

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Leisure & Tourism Committee, held at the Town Hall, Rye, on Monday 23 July 2007**

- PRESENT** Councillors Granville Bantick, John Breeds (**Committee Vice Chairman**), Brian Elliott, Lorna Hall (**Committee Chairman**), Sonia Holmes, Paul Osborne (Mayor), David Russell, Sam Souster (Deputy Mayor), David Wright
- IN ATTENDANCE** Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Cllrs Bernardine Fiddimore, Shaun Rogers and Sylvia Willgoss; 6 members of the public

*The meeting commenced at 7.28.*

The Committee Chairman, Cllr Lorna Hall welcomed Cllr Wright to the Committee.

**17 APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

**18 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

- |                        |                 |                |  |
|------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Cllr Granville Bantick | <i>personal</i> | <b>item 24</b> | Member of Skatepark Management Committee |
| Cllr Paul Osborne      | <i>personal</i> | <b>item 24</b> | Member of Skatepark Management Committee |

**19 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of 11 June 2007 (LT01) were approved as a correct record of the proceedings.

**20 MATTERS ARISING**

*Page 2*

*4 Matters Arising, 24 Destination Management resolution (1066 & RDC tourism expenditure breakdowns) RDC information received – 1066 outstanding.*

*Page 3*

*9 Cycle Path, Resolution 1 (arranging Member's visit of route) Outstanding – awaiting response from Sustrans*

*9 Cycle Path, Resolution 3 (map of proposed route to Members) Actioned.*

*9 Cycle Path, Resolution 4 (raising cycle path maintenance at RTC-ESCC liaison meeting) Actioned. The Highways Maintenance Manager was investigating whether this fell within the remit of the County's Rights of Way department.*

11 Rye Fawkes (asking for the public conveniences to be open longer) Actioned – response awaited.

13 Rother Play Strategy (questionnaire response) Actioned.

16 Community participation (writing to local organisations to encourage information flow) Actioned – one response to date.

## 21 ALLOTMENTS

Members were asked to consider advice received from the National Association of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners and to consider whether to proceed to instruct a solicitor to seek Counsel's advice on the ownership and status of Rye's allotments. The Council had agreed previously a budget of up to £1,000.

Cllr Russell invited Members to ponder whether it was important who ran the allotments as long as this was done to a satisfactory standard. He then highlighted the options for the South Undercliff Allotments set out in the draft Rock Channel Development Brief – three of which involved some degree of development on the site.

7.38 *The Committee Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow Mary Smith, a member of the Rye Allotment Holders' Association, to address Members.*

*Ms Smith advised that, at £40pa, Rother's plot charges were higher than those levied by other authorities and allotment holder were capable of maintaining the sites themselves. The Association takes the view that Rye Town Council is the lawful owner of the two sites.*

7.40 *The meeting reconvened.*

The Clerk observed that, shortly after the last local government re-organisation, the Town Council had incorrectly given up, and the District Council had incorrectly accepted, ownership of Rye's allotments. Rother's solicitor had stated that he would review Rother's position if presented with Counsel's advice.

Cllr Hall noted that if Rother's ownership of the land was found to be lawful, and it decided to cease to provide allotments, six local government electors or tax payers could require the Town Council to provide them elsewhere.

Cllr Souster observed that the occupancy level at the South Undercliff allotments appeared to be in the region of 50%. Cllr John Breeds advised that Rother had refused recently a request from a South Undercliff resident for a plot.

It was considered generally that the Council had a good case for ownership to return to it and for the allotments to be considered statutory.

The Clerk suggested instructing the solicitors used by SALC, Headleys, to seek Counsel's advice because it had considerable experience of dealing with property law issues in relation to parish councils.

