

Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy, Resources & General Purposes Committee, held at the Town Hall, Rye, on Monday 18 August 2008

- PRESENT** Councillors Granville Bantick, John Breeds (Deputy Mayor), Jonathan Breeds, Bernardine Fiddimore, Lorna Hall, Sonia Holmes, Jo Kirkham, Paul Osborne (**Committee Vice Chairman**), Ian Potter (**Committee Chairman**), David Russell, Shaun Rogers, Sam Souster (Mayor)
- IN ATTENDANCE** Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Cllrs Brian Elliott and Mary Smith; County Cllr Keith Glazier; Andy Hemsley – *Rye Observer*; 5 members of the public; Roy Apps and Alison Prentice (Rye College Parent Council)
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The meeting commenced at 6.50.

19 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllr David Wright.

20 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

- | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Cllr Sam Souster | <i>prejudicial</i> | item 24.2a) | Partner a RTS Director |
| Cllr Granville Bantick | <i>personal</i> | item 29 | Member of Skate Park Management Committee |
| Cllr Lorna Hall | <i>prejudicial</i> | item 33b) | Applicant |
| Cllr Sonia Holmes | <i>personal</i> | items 27 & 30 | RDC Member |
| Cllr Paul Osborne | <i>personal</i> | item 29 | Chair of Skate Park Management Committee |
| | <i>personal</i> | items 27 & 30 | RDC Member |
| Cllr Ian Potter | <i>personal</i> | item 29 | Member of Skate Park Management Committee |
| Cllr David Russell | <i>personal</i> | items 27 & 30 | RDC Member |

21 MINUTES

With the exception of page 6 (missing), the Minutes of the meeting of 9 June 2008 (PR01) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

It was noted that page 6 would need to be approved at the next meeting. **Clerk**

22 MATTERS ARISING

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5.1c) Resolution 2 (balance of LAP revenue budget 2007-08 to Earmarked Reserves) Actoned

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5.1c) *Resolution 3 (re-stating preference for use of Town Manager funding)* Actioned

5.1d) *Resolution 4 (placing Cllr Souster's request to consider the condition of the ceremonial hats on the next agenda)* Actioned.

5.2b) *Resolved 2 Further financial information – including the draft HC Profit & Loss Statement – had been distributed at the Council meeting held on 21 July.*

5.5 *Banking Resolution (Transferring day-to-day banking to Co-op)* Receipt of authorised signatories information not yet complete.

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5.6 *Internal Auditor Resolution (reappointing Internal Auditor)* Actioned – Paula Fisher has accepted for one further year only.

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10 *Stray dogs Resolution (seeking record keeping reassurance and pressing for more local kenneling)* Communicated via Animal Wardens web site and followed up with a letter 12.8.08

12 *Parish/Town Council grants (ascertaining anticipated source of match funding for applications from Bexhill community organisations)* RDC Head of Finance had been emailed. His reply had been distributed.

13 *Skate Park Recommendation (contributing up to an additional £1100 to complete the project and resurface main equipment)* Only £401 necessary – approved by Council on 21 July.

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17 *Ceremonies 2 Recommendation (introducing Sunday and Public Holiday wedding attendance enhancements)* Actioned.

6.53 *The Committee Chairman adjourned the meeting for a presentation by Roy Apps and Alison Prentice of the new Rye College Parent Council.*

They explained that the Government was keen to see the setting up of Parent Councils and it was believed the Rye College body would be the first fully constituted Council in East Sussex. It was mainly consultative/advisory and had a particular interest in attracting greater resources to the College, its art specialism and procedures and systems.

Parents are enthusiastic and the purpose of the presentation was to highlight the body to the Town Council.

The Parent Council works with the Parent Governors – one is a member of both the Parent Council and the Board of Governors – and the Assistant Principal, Maureen Coleman attends meetings.

The Parent Council shared concerns about the condition of the building – which it had discussed with the Board of Governors and Senior Management Team - and had been pleased to note (and had participated in) some remedial work undertaken over the summer break.

The Committee Chairman thanked the Parent Council representatives for their presentation.

