

Minutes of a Meeting of the Leisure & Tourism Committee, held at the Town Hall, Rye, on Monday 1 October 2007

PRESENT Councillors Granville Bantick, John Breeds (**Committee Vice Chairman**), Brian Elliott, Lorna Hall (**Committee Chairman**), Sonia Holmes, Paul Osborne (Mayor), Sam Souster (Deputy Mayor), David Wright

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Andy Hemsley – Rye Observer, 3 members of the public

The meeting commenced at 7.00.

31 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllr David Russell.

32 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Cllr Granville Bantick	<i>personal</i>	item 40	Member of Skatepark Management Committee
Cllr Granville Bantick	<i>personal</i>	item 46	Member of Rye & District Bonfire Society
Cllr Paul Osborne	<i>personal</i>	item 40	Member of Skatepark Management Committee

33 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of 23 July 2007 (LT02) were approved as a correct record of the proceedings.

34 MATTERS ARISING

Page 1

4 Matters Arising, 24 Destination Management resolution (1066 & RDC tourism expenditure breakdowns) Received - see main agenda item 38(d).

9 Cycle Path, Resolution 1 (arranging Members' visit of route) Actioned – see main agenda item 41.

Page 2

11 Rye Fawkes (asking for the public conveniences to be open longer) Actioned – see main agenda item 46.

21 Allotments (seeking Council approval for any necessary budget increase – Counsel's Opinion) Actioned and approved by Council (up to £2,000). See main agenda item 36.

22 Visitor & Information Management Group (Bridge repair delays) Actioned – delays due to unavailability of sub-contractors).

Page 3 Kings Avenue Open Space (asking Rother Homes to survey residents) Actioned via RDC which has been informed of local requests for play equipment by a Rother Homes Community Development Officer. Rother is considering some minor improvements to the playground over the autumn-winter. Discussions were continuing and the situation would be updated at the next meeting.

35 DE LA WARR PAVILION

The meeting was asked to consider contributing to Rother District Council's review of its Funding Agreement with the De La Warr Pavilion Charitable Trust. (*Deadline: 26 October.*)

The discussion ensuing included the points following: the Pavilion does contribute to social and cultural life but few residents in the east of the District choose to access the facility principally on the grounds of distance and the closer proximity of the White Rock; suggestions have been made that the programme is too 'highbrow and arts-oriented' and designed to attract visitors from places such as London and Brighton; Bexhill does not provide sufficient visitor accommodation to attract targeted customers (young professionals with disposable income) from outside the area; local taxpayers not using the facility expect to see Rother's subsidy reduce further; there appears to be considerable unused space within the building; more could be made of its sea frontage; it is an iconic building – in the wrong place.

RESOLVED To convey the views expressed.

Clerk

36 ALLOTMENTS

The Clerk advised that he believed he had supplied to Headley's Solicitors all the supporting documentation it required to prepare instructions for Counsel. He was hopeful of receiving an Opinion in time for the next Rye-Rother liaison meeting.

37 VISITOR AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT GROUP

Members received and considered the notes of the meeting of the Visitor and Information Management Group held on 3 September 2007.

Concern was expressed that County's Transport & Environment department was considering 'radical' proposals for Deadman's Lane – including closure and making the road one way out of town. With the completion of the new primary school scheduled for September 2008, County transport strategists had taken the view that there would be a need to get traffic visiting either the Thomas Peacock or new school at peak times away from the Grove/Love Lane as quickly as possible.

RESOLVED 1 To re-state the Council's existing preference – (one way into town – 2-way from The Grove to the Hillyfield footpath). Clerk

RESOLVED 2 To seek confirmation that there will be further consultation before a final scheme is adopted.

