

Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy, Resources & General Purposes Committee, held at the Town Hall, Rye, on Monday 14 January 2008

- PRESENT** Councillors Granville Bantick, John Breeds, Bernardine Fiddimore, Sonia Holmes (**Committee Chairman**), Jo Kirkham, Paul Osborne (Mayor), Frank Palmer, Ian Potter, David Russell, Sam Souster (Deputy Mayor), David Wright
- IN ATTENDANCE** Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Andy Hemsley – *Rye Observer*; 2 members of the public
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The meeting commenced at 6.31

70 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllrs Jonathan Breeds and Brian Elliott (**Committee Vice Chairman**).

71 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Cllr Sam Souster *prejudicial* **item 74.2** Partner a RTS Director

6.33 *Cllr Fiddimore arrived*

72 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of 10 December 2007 (PR04) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

73 MATTERS ARISING

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95a) Community Centre signage (contributing up to £125 towards a B&G 'finger') Supplier details had 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 new Agreement had been drawn up.

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

55 Thomas Peacocke Community College student presentation Re-arranged for Council, 21.1.08.

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56.2a) *Heritage Centre Trading Reports (chasing October's)* Actioned – outstanding Reports to be table at the meeting.

60 *Street Trading (arranging review meeting)* See main agenda item – **78**.

61 *Quality Status Review (submitting comments)* Actioned.

62 *County Association (making provision for the increased subscription within the draft 2008-09 Budget)* Actioned – see main agenda item **74.5**.

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63a) *Stray dogs (ascertaining status of contract)* Actioned – see main agenda item **79**.

63b) *Fouling (submitting comments)* Actioned.

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64 *Code of Conduct (amending Standing Orders)* Outstanding.

65 *Annual Town Meeting: format* See main agenda item **80**.

67 *Reproduction permission (inviting publisher to contribute appropriate sum)* Actioned - no response.

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68 *Playing Fields Association (grant of £200)* Cheque raised 14.1.08.

74 FINANCE

74.1 Town Hall

a) Schedules of Authorised Payments and Statements of Income

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

b) Petty Cash

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

c) Budget Monitor

RESOLVED That the Statement of actual income and expenditure to 30 November 2007 against that budgeted, be received and noted.

Cllr Souster restated his prejudicial interest in the item following and left the Chamber.

74.2 Heritage Centre

a) RTS Trading Reports

Members were invited to consider Heritage Centre Trading Reports for October 2007 and November 2007 – which had been received after the meeting's papers had been distributed.

The Clerk advised that, encouragingly, the Centre's 'running surplus' as at the end of October 2007 was up £8,721 compared with October 2006. In respect of the November comparison the running surplus was up by £9,496.

RESOLVED To remind RTS that the Council expects Trading Reports to be provided no more than 6 weeks following the month to which they relate. Clerk

b) Improvements

RESOLVED To receive and note details of the improvement works being carried out recently.

c) Water Ingress

The Clerk – and Mayor – advised that, despite numerous attempts to solve the problem, during specific weather conditions rainwater continues to enter the premises close to the point at which the new extension abuts the main building. Water collects in a tray in an area over which the old entrance was located and overflows. Sealing suspected areas of water ingress and re-lining and re-cladding the front elevation had proved unsuccessful. The Mayor doubted that a surveyor would be able to identify the problem.

RESOLVED To accept the Mayor's offer to discuss the matter with the contractor currently on site with a view to exploring the practicalities of diverting any accumulated rainwater out of the building. Mayor

Cllr Souster returned to the Chamber.

74.3 Account Balances

RESOLVED That the Statement of Account Balances as at 30 November 2007 be received and noted.

74.4 Earmarked Reserves

RESOLVED 1 That the balance in the Heritage Centre Office Equipment Reserve be vired to the General Reserve.

RESOLVED That the Statement of Earmarked Reserves as at 30 November 2007 – as amended – be received and noted..

74.5 Draft Budget 2008-09

The Clerk talked Members through the Draft Budget, explaining that the most significant new provision was a sum towards the engagement of a suitable individual to take forward the production of a Local Action Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION 1 That the cost of the renewal of the Council's wedding/ceremonies licence be budgeted over 3 years.
Clerk**

RECOMMENDATION 2 That the Draft Budget 2008-09 be approved.

Cllr Potter asked for it to be minuted that he considered an increase of 4.9% for a Band D Rye tax payer was unacceptable.

75 TOWN CLERK ACTIVITY SUMMARY

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

76 WORK PROGRAMME

**RESOLVED 1 To ask the Clerk to include 'target completion/review' dates for all action items shown within future Work Programme Summaries.
Clerk**

The Clerk advised that he would be chasing the Emergency Planning Officer for a meeting shortly.

RESOLVED 2 That the summary of key tasks/projects as at 6 January 2008 be received and noted.

77 DEVOLVED SERVICES

The Clerk advised that – despite reminders - the Council was still waiting for a draft specification for the joint consultancy work proposed from Rother's Head of Finance.

**RESOLVED To ask Rye's District Councillors to pursue the matter.
Clerk, Cllrs Holmes & Russell**

78 STREET TRADING

The Clerk reported that the District Council was currently considering a confidential matter which, it was believed, had significant implications for the enforcement of street trading regulations in Rye.

79 STRAY DOGS

Cllr Fiddimore advised that she had obtained a summary of the specification for Rother's Stray Dogs contract. It indicates that the Police have been responsible for stray dogs outside normal office hours for the last 7 years (changing April 2008); however, there is little evidence to suggest they have been aware of this.

The new contract is stringent and may be awarded jointly by Rother and Hastings BC. The main problem would appear to be funding – Rother is seeking Police monies.

The Clerk had been informed by the Head of Environmental Health that Rother had received four expressions of interest in the contract.

Cllr Fiddimore reported that, over the Christmas-New Year period, Iden Kennels received many reports from the public of lost/found dogs. Ringing Rother out of hours is of no use – there is not even a recorded message.

RESOLVED To write to Rother highlighting the problems people with 'found dogs' have and suggesting that out-of-hours callers should have the benefit of a recorded message explaining what they should do.
Clerk

80 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

RESOLVED To note that the Working Group's first meeting would follow this meeting.

81 DRAFT SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

Members were invited to consider whether to send a representative to the Rother District Local Strategic Partnership Consultation on the Draft Integrated Sustainable Community Strategy for East Sussex to be held at Cooden Beach Hotel, Bexhill on 30 January, 9am-1.30pm.

RESOLVED To note that Cllr Holmes would be attending.

82 ST ANTHONY PADUA CHURCH

The meeting was asked to re-consider the Leisure & Tourism Committee Recommendation that the Council contributes £125 towards the cost of St Anthony's organising a Vox Cordis concert, noting the additional information provided that the concert has been postponed to (provisionally) the Spring and that the Church does not wish to levy an attendance charge because it wishes to gauge the level of interest in sacred music.

Cllr Potter observed that St Mary's sometimes makes a charge for concerts and these are generally well-attended.

RESOLVED To take no further action.

83 JOHN FLETCHER

Members noted that the National Portrait Gallery was attempting to raise £218,000 to acquire the only known portrait of the playwright, John Fletcher and that a fundraising draw had been held by the owners of his birthplace, Fletchers House.

Cllr Souster advised that he had agendered the item because he had only recently become aware of the appeal and considered that Council should lend its support in some way.

Cllr Palmer advised that the Fletcher's original birthplace was pulled down in 1701.

Cllr Potter reported that Fletchers House draw had raised c£2,600.

The meeting ended at 7.50.

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