

Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy, Resources & General Purposes Committee, held at the Town Hall, Rye, on Tuesday 31 August 2010

- PRESENT** Councillors John Breeds (Mayor), Bernardine Fiddimore, Lorna Hall (Deputy Mayor), Sonia Holmes, Jo Kirkham, Paul Osborne (**Committee Vice Chairman**), Frank Palmer, Ian Potter (**Committee Chairman**), Shaun Rogers, David Russell, Sam Souster
- IN ATTENDANCE** Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Cllr Mary Smith; Peter Cosstick – Heritage Centre Manager; 5 members of the public

The meeting commenced at 7.16

16 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence – and the reasons (lodged with the Clerk) - were accepted from Cllrs Granville Bantick and David Wright.

17 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

*The Committee Chairman adjourned the meeting for a presentation by a representative of Rye Rugby Football Club on its recent development and plans. (See **Appendix**.)*

18 FREDA GARDHAM PLAYING FIELD

Members generally commended the Rugby Club on its development and activities over the last 5 years.

RESOLVED To note that:

- (a) the rent (currently £500pa) payable by Rye Rugby FC to the Town Council was due for a 5-yearly review on 1 January 2010;
- (b) the Lease between both parties stipulates that, upon review, the rent payable shall be the 'market rent' (or not less than the current rent);
- (c) the Valuation Office has valued the current market rent for the field at £1,850pa

RECOMMENDATION That, in recognition of the valuable work being undertaken by the Club – particularly in relation to the development of Rye's younger residents - the rental increase applicable for the next 5 years from 1 January 2010 be restricted to £100 (making the total annual rent payable £600).

19 MINUTES

RESOLVED To adopt the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2010 (PR01) as an accurate record of the proceedings.

20 MATTERS ARISING

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4 Matters Arising, Rye Cemetery, Resolution (asking Amber Rudd MP if she would consider pursuing a suitable amendment to the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1997 to permit the re-use of grave space) Actioned – response awaited.

5.3 *Renewal of Bank Mandate - Heritage Centre (pursuing RTC's unwillingness to adopt Nat West's Model Bank Mandate)* A complaint had been lodged and is being investigated.

5.6 *Internal Controls (Members assisting with internal controls)* Not yet introduced.

8 *Photography Permission* Janet Pollard had agreed to make a donation to a local charity in return for photographing the Town Hall attic.

21 FINANCE

21.1 Town Hall

a) Schedules of Authorised Payments and Statements of Income

RESOLVED That the Schedule of Authorised Payments and Statements of Income for June-July 2010 be received and adopted.

b) Budget Monitor

The Clerk reminded Members that the first installment of this year's precept had been paid by RDC in the previous financial year.

RESOLVED That the Statement of actual income and expenditure to 31 July 2010 against that budgeted, be received and noted.

21.2 Heritage Centre

a) Progress report

The Heritage Centre Manager, Peter Cosstick reported that all revenue streams were performing well and (as at 31.8.10):

- retail sales had achieved 60% of the annual target (+17.5% on previous period)
- Town Model receipts had reached 70% of the annual target (+29%)
- Audio tours had reached 34% of this year's target (down 12%)
- Accommodation booking commission stood at 87% of target and Old Pier Amusements revenue was 65% of target
- The salary bill was down £2,200 – despite the opening hours being extended

Oliver Campion's new audio tour download was now being supplied by Rye TIC.

The Town Model's (original) processor had been damaged during a recent storm. A repair was made under the service contract within 36 hours; however, it is becoming increasingly difficult to source parts. A permanent solution was being explored.

There had been no noticeable decrease in visitor numbers to the Centre.

b) **Payments and income**

RESOLVED To receive and adopt Income by Customer Reports 1 June 2010-31 July 2010 and Supplier Balances Reports 1 June 2010-31 July 2010.

c) **Budget Monitor**

RESOLVED To receive and note the actual income and expenditure against budget to 31 July 2010.

21.3 Account Balances

RESOLVED That the Statement of Account Balances as at 31 July 2010 be received and noted.

21.4 Earmarked Reserves

RESOLVED That the Statement of Earmarked Reserves as at 31 July 2010 be received and noted.

22 TOWN CLERK ACTIVITY SUMMARY

RESOLVED To receive and note the Clerk's Activity Summaries for June and July 2010.

23 WORK PROGRAMME

Referring to the proposed completion of the National Cycle Path between Tillingham Sluice and Monkbretton Bridge, Cllr Smith reported that she had been advised by a civil engineer that it would be possible to avoid having to encroach on the allotments. Cllr Osborne responded that RDC was of the initial opinion that it may be necessary to widen a pinch point on the footpath concerned by approximately 10' and that it might be necessary to utilise a very small parcel of allotment land.

RESOLVED To receive and note the Work Programme as at 24 August 2010.

24 GRANT APPLICATIONS:

(a) Rye Cricket Club

Request for £1,000 towards the construction of a practice net.

RECOMMENDATION That the Council contributes £750.

statutory power: Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s19

(b) Rye Community Centre Association

Application for £1,070.23 to cover the cost or repairs and improvements to the Centre's emergency lighting system.