7.02 *The meeting reconvened.*

23 RYE COLLEGE PARENT COUNCIL

RESOLVED To note the presentation.

24 FINANCE

24.1 Town Hall

a) Schedules of Authorised Payments and Statements of Income

RESOLVED That the Schedule of Authorised Payments and Statements of Income for May 2008 to July 2008 be received and adopted.

b) Petty Cash

RESOLVED That the Petty Cash Account Statement as at 31 July 2008 be received and adopted.

c) Budget Monitor

RESOLVED 1 That the Statement of actual income and expenditure to 31 July 2008 against that budgeted, be received and noted.

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

24.2 Heritage Centre

a) RTS Trading Reports

Responding to queries raised by Cllr Rogers the Clerk explained that:

- In accordance with the Agreement, RTS charges a fee of £500 a month for managing the Centre.
- Some members of staff are provided by Rye Lodge.

RESOLVED To receive the monthly Trading Reports for May 2008 and June 2008.

Cllr Souster returned to the Chamber.

b) Working Group

RESOLVED That the Members following be appointed to the Working Group to consider the future of the Heritage Centre following receipt of Rye Town Services' (12 month) Notice to terminate the RTC-RTS Agreement: Cllrs Bantick, Holmes, Potter, Rogers and Souster. Clerk

Cllr Fiddimore offered to attend meetings should her previous retailing experience be considered useful.

Members of the working group agreed to hold their first meeting on 8 September at 7pm.

24.3 Account Balances

RESOLVED That the Statement of Account Balances as at 31 July 2008 be received and noted.

24.4 Earmarked Reserves

RESOLVED That the Statement of Earmarked Reserves as at 31 July 2008 be received and noted.

25 TOWN CLERK ACTIVITY SUMMARY

RESOLVED To receive and note the Clerk's Activity Summaries for May 2008-July 2008.

26 WORK PROGRAMME

The update of key tasks/projects as at 11 August had been omitted inadvertently from the meeting's papers and would be distributed with the next Council mailing.

Clerk

27 DEVOLVED SERVICES

The Clerk advised that the (recently received) interim report of the (jointly-funded) income and expenditure analysis of services provided by Rother District Council in Rye had been considered at that afternoon's Town Council-Rother Liaison meeting.

The report would be considered by the Town Council's Devolved Services Working Group with a view to recommending to the Town Council the services to be considered in greater detail for possible devolvement.

Devolved Services Working Group

28 STREET TRADING

The Clerk advised that, following the sale of three of the four ice cream tricycles – as well as the owner submitting to an injunction designed to deter him from street trading unlawfully – there was currently no longer a problem with trading on Consent Streets, or around the Heritage Centre (which RDC now considers to be covered by virtue of the fact that it lies at the junction on two Consent Streets).

At that morning's RDC-RTS Liaison meeting the Head of Environmental Health had conceded that the Street Trading Order would benefit from modification (to prevent traders circumventing it by trading a metre or so from a Consent Street) but, given the considerable resources devoted to the matter over the last 2 years, had suggested reviewing this option in 12 months' time.

29 SKATE PARK

The Clerk confirmed that the project was now complete and that he had passed to RDC's Director of Resources a written request that the two outstanding Community Project Grants of £5,000 each be released, as promised.

Rother would be asked to attend to the trees in close proximity to the site, mainly to expose the equipment to more sunlight. This would dry out the ply surfacing more quickly and extend its life. Cllr Jonathan Breeds observed that wet leaves presented users of the facility with difficulties.

30 TOWN MARKETING

Members were invited to consider Rother Cabinet's decision to make £15,000 of the monies allocated to the Rye Town Manager post available for marketing the town for one year, subject to the Town Council contributing £5,000 to support partnership working.

It was considered generally that the current state of marketing in Rye – responsibilities, roles, accountability and reporting mechanisms remained unclear. It was noted that the Town Council had expressed a preference for the Rye town management monies to be used to employ a town co-ordinator under the umbrella of RTC – but this had not found favour amongst key stakeholder organisations. Concern was expressed that the £15,000 could be lost.