Clerk

38 MARKETING

(a) Rye Marketing Group

Councillor Hall's report on the last 3 meetings of the Group included reference to:

- (i) Problems of continuity and accountability in the light of the continued absence of the Town Manager
- (ii) Concern about the effectiveness of the Visit Rye web site, resulting in a meeting with Marcomm
- (iii) Cllr Hall being appointed as the Group's 1066 Country rep
- (iv) Continued delays getting planning permission at Rye TIC
- (v) Concern about the Partnership requesting a fixed fee of 15% of the cost of all projects to cover admin/overheads
- (vi) Arrangements needing to be made to ensure the Taste of Rye proceeded and that a stall was staffed at the Community Rail Festival.
- (vii) Arrangements for the *Rye Town Guide 2008* (see below)

(b) Town Guide 2008

A company had been appointed to design the publication; the administration and compilation of its content would be undertaken by the Partnership 'in-house'.

(c) 1066 Country Campaign Committee

Cllr Elliott had attended the last meeting because Cllr Hall (the Marketing Group's 1066 rep) had been unavailable.

Points arising from the meeting included: West Sussex residents being reluctant to visit East Sussex – probably because of the less-than-desirable image of Hastings/St Leonards (the Mayor suggested that poor transport infrastructure between East and West Sussex was also an important factor); concern about the lack of day visitors to the area – prompting suggestions that further research should be funded; difficulties in returning to the 1066 web site after following links off-site.

(d) Marketing Budgets

Members considered responses from Rother District Council and the 1066 Country Campaign regarding marketing expenditure for the benefit of Rye. The Rother Officer had set out both direct and indirect tourism expenditure but 1066 was unable to estimate the proportion of its expenditure attributable directly to Rye because it promoted the 'area as a whole'.

It was agreed generally that the public tended to associate the (successful) 1066 brand primarily with Hastings and Battle – and possibly Pevensey. There was a sound argument for suggesting that, for historical and social reasons, Rye has a natural affinity with the Romney Marsh area and the Kentish Cinque Ports towns just across the county border – such as New Romney, Tenterden and Lydd. There was no reason why Rye should not consider forging beneficial promotional links across the border and making a good case to 1066 Country that it should consider making a grant available to Rye to enable it to pursue such a strategy.

**RESOLVED To consider this matter further at the next meeting and raise it within the Rye Marketing Group.
Cllr Hall**

(e) Marketing Materials

Cllr Hall reported that, whilst preparing a stand for the recent Community Rail Festival, it had become apparent that the town had virtually no suitable marketing materials for use on stalls and at events.

It was agreed that all stakeholders should be involved in the design and selection of such material and that it was important that everything produced to promote that town should be 'complementary'.

**RESOLVED To refer this matter to the Rye Marketing
Group. Cllr Hall**

39 RYE TOWN INITIATIVE REVIEW

Members were invited to receive and consider the final report (July 2007) which had been funded jointly by the Town Council and the Partnership. Cllr Kirkham had kindly supplied some background information (tabled).

Cllr Souster observed that around 75% of the tasks/projects identified in the original RTI Report (1993) had been completed. Cllr Hall observed that the main weakness identified was the management and monitoring of projects. Cllr Souster added that another was that projects were not cross referenced.

It was agreed generally that the review document provided a useful summary of the status of the tasks/projects suggested in the original document and Members noted that one of the main conclusions – reviewing town management and marketing – was already in hand.

40 RYE SKATE PARK

The Clerk advised that, on the assumption that Rother District Council's two committed Community Project Grants of £5,000 each would be released in the near future, two additional items of equipment had been ordered for installation in the autumn.

41 PROPOSED CYCLE PATH

Cllr Holmes and the Clerk reported on an encouraging meeting with Chris Boocock of Sustrans on 4 September 2007. They had walked the preferred route to 'join up' the National Cycle Path Network (between the Gibbet Marsh Car Park footpath and Monkbretton Bridge). Mr Boocock considered that there were only 3 slightly problematic areas along the stretch and had agreed to provide a basic feasibility report early in the New Year. Mr Boocock was aware of – and was interested in - the suggestion that the land north of the Railway Station could be used to access the TPCC/Sports Centre/new primary school.

There had been some discussion also on possible funding sources.

