

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy, Resources & General Purposes
Committee, held at the Town Hall, Rye,
on Monday 10 December 2007**

- PRESENT** Councillors Granville Bantick, John Breeds, Jonathan Breeds, Brian Elliott (**Committee Vice Chairman**), Bernardine Fiddimore, Sonia Holmes (**Committee Chairman**), Jo Kirkham, Paul Osborne (Mayor), Frank Palmer, David Russell, Sam Souster (Deputy Mayor), David Wright
- IN ATTENDANCE** Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Cllrs Lorna Hall and Shaun Rogers; Andy Hemsley – *Rye Observer*; 1 member of the public
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The meeting commenced at 7.05.

51 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllr Ian Potter.

52 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Cllr Sam Souster	<i>personal</i>	item 62	RALC representative on Rother's Standards Committee. If RTC is not a member of SALC it cannot maintain RALC membership.
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The Clerk asked for his interests in item 62 to be noted: he is RALC's Clerk, one of its representatives on SALC's East Sussex Executive Committee and is also a Director of Action in Rural Sussex which employs SALC's Director and provides SALC with office accommodation under a Service Level Agreement.

53 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of 29 October 2007 (PR03) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

54 MATTERS ARISING

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95a) Community Centre signage (contributing up to £125 towards a B&G 'finger') Supplier details have been passed to the Community Association.

45 Banners across High Street (renewing planning permission) Not yet actioned – need to identify secure/safe fixings and willing property owners. (May be possible to utilise new Christmas lighting brackets.)

60 Rye Cemetery (asking RDC to adopt Hastings BC memorial stones testing model) Not yet actioned.

20.2b) Heritage Centre: VAT (letter of understanding) Not yet actioned.

83 Town Hall Cottage (negotiating suitable tenancy agreement with The George) A draft Agreement had been sent to Alex and Katie Clarke for comments.

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5.4 Earmarked Reserves, Resolved 2 (confirming requirement for detached youth work reserve) Outstanding.

29a) Community Engagement: generally, Resolution (exploring regular Council column in Observer and greater involvement with TPCC). Rye Observer: OK as long as not 'boring council waffle' and does not repeat the reporter's pieces; TPCC: See main agenda – presentation and item 55.

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40.2b) Heritage Centre Annual Accounts 2006-7 (payment of Occupancy Fee) Considered by Council, 26.11.07.

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42 Work Programme (involving RDC CEO in obtaining outstanding Skate Park funding) RDC's Director of Resources – the Council's allocated 'buddy' – had been asked to investigate.

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46 Business card (exploring producing small quantities in-house) Designed – awaiting delivery of card.

48 Local Action Plan (asking Steering Group Members if they would consider taking on the role of Co-ordinator) Outstanding.

49 Past Mayors' Badges (ordering from Peter Farrow) Work to commence Jan 08.

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50b) Grant Applications – St Anthony of Padua Church (seeking additional information) Actioned – response awaited.

At this point the meeting was to have been adjourned for a presentation by Thomas Peacocke Community College students on the needs of young people in Rye; however, no students – nor escorts – were present.

RESOLVED To hold over the presentation until the next meeting.
Clerk

55 PRESENTATION

There had been no presentation to consider.

56 FINANCE

56.1 Town Hall

a) Schedules of Authorised Payments and Statements of Income

RESOLVED That the Schedule of Authorised Payments and Statements of Income for October 2007 be received and adopted.

b) Petty Cash

RESOLVED That the Petty Cash Account Statement for October 2007 be received and adopted.

c) Budget Monitor

RESOLVED That the Statement of actual income and expenditure to 31 October 2007 against that budgeted, be received and noted.

56.2 Heritage Centre

a) RTS Trading Reports

The Clerk advised that the Report for October 2007 was outstanding.

RESOLVED To ask RTS for its October Report.

Clerk

56.3 Account Balances

RESOLVED That the Statement of Account Balances as at 31 October 2007 be received and noted.

56.4 Earmarked Reserves

RESOLVED That the Statement of Earmarked Reserves as at 31 October 2007 be received and noted.

57 TOWN CLERK ACTIVITY SUMMARY

RESOLVED To receive and note the Clerk's Summary for October 2007.

58 WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED To receive and note the Work Programme as at 4 December 2007.

59 DEVOLVED SERVICES

RESOLVED To note that Rother District Council has been asked to prepare a draft Brief for the proposed consultancy work to ascertain the income and expenditure associated with the services it provides/delivers in Rye.

60 STREET TRADING

RESOLVED To note that Rother District Council has achieved successful prosecutions for illegal street trading in Rye resulting in fines in excess of £6,000 and to agree to proceed to arrange a meeting with Rother to agree a strategy for 2008.

