

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy, Resources & General Purposes
Committee, held at the Town Hall, Rye, on
Tuesday 26 January 2010**

PRESENT Councillors John Breeds (Deputy Mayor), Lorna Hall, Sonia Holmes, Jo Kirkham, Paul Osborne (**Committee Vice Chairman**), Frank Palmer, Ian Potter (**Committee Chairman**), David Russell, Sam Souster (Mayor), Shaun Rogers, David Wright

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Peter Cosstick – Heritage Centre Manager

The meeting commenced at 6.30

44 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence – and the reason (lodged with the Clerk) - were accepted from Cllr Granville Bantick.

45 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Cllr Lorna Hall	<i>prejudicial</i>	item 54	adjacent landowner
Cllr Sonia Holmes	<i>personal</i>	item 54	RDC Member
Cllr Paul Osborne	<i>personal</i>	items 51 & 54	RDC Member
Cllr David Russell	<i>personal</i>	items 51 & 54	RDC Member

46 MINUTES

RESOLVED To adopt the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2009 (PR03) as an accurate record of the proceedings.

47 MATTERS ARISING

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31 Matters Arising: 21 General Election (establishing if Churches Together is intending to hold a Q&A session involving candidates) Confirmed.

31 Matters Arising: 22 Mayor Making (discussing a 'park and ride' scheme with RDCT) Chased 19.1.10

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32.5 Nat West (Heritage Centre) Bank Mandate (amending authorised signatories) In hand.

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34 Work Programme: Strand Car Park pedestrianisation proposal (preparing a costing) Outstanding.

35 Devolved Services See main agenda item – 51.

38 Telephone kiosk: Udimore Road (adoption) Actioned - confirmation awaited.

39 Sustainable Communities Act Amendment Bill Update; EDM 143 (the Sustainable Communities Act Amendment Bill) had now been introduced into Parliament. RTC had written to the Secretary of State asking him to ensure the Bill is given sufficient time so that it becomes law prior to the next General Election.

48 FINANCE

48.1 Town Hall

a) Schedules of Authorised Payments and Statements of Income

RESOLVED That the Schedule of Authorised Payments and Statements of Income for September-December 2009 be received and adopted.

b) Budget Monitor

RESOLVED That the Statement of actual income and expenditure to 31 December 2009 against that budgeted, be received and noted.

48.2 Heritage Centre

a) Progress report

The Heritage Centre Manager, Peter Cosstick (PC) spoke to his summary (distributed previously) – adding that the large Heritage Centre roundel and Town Model signs at the front of the building were in urgent need to repainting (estimated cost: £2,000) and the condensation in the (failed) double glazing on the ground floor needs to be addressed. Cllr Osborne suggested exploring whether the glass could be removed and re-sealed.

Cllr Russell questioned whether the doubling of the stockholding (to £60,000 retail price) was desirable. PC observed that the stock holding had been very low just prior to his appointment and that it was now all 'saleable'. Aside from introducing a few new ranges, going into the new financial year the Centre was well-paced to trade without having to make significant purchases of stock.

In connection with the forecast Year 1 trading profit of c£13,000, the Clerk observed that this included a contractor 'buy in' of £3,000 and that PC had not drawn down the £6,000 budgeted management charge.

b) Payments and income

RESOLVED To receive and adopt an Income by Customer Report 1 April 2009-31 December 2009 and Supplier Balances Report 31 October 2008-20 January 2010.

c) Petty cash

RESOLVED To receive and note the petty cash reconciliation as at 31 December 2009.

d) Budget Monitor

RESOLVED To receive and note the actual income and expenditure to 31 December 2009.

48.3 Account Balances

RESOLVED That the Statement of Account Balances as at 31 December 2009 be received and noted.

48.4 Earmarked Reserves

Cllr Kirkham advised that the scouts were continuing to fundraise for a new hut.

RESOLVED That the Statement of Account Balances as at 31 December 2009 be received and noted.

48.5 Draft Budget 2010-11

Heritage Centre Peter Cosstick (PC) advised that the forecast retail sales for 2009-10 had been unrealistic. Since losing the TIC contract in early August, the Centre had generated £5,218 (budget: £500) from 'walk-in' accommodation bookings. From the 1 February the Nat West would be levying bank charges.

RECOMMENDATION That the Draft Town Hall and Heritage Centre Budgets for 2010-11 be adopted and the precept for the coming year be set at £84,487.

49 TOWN CLERK ACTIVITY SUMMARY

RESOLVED To receive and note the Clerk's Activity Summaries for September-December 2009.