Cllr Hall highlighted the need to put in place arrangements to ensure that some form of Rye guide was produced in time for next year's season. Festivals need to be co-ordinated. She had reluctantly taken on the organisation of A Taste of Rye this year – but there was also the Scallop Festival to take into account.

Cllrs Bantick and Smith (speaking from the Public Gallery) suggested that it would be inappropriate for RDC to channel the £15k via the Partnership when the NAO audit had not been undertaken – with Cllr Smith adding that the funding should properly be passed to an elected body.

The Clerk stated that, following the review of marketing (and town management) the Rye Marketing Group had recommended (and the Partnership Board had accepted) the recommendation that marketing in Rye be delivered by Rye Town Services in conjunction with 1066 Country. Cllr Russell confirmed this – adding that RTS's decision to terminate the RTS-RTC Heritage Centre Agreement had complicated matters.

Speaking from the Gallery, the Chairman of the Rye Partnership, Cllr Glazier stated that the company had no burning desire to retain a role in marketing.

It was noted that the (now) £9k given annually by RDC for the *Rye Guide* was protected and that any contribution to marketing made by RTC would be drawn on its General Reserve.

RESOLVED To seek further clarification of the issues involved and refer the request to Council (12 September). Clerk

31 LOCAL ACTION PLAN

Members considered the Clerk's Briefing Note which explained the lack of progress in producing a Rye Plan.

Cllr Osborne, Lead Cabinet Member for the emerging Rother LDF, confirmed that LAPs will help inform its development and observed that some Rother parishes had had LAPS for many years - and even smaller parishes (like Playden) now had a plan.

Although Rye's original AiRS support worker remained on long term sick leave, Barbara Beaton had stepped in.

Cllr Fiddimore reported that she had attended the last Winchelsea Town Meeting and had been impressed by the apparent ease with which a clear and well-constructed action plan had been produced.

RESOLVED 1 To adopt the Clerk's suggested course of action – namely:

- **Aim for a 'fast track' Plan – utilise any relevant existing consultation reports (eg Market Town Healthcheck) and the Awareness Day data**
- **Keep the Steering Group small (2 Town Councillors and 4 community members)**
- **Publicise the position of Co-ordinator in *Fixtures* and via RVA, AiRS, Rother Clerks etc. and invite interested individuals to discuss the role with the Clerk and then submit a costed proposal**

- Review the funding available with a view to engaging a suitable individual to undertake the necessary work on a fixed sum basis.
- The Steering Group should 'guide and assist' (rather than direct) the Co-ordinator - who would be accountable to the Town Council (as the main funder) and would report to the Town Clerk
Note Timescale consideration: £2,000 worth of the project would need to be completed by 31.3.09.

RESOLVED 2 That RTC's two Council Steering Group representatives shall by Cllrs Fiddimore and Osborne. Clerk

32 ROBES & REGALIA

A number of Members expressed concern about the condition of the Council's ceremonial hats – especially the tricorns.

RESOLVED To obtain (local and national) quotes for recovering/refurbishment and to consider the matter again. Clerk

33 GRANTS

(a) Rye Arts Festival

The Committee considered a request from the Rye Arts Festival for £500 towards the cost of running the 2008 Festival which could not be covered by ticket sales.

RESOLVED To contribute £250. Clerk

Cllr Hall re-stated her prejudicial interest in the item following. Before leaving the Chamber – and in accordance with Standing Orders – she stated that:

- The Taste of Rye 2008 schedule of events had been distributed to Members the previous week
- The £200 requested would be used to fund the launch of a new monthly (Saturday) produce market, under the auspices of the Rye Farmers' Market Committee.
- The bank balance between the 2007 and 2008 Festivals did not tie up because the account was used for the intervening Scallop Festival.

(b) A Taste of Rye 2008

RESOLVED To contribute £200 towards a Taste of Rye 2008. Clerk

Cllr Hall returned to the Chamber.

34 ART LOSS

RESOLVED To register (FOC) the Council's oil paintings with the Art Loss Register. Clerk

The meeting ended at 8.06

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