Clerk

61 QUALITY STATUS REVIEW

RESOLVED To submit the responses following to the National Association of Local Councils questionnaire seeking feedback on proposed changes to the Quality Parish & Town Council's Scheme: Q1 – (c); Q2 – (b); Q3 – Yes; Q4 – Yes; Q5 – Yes; Q6 – Yes; Q7 – Yes;

62 COUNTY ASSOCIATION

The Committee was asked to consider whether to renew the Council's membership of the Sussex Association of Local Councils and National Association of Local Councils (and, by implication, the Rother Association of Local Councils) in 2008-09

Members noted that the SALC subscription formula for 2008-09 would be 22p per elector (up 1p) and that last year SALC had introduced a more equitable subscription rate based on the number of electors within each Parish. This resulted in Rye's total (SALC and National Association of Local Councils) membership renewal fee rising by 62% to £830.18. However, following representations this was reduced to £649.80 for one year only. The combined SALC/NALC invoice (not yet issued) for 2008-09 would be **£867.15**

The discussion ensuing included the comments following: NALC has a good working relationship with – and is invited to join – relevant Government advisory bodies; SALC can be invaluable in 'crisis situations' – eg when a council finds itself without a clerk; membership can be viewed as a form of insurance.

RESOLVED To renew membership of SALC/NALC in 2008-09 and to make provision within next year's Budget. Clerk

63 DOGS

a) Stray

Cllr Fiddimore invited members to consider how Rother District Council deals with stray dogs outside normal office hours and, if appropriate, to agree a course of action.

She explained that dogs stray for all manner of reasons. RDC took over responsibility for dealing with strays from the Police 10-11 years ago.

A recent incident had highlighted a problem with the current scheme: an older couple had taken in a dog found in Military Road late in the afternoon. RDC's Environmental Health department had advised that it could not send an officer because s/he would arrive after normal working hours. Rye Police Station was about to close. The couple contacted Cinque Ports Surgery and Cllr Fiddimore managed to persuade the Environmental Health department to send an officer. The current system does not recognise the fact that dogs often go missing at week-ends.

RDC had recently invited kennels to tender to accommodate stray dogs. There had been little interest the specification which, according to a solicitor, was unworkable. The future of the current contract was uncertain.

RESOLVED To ascertain the status of Rother's stray dogs contract and its future plans. Clerk

b) Fouling

RESOLVED To support Rother District Council's proposed Dog Control Order: Removal of Dog Faeces – subject to it being enforced, once adopted. Clerk

64 CODE OF CONDUCT: PARA 12(2)

Members were invited to consider whether to amend the Council's Standing Orders in line with the National Association of Council's Legal Briefing *Public Participation Sessions at Parish Council Meetings and Paragraph 12(2) of the Revised Model Code of Conduct* (L11-07).

The Clerk explained that the Council had delayed amending its Standing Orders in order to make full use of para 12(2) – which allows Members with a prejudicial interest to speak/answer questions – until firm guidance had been published by SALC/NALC.

The proposed amendments to the NALC Model Standing Orders (largely adopted by RTC in the past) appeared reasonable. Members considered whether the contributions from Members with a prejudicial interest wishing to speak and members of the public should be restricted in length. It was agreed generally that this should be left to the discretion of the Chairman.

RECOMMENDATION That the Council's Standing Orders be amended to incorporate the revised Orders recommended by NALC. Clerk

65 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Cllr Wright invited Members to consider amending the format of the Annual Town Meeting with a view to improving the attendance of electors and members of the public.

He suggested that recent ATMs had tended to be rather sterile and that attendance might improve if they were made less formal – eg with Councillors interspersed amongst the public, discussion groups and refreshments - and more 'interactive'. He had spoken with the Clerks of Sedlescombe, Camber and Battle. The first two invited organisations to set up stands at their Annual Parish Meetings and sought views on topical issues. The format of Battle's ATMs was similar to Rye's but attendance was better – probably because of greater publicity (posters, flyers etc).

8.06 Cllr Jonathan Breeds left

RESOLVED To establish a working group – comprising Cllrs Bantick, Fiddimore, Russell, Souster, Wright and the Clerk – to meet early in the New Year to consider – and recommend - a format for the 2008 ATM Clerk

66 SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS

The meeting was invited to put forward infrastructure improvements for the Council's planning gain 'wish list'. A Community Centre for Tilling Green and a 'Park and Ride' facility were suggested.

67 REPRODUCTION PERMISSION

The Committee considered a request from Nathan Publishing (France) for permission to reproduce a photograph of the Rye Gibbet Cage within a publication for younger people (print run: 5,000).

RESOLVED To invite the publisher to contribute an 'appropriate sum'. Clerk

68 PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION

Noting that in 2006-07 it had given a grant of £2,000 to Rye Rugby FC, Members were invited to consider a request for a donation from the Sussex County Playing Fields Association.

RESOLVED 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 £200 to the Sussex Playing Fields Association.

69 RYE LOCAL ACTION TEAM

Members were asked to consider providing £100pa towards costs associated with providing administrative and secretarial support to the Rye Local Action Team. Although John Izod had offered to take the Minutes of LAT meetings he was not in a position to type them up.

RESOLVED That the Council makes available up to £100pa towards administrative and secretarial costs associated with running the Rye Local Action Team.
Clerk

The meeting ended at 8.26

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