

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning & Townscape Committee  
held at the Town Hall, Rye on Monday 16 February 2009**

**PRESENT** Councillors John Breeds (Deputy Mayor), Jonathan Breeds, Jo Kirkham, Paul Osborne (**Committee Vice Chairman**), Frank Palmer (**Committee Chairman**), Shaun Rogers, Sam Souster (Mayor)

**IN ATTENDANCE** Richard Farhall – Town Clerk; 2 members of the public

*The meeting commenced at 6.30.*

**130 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllrs Bernardine Fiddimore, Mary Smith and David Wright

**131 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures at this stage.

*The Committee Chairman adjourned the meeting for public questions.*

6.32 *Cllr Potter arrived.*

Pat Field had attended a demonstration at the Town Hall, the previous week by Hawk Force which flies birds of prey in order to prevent seagulls and pigeons from settling and nesting. She suggested it could be a valuable service for Rye. Cllr Palmer advised that it was his understanding that the organiser, Sara Nixon, would shortly be distributing a funding proposal.

*The meeting reconvened.*

6.38 *Cllr Rogers arrived.*

6.39 *Cllr Jonathan Breeds arrived.*

The declarations of interest following were made at this point:

Cllr John Breeds	<i>prejudicial</i> RR/2009/141/L RR/2009/142/P RR/2009/44/A	Shareholder in a similar business
Cllr Jonathan Breeds	<i>prejudicial</i> RR/2009/141/L RR/2009/142/P RR/2009/44/A	Shareholder in a similar business
Cllr Ian Potter	<i>prejudicial</i> RR/2009/141/L RR/2009/142/P RR/2009/44/A	Shareholder in a similar business

**132 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED To move Ian Potter from 'PRESENT' to 'IN ATTENDANCE'.**

The Minutes of the Planning and Townscape meeting of 20 January 2009 (PT20) – as amended - were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**133 MATTERS ARISING**

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*128 Adjournment The items following were outstanding:*

- (a)** uneven 're-cobbled' area at the NE corner of the churchyard
- (b)** removal of the prop from the Indian Bean tree in the churchyard

**134 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**RESOLVED That the comments following be submitted to the Planning Authority:**

*Cllrs John Breeds, Jonathan Breeds and Potter re-stated their prejudicial interest in the three applications following and left the Chamber.*

**RR/2009/141/L** Hope Anchor Hotel, Watchbell Street, Rye  
Enclosing of rear yard to form staff changing/locker room and toilets.  
*Applicant: CMD Hotels & Catering, Hope Anchor Hotel, Watchbell Street, Rye*  
SUPPORT APPROVAL

**RR/2009/142/P** Hope Anchor Hotel, Watchbell Street, Rye  
Enclosing of rear yard to form staff changing/locker room and toilets.  
*Applicant: CMD Hotels & Catering, Hope Anchor Hotel, Watchbell Street, Rye*  
SUPPORT APPROVAL

**RR/2009/44/A** 24 High Street, White Vine House, Rye  
Retrospective  
Replacement of external signage.  
*Applicant: Mr Khan, White Vine House, 24 High Street, Rye*  
SUPPORT REFUSAL The sign is detrimental to the appearance of the building and Rye Conservation Area, being too large to be accommodated satisfactorily (RN9A, RN9B).

*Cllrs John Breeds, Jonathan Breeds and Potter returned to the Chamber.*

**RR/2009/178/P** 32 Kings Avenue, Rye  
Erection of first floor extension raised over part of existing ground floor extension to form integral granny

annexe facility. Replace rear conservatory with a family/dining room.

*Applicant: Mrs J Paine, 32 Kings Avenue, Rye*  
SUPPORT APPROVAL

**135 E-Consultation Planning Demonstration**

*(29 January, Town Hall, Bexhill)*

This had been attended by Cllr Wright and the Clerk. At some point in the near future all planning applications would be submitted online. Issues for parish/town councils included:

- Not all Members have internet access
- Broadband speeds tend to be lower in rural areas (and planning applications files tend to be large)
- It is difficult to view (and compare) plans on 15-17" screens
- To view plans at meetings it may be necessary to acquire a lap top, projector and screen

The Planning Authority is considering the implications for parishes. An entirely electronic system would reduce its costs and these savings could, perhaps, be passed to parish councils to help them 'adjust' to the new system.

**RESOLVED To monitor developments.**

**136 Public seating: Gibbet Marsh**

In response to representations made by a member of the public, Cllr Souster invited the Committee to review the Council's decision not to pursue the reinstatement of the two benches removed some years ago by the Safer Rother Partnership from the footpath opposite The Windmill.

Cllr Souster had formed the impression that the weight of public opinion had been against the removal of the benches for reasons which included:

- The two benches had been conveniently-sited and well-used during the day time
- The replacement bench (further along the riverbank) was inaccessible to some because of the undulating, unmade access

The matter could be reviewed because more than 6 months had passed since the Council identified an alternative site adjacent to the footpath and no bench had yet been installed.

The footpath, installed by the Rye Partnership around 1998, had been purposely widened opposite the Windmill (and adjacent to the railway gate) to accommodate two benches. The benches had been removed (without consultation with the Town Council) at a later date by the Safer Rother Partnership, following unsuccessful attempts by the police to deter night-time anti-social behaviour in their vicinity.

As an accommodation provider, Cllr Souster sympathised with similar businesses whose guests were being disturbed by noise late at night; however, moving benches simply moves the problem elsewhere, rather than addressing it directly.

The Clerk advised that the Council had budgeted for a further seat, to be installed adjacent to the footpath at a 'mid-point', but that he had still not got a price for a plaque, nor had he asked The Safer Rother Partnership for a contribution. Following a meeting with the Parks Officer, the 'mid-point' had moved closer to the car park where there was more level access.

The discussion that followed included the points following: most people appeared to have preferred the original location of the benches; members of the public had expressed concern that the benches had been removed by an 'unknown body'; the owners of The Windmill were not present to make their views known; the original locations of the benches had provided an unrestricted view of the river.

The Clerk advised that membership of the Safer Rother Partnership included ESCC, RDC, Fire & Rescue and the PCT. The former Rye Town Manager had been a member of its Property & Crime sub group which had made the decision to remove the benches.

**RECOMMENDATION That the Council presses for the reinstatement of the two benches.**

*Note: Councillor Souster abstained from voting on this Recommendation.*

The Clerk would ask the member of the public who had made representations to summarise her concerns. **Clerk**

*The meeting ended at 7.16.*

Date.....

Chairman.....