RECOMMENDATION That the Council contributes £750.

statutory power: Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s19

(c) REACT

Members noted that: REACT is organising a public meeting to provide reassurance in relation to flooding fears at Tilling Green on 29 September at Rye Community Centre.

The Clerk advised that members of REACT had, thus far, largely covered their own expenses.

RESOLVED To ring fence up to £150 to cover the group's costs including copying flyers for the public meeting and (if necessary) the cost of hiring the hall.

statutory power: Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, s77 [power of wellbeing]

**25 DEVOLVED SERVICES
LOCAL ACTION PLAN**

RESOLVED To note that further progress in both these areas will accelerate once the Council's Quality Council re-accreditation application has been submitted.

26 TOWN SERGEANT VACANCY

The Clerk advised that two completed application forms had been received by the deadline and that both candidates would be interviewed by the HR Working Group on 1 September.

27 QUALITY COUNCIL STATUS: PREPARATION

The Clerk advised that progress was being made; however, various actions in relation to the College could not be taken forward until the new academic year had commenced.

28 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 (1)(2) to exclude the public and press from agenda item 29 on the grounds that it contains information about the terms and conditions of current staff.

29 HUMAN RESOURCE ISSUES

The Committee was invited to consider adopting the HR Working Group's recommendations in relation to terms and conditions of employment issues relevant to Quality Council Re-accreditation and the June 2010 Budget.

RECOMMENDATION 1 That, in order to retain or recruit a suitably qualified/experienced Clerk, the Council should be prepared to consider enhancing the terms and conditions associated with the post of Clerk without feeling obliged to apply the same enhancement to other Council posts.

RECOMMENDATION 2 That, with effect from 1 October 2010, the Council's standard full-time working week be decreased from 37.5 hours to 37 hours – for all posts.

RECOMMENDATION 3 That, with effect from 1 October 2010, the maximum sick pay associated with the *Clerk post only* be raised from 3 months' full pay and 3 months' half pay to 6 months' full pay and 6 months' half pay.

RECOMMENDATION 4 That, with effect from 1 October 2010, the pay of those Council posts linked to the NJC National Pay Spine be based on the current year's spine (rather than the previous year).

RECOMMENDATION 5 That, with effect from 1 October 2010, the mileage rate for all staff travelling by motor vehicle shall be in accordance with the NJC National Agreement on Pay & Conditions - ie the relevant current Casual User rate.

RECOMMENDATION 6 That an appropriate system of formal staff appraisal be introduced.

RECOMMENDATION 7 That the Council's preferred means by which the Clerk is compensated for working additional hours be 'time off in lieu'.

RECOMMENDATION 8 That the Council proceeds to issue the Clerk with a letter, with a copy of the NALC/SLCC Model Contract of Employment, highlighting those areas that replace his current terms and conditions of employment – and seeks written confirmation from the post holder that these changes are acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION 9 That the Council proceeds to issue other relevant members of staff with a letter, highlighting those areas that replace their current terms and conditions of employment – and seeks written confirmation from the post holders that these changes are acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION 10 That, the HR Working Group be tasked with considering whether the Council should supplement national (NJC) pay awards, as they are announced.

RESOLVED To re/appoint Members to the HR Working Group at the first meeting of the Committee following Committee Formation.

The meeting ended at 8.08.

Date Chairman

PR02 31 August 2010

RYE RUGBY CLUB PRESENTATION

The presentation by the Team Manager, Tony Pierce (TP) included the following:

- The Club had relied on grants to maintain – and develop – its activity levels
- The players comprising the two senior sides lived in/near the town
- Mini and youth membership (subsidised) peaked at 100, settling at c60
- The clubhouse was bought for £35,000 from Eastbourne Yacht Club. It is licensed and generates useful revenue
- The facilities are used by Rye College, Rye Primary School, the Police, Rye Cricket Club (third team) and ARRCC (FOC - for Rye Goes Rock – which has made a loss two years' running). The Cricket Club has aspirations for a fourth team
- The Cricket Club is not charged because it is providing youth facilities
- The Club is negotiating with ESCC concerning the use of the Freda Gardham 'Middle Field' for training purposes. The Field has been unused for 4 years
- The Club needs a new first team strip and has to cover the cost of an increasing number of training courses for working with younger people
- All work/activities are undertaken on a voluntary basis
- Last month the Club had £2,000 cash in the bank but received a bill for £4,000. The Club would struggle to afford the new market rent suggested by the Valuation Office and was still paying for the Clubhouse
- The Club occupies younger people who might otherwise 'go off the rails'
- Following the arson attack on the Cricket Pavilion the Rugby Club had offered the Cricket Club the use of its own facilities.

The Clerk confirmed that the recent valuation excluded the clubhouse and advised that, despite what was stipulated in the Underlease, the Council could decide to levy a smaller rental increase. However, in case of a challenge on the part of a local taxpayer or auditor, the Council would need to be able to justify not charging the market rent.

Cllr Russell suggested that the Club should, perhaps, consider charging for the use of its facilities. Cllr Souster highlighted the Club's valuable contribution towards the development of younger people.

Cllr Kirkham suggested it would be helpful to have an annual update on the Club's development.

John Izod added that the Club incurred travel costs for away matches.