50 WORK PROGRAMME

Annual Town Meeting The Clerk advised that the arrangements – including booking Rye College, microphones and Landgate WI – were in place and it was unlikely that another meeting of Members would be required.

RTC-RDC Liaison meetings It was agreed that these should be reinstated at the earliest opportunity.

Clerk

51 DEVOLVED SERVICES

RESOLVED To note that RTC was still waiting for further financial information from RDC in relation to car parks and public conveniences and to ask Rye's District Councillors to help obtain a response.

Cllrs Holmes & Russell

52 LOCAL ACTION PLAN

The Clerk advised that he had needed to postpone a meeting of the Steering Group (Jan) – and the planned Stakeholders Meeting/official launch (Feb).

53 QUALITY COUNCIL STATUS

Members noted that the Council's accreditation expires 14 September 2010 and, with reference to the Clerk's Briefing Note, proceeded to consider whether the Council should seek re-accreditation.

The Clerk advised that, in connection with a Sussex-wide Local Area Agreement Quality Council performance target, RTC was in line to receive £700 by 31.3.10 and a further £700 during 2010-11.

The Mayor observed that RTC would currently have difficulty meeting satisfying the new democracy and citizenship accreditation standard. He had spoken previously with the Principal of Rye College about ways of introducing students to local and central government but there had been limited progress. He was happy to play a role in this.

'Speed dating' with Councillors might prove to be popular.

Cllr Osborne stated that there had been a significant degree of consultation with younger people during the preparation of the Rye Local Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION That a working group be formed to prepare for re-accreditation.

Cllr Hall re-stated her prejudicial interest in the item following and left the meeting.

Cllr Holmes re-stated her personal interest.

54 RYE CEMETERY

Members considered a request from Rother District Council for assistance in identifying additional land for use as a cemetery.

The discussion ensuing included the comments following: why could RDC not re-use the older part of the Cemetery?; RDC's current charges offered exclusive interment rights for 50 years only; a former owner of Rolvendene Farm was buried close to the boundary of the Cemetery; the current owners of Rolvendene Farm do not wish to make land available to facilitate the extension of the Cemetery; at £1800, RDC's charges are high in comparison with Iden - £200 (£400 if the deceased had not resided within the parish).

RESOLVED To ask RDC if the older area of the Cemetery where just one tombstone remains could be re-used. Clerk

Cllr Hall returned to the Chamber.

55 'DUNGENESS C'

The Committee was asked to consider whether RTC should make representations on the Government's decision not to select a site at Dungeness for a new nuclear power station.

The Clerk advised that he had placed the item on the agenda because he was aware that a number of Councillors had expressed concern about the loss of employment in the area.

Cllr Osborne advised that the Head of Planning and made representations to the appropriate Minister. The principal local authorities affected had decided to act jointly in order to object to the (surprise) decision not to proceed with the expected 'Dungeness C'. The Dungeness power stations provided wages amounting to £30m pa for a travel-to-work area with a radius of 25 miles.

Cllr Souster advised that, if given the green light, Dungeness C would have created 2000 temporary jobs during construction 600 post-commissioning posts. The decision to exclude it from the 11 sites selected for a new generation of nuclear power stations was taken because of concerns about the threat to the local eco-system from coastal erosion and flooding. He added that (somewhat surprisingly)

Defend Our Coasts were opposed to the decision and observed that the (Conservative) MP for Folkestone & Hythe, Michael Foster – and his likely successor - were both campaigning against it.

Cllr Palmer advised that a number of rare species were present at Dungeness and Cllr Russell noted that the construction of the next generation of reactors was well behind schedule. Cllr Kirkham noted that all nuclear power stations are on the coastline.

RESOLVED (unanimous) To make representations to the appropriate Minister. Clerk

56 COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIP

The meeting considered a request from the Community Rail Partnership (via Cllr Bantick) that it be permitted 5 meetings a year at Rye Town Hall free of charge.

The Clerk advised that, in addition to the 12 annual free lets 'in the gift of the Mayor', organisations were not charged if the Council was instrumental in their formation – eg Rye in Bloom, Rye Merchant Seamen's Fund, Rye LAT, REACT – and the Town Clerk would be present at the meeting/event (thereby obviating the need to pay the Town Hall Keeper to open/close the building).

There was general agreement that acceding to the request would set an undesirable precedent.

RESOLVED To advise the Community Rail Partnership to approach the Mayor for a free let as and when needed. Clerk

The meeting ended at 7.50.

Date Chairman