**RESOLVED To proceed to seek Counsel's advice but to revert to the Council should it become apparent that the £1000 budgeted is insufficient.**  
Clerk

## 22 VISITOR AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT GROUP

Cllr Bantick highlighted the matters following which were considered at a meeting of the Visitor and Information Management Group held on 4 July:

- *Repairs to Monkbretton Bridge* (reported by Cllr Wright to a previous Planning & Townscape Committee meeting)
- *Landgate Arch* 3 lights were inoperative
- *Local Area Transport Strategy* County was prioritising completion of the Harbour Road cycle path

Cllr Souster advised that 8 lights were not working at Gibbet Marsh Car Park. Responsibility for their maintenance was unclear. It was not unusual for an organisation to fund capital works without putting in place arrangements for maintenance and insurance.

Concern was expressed that the commencement of Phase I of the Monkbretton Bridge repairs appeared to have been delayed further. Under the revised timetable this was scheduled for 21-23 July.

**RESOLVED To pursue the reasons for the delay and seek reassurance that the work would be completed by the end of October. Clerk**

## 23 RYE MARKETING GROUP

The Group had not met since the last meeting; the next was scheduled for 25 July.

## 24 RYE SKATE PARK

The Clerk advised that he was again having difficulty making contact with the Rye Youth Development Manager, Richard Harding to establish whether a group of Skate Park users had been successful in bidding for £5,000 from the County's Youth Opportunities Capital Fund on 17 July.

The Clerk had addressed some concerns raised by Rother in relation to the two £5,000 Community Project Grants it had agreed for the project. Upon receiving confirmation that this funding would be released, his discussion with Richard Harding, and negotiations with the main contractor, the Clerk would commission either Phase II of the project or both of the Phases outstanding (II and III).

## 25 PROPOSED CYCLE PATH

Responses to a request for guidance had been received from Rother District Council and East Sussex County Council (distributed); however, a reply from Sustrans' Regional Manager was outstanding. **Clerk**

## 26 RYE SPORTS CENTRE

Cllr Souster advised that there had been no meeting of the Sports Hall Management Committee since the last meeting.

## 27 KINGS AVENUE PLAY AREA

The Committee Chairman had visited recently the Kings Avenue open space. She had formed the view that it was well-maintained but noted that it contained no play

equipment. Cllr John Breeds advised that there had been garages and play equipment on the site but they were removed because of chronic vandalism.

With her Rye in Bloom hat on, Cllr Hall had been discussing planting on the site – and the installation of play equipment – with a member of Rother’s Parks and Gardens department. In relation to play equipment he had advised that Rother would need to assess the demographics of the area before deciding whether new equipment would receive sufficient usage. This information could be obtained by tapping into a survey to be undertaken by Rother Homes later in the year.

It was agreed generally that it was important to ascertain the views of residents before initiating any improvements on the site. Cllr Wright suggested that any features/facilities installed on the site would need to be ‘self-policed’ and that this could best be achieved by engendering community involvement.

**RESOLVED To ask Rother Homes to survey all residents in King’s Avenue and not just its tenants.** **Clerk**

**28 TOURISM AWARDS**

Cllr Hall advised that she had managed to alert the Chamber of Commerce and HotCats to the Tourism South-East (TSE) annual Tourism Excellence Awards before the deadline of 20 July. A number of local businesses had entered.

It was agreed generally that any initiative which might attract more visitors to the town in an increasingly competitive environment should be welcomed.

**29 MARITIME FESTIVAL**

The Committee Chairman advised that this year’s Maritime Festival (18-19 August) would have an extensive programme of events. The Clerk reported that the Festival organisers had thanked the Council for its £250 grant towards its running costs.

Cllr Souster reported – and the Mayor confirmed – that Rother had still not notified the organisers whether their (usual) request to use the Strand Car Park had been approved.

**30 CYCLING CLUB VISIT**

Cllr Hall reported that the Rotary Club and Rye Wheelers were organising a cycling weekend in Rye 20-21 October. A range of rides would be run – from 10k to 100k @£5 per entry. A cycling club from Ardres (France) would be invited to participate as part of a reciprocal arrangement. An application for financial assistance might be made to the Council – as well as a request for a Mayoral Reception at the Town Hall on the evening of the 20<sup>th</sup> (subject to availability – Clerk to check). **Clerk**

*The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.31*

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