42 RYE SPORTS CENTRE

Cllr Souster advised that, although there had not been a meeting of the Sports Hall Management Committee since the last L&T Committee meeting, it was considered generally that Freedom Leisure was performing well.

43 CINQUE PORTS DAY

The meeting was invited to consider a proposal by a former Speaker of the Confederation of the Cinque Ports that a Cinque Ports Day be established, possibly on 16 June.

The Mayor advised that the proposal had not met with an enthusiastic response at the meeting of the Confederation Standing Committee in May because a number of the Mayors present considered their towns were involved in sufficient promotional events already.

It was agreed generally that a more efficient use of resources would be to link with – or ‘piggy back on’ – a relevant, established local event, such as the Maritime Festival.

RESOLVED To refer the proposal to the Rye Marketing Group for further consideration.
Cllr Hall

44 EVENTS

(a) A Taste of Rye 2007

In the absence of the Town Manager, a small team of volunteers – Cllr Hall, Cllr Elliot and John Izod – had put together a programme of events (including a web page) over the course of week, sponsored by local business people and guide advertisers. Cookery demos and tastings took place at the Fish Café and Ghandi Tandoori and Kerry de Courcy managed to secure national advertising at very favourable rates.

Cllr Hall added that she had attended the Hastings Seafood Festival to promote A Taste of Rye and had been impressed by its organisation, level of participation and numbers attending (c30,000 over one weekend).

(b) The Community Rail Festival 2007

The Committee Chairman thanked Cllr Souster, Cllr Fiddimore and Rita Cox for helping her staff a stand throughout the whole day.

(c) Flower & Vegetable Show 2007

Cllr Hall advised that there had been 235 entries and one entrant had been invited to exhibit at the Kent County Show.

45 CYCLE TOUR

Cllr Hall advised that the French contingent was now unable to attend the Cycle Tour of Rye and the Marshes (21 October) organised by Rye & District Wheelers and the Rotary Club. There would be four rides – 10, 25, 50 and 100km) and it was hoped that Councillors would either take part or help with marshaling.

46 RYE BONFIRE

The meeting considered Rother DC's response (tabled) to the Council's request that all of the town's public conveniences be kept open later on Rye Fawkes night. Essentially, an Environmental Health officer locked up the Strand convenience before going off duty and Rother was reluctant to keep the other toilets open later

because of the risk of vandalism and the need to ensure that presentable facilities were available the next day for Remembrance Sunday.

It was agreed generally that, because of the large numbers of people in the town for Rye Fawkes, vandalism was less likely to occur and that the majority of those attending the (comparatively) small Remembrance Day parade/service were local people.

RESOLVED To convey these observations and request that the Environmental Health Officer on duty be asked to lock up other conveniences – at least Crownfields. Clerk

47 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Members considered the responses received (to date) from organisations contacted recently by the Chairman:

- (a) *St Anthony's Church* – funding request to support Vox Cordis concert.

RECOMMENDATION That the request be supported with a grant of up to £125.

Statutory power: LGA 1972 s145

- (b) *Rye & District Camera Club*

RESOLVED To note that there had been no response to the Clerk's request for further information on the Club's application for financial support for its Annual Photographic competition

- (c) *Friends of Tilling* Details of the Tilling Gathering 2007 had been distributed to Councillors on 21.8.07

- (d) *Rotary Club of Rye & Winchelsea* (Cycle Tour of Rye) – request for funding/assistance.

RECOMMENDATION That the Council in accordance with its powers under sections 137 and 139 of the LGA 1972, should incur the expenditure following which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interest of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure: contributing £100 towards the costs of providing road signage and securing the attendance of the St John's Ambulance Service.

- (e) *ESCC* (Wildlife Weekend 2008)

RESOLVED To invite Simon Hickmott to attend the next meeting to explore Council support/involvement.

Clerk

- (f) *Environment Agency* Had written to the Council outlining some of its projects relating to the Harbour of Rye and how its boating facilities are promoted.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.32

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