Potter re-stated his prejudicial interest in the Jempsons' presentation insofar as it dealt with car parking and absented himself from the Chamber for the duration of that aspect of the presentation.

7.35 *The meeting reconvened.*

45 COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED To adopt the Minutes of the meetings held on 9 July 2007 (C5) and 23 July 2007 (C6).

46 COMMITTEE MINUTES

(a) Planning & Townscape

RESOLVED Adoption of the Minutes of the meetings held on 9 July 2007 (PT05), 23 July 2007 (PT06), 6 August 2007 (PT07) and 20 August 2007 (PT08).

(b) Leisure & Tourism

RESOLVED Adoption of the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2007 (LT02).

47 DRAFT ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2006-07

RESOLVED To approve and adopt :

- (a) the Draft Rye Town Council Annual Accounts 2006-07**
- (b) sections 1 and 2 (as amended at section 6 – changing the response from ‘yes’ to ‘No’) of the Annual Return 2006-07**

Cllrs Fiddimore and Rogers re-stated their personal interests in the item following.

48 RYE ALLOTMENTS

Members were advised that Hedleys Solicitors had estimated the cost of preparing a brief for Counsel, and receiving Counsel's opinion on the status and ownership of Rye's allotments at £1,350-£1,850. The Clerk advised that the Council had previously agreed a budget of £1,000 to finance this course of action.

Cllr Hall expressed concern that the Council was considering spending up to £1,850 of public money on legal advice. Addressing another of her concerns, Cllr Potter suggested that it was unlikely the Council would be able to re-claim its costs.

It was considered generally that a further approach to Rother would be unproductive and that the Council was left with no choice but to obtain Counsel if it wished to continue to pursue this matter.

RESOLVED To increase the budget to £2,000.
statutory power: Local Government Act 1972 Sch 29(9)(1)

Clerk

49 HARBOUR OF RYE

Councillors noted that, on a discretionary basis, the Environment Agency periodically invites the Town Council to put forward a nominee to sit on the Harbour of Rye Advisory Committee (HORAC). The current incumbent, Roger Breeds (HORAC Vice Chairman) was no longer a Town Councillor.

It was considered generally that it would be inappropriate to ask Roger to consider relinquishing his position.

RESOLVED To ascertain Roger's views on the situation – including exploring whether he might be prepared to continue to represent the Town Council.

Clerk

50 RYE RELIEF IN NEED APPLICATION

The Council considered an application from PCSO Ruth Brunton for £200 towards the cost of running an Alcohol Awareness Week during term-time at the Thomas Peacock Community College.

RESOLVED To contribute the £200 requested.

Secretary

51 RYE PARTNERSHIP

The Mayor invited reports from the Council's representatives.

Cllr Wright advised that, as a result of the Town Manager being absent, there was now just one member of staff in the Partnership Office. As the Town Manager appeared to be no longer working on Rye issues he suggested it would be reasonable to ask Rother DC to supply a replacement officer.

Cllr Hall observed that the Town Manager had been 'not available' for 2-3 months. She would normally have chaired Marketing Group meetings, updated the web site and co-ordinated a Taste of Rye and the 2007 Town Guide – but she was currently working at Bexhill Town Hall on regeneration. As a result, a small group of volunteers had taken on the organisation and promotion of a Taste of Rye. She suggested that the questions following could be usefully put to both the Partnership and Rother DC:

- (a) Is Yolanda Laybourne returning to her post?
- (b) If not, will Rye be getting a replacement?
- (c) Can an urgent meeting of relevant parties be arranged to discuss outstanding projects?
- (d) What plans are there for the marketing budget?
- (e) Will the money expended by Rother and the Partnership be replaced?

She concluding by asking Members to consider whether the Town Council should take on the functions associated with town management.

The Mayor recalled that originally the Town Council had narrowly accepted the introduction of a Town Manager working under the auspices of the Partnership and there had been a long-running dispute concerning Council representation on the Town Management Action Group.

Cllr Souster (who had chaired the last Marketing Group meeting) congratulated those – including Cllrs Elliott and Hall – who had stepped into organise a Taste of Rye. He was optimistic that a way could be found to start work on the next Town Guide in the very near future. The Marketing Group had previously withdrawn its own budget. He believed there were monies available and it was just a matter of the Partnership Board approving expenditure proposals.

Cllr Hall advised that she had been keeping relevant people updated on the Taste of Rye project but no funding had been forthcoming from the Partnership.

Speaking from the Gallery, Cllr Glazier advised that the Marketing Group had produced a draft budget in March but there had been an issue about the Group not accepting that it should include provision for covering a proportion of the Partnership's overheads. Firm proposals were needed from the Marketing Group. Responsibility for producing the Town Guide should be clarified within a week. Short-listed applicants for a new post of Administration Assistant would be interviewed later in the week. The results of the review of town management and marketing were imminent; however, there would need to be further consultation with key stakeholders.

Responding to a question put by Cllr Potter, Cllr Glazier advised that there was no connection between the appointment of an Admin Assistant and the absence of the Town Manager.

Cllr Glazier then responded to Cllr Hall's questions as follows:

- (a) Unknown
- (b)(c) For others to decide – the town management and marketing review is relevant
- (d) There is a budget available for properly costed and approved proposals
- (e) Rother DC is paying the salary associated with the Town Manager post. Rye is currently not benefiting from the post.

Cllr Glazier expressed disappointment that the Council's representatives had not mentioned the Partnership's plans to upgrade Rye Fisheries and the refurbishment of Animate. In relation to the latter, the Animate Board was awaiting the replacement of a new gas meter.

52 URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items to consider.

The meeting ended at 8.13.

Date Chairman