

Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy, Resources & General Purposes Committee, held at the Town Hall, Rye, on Monday 8 November 2010

PRESENT Councillors John Breeds (Mayor), Jonathan Breeds, 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; Cllrs Sonia Holmes and Mary Smith; Peter Cosstick – Heritage Centre Manager; 8 members of the public

The meeting commenced at 7.09.

30 APOLOGIES

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

31 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Cllr Sonia Holmes	<i>personal</i>	items 37	RDC Member
Cllr Ian Potter	<i>personal</i>	items 38(b)	Father is a member of the Sussex County FA

The Committee Chairman adjourned the meeting for a presentation by Anthony Kimber on REACT's progress since the public meeting on flood risk at Tilling Green.

32 MINUTES

RESOLVED To adopt the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 August 2010 (PR02) as an accurate record of the proceedings.

33 MATTERS ARISING

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18 Freda Gardham Playing Field, Recommendation (restricting the Rugby Club's rent rise for the next 5 years to £100) At its meeting held on 25 October 2010 the Council resolved that there would be no increase.

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.

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5.3 Renewal of Bank Mandate - Heritage Centre (pursuing RTC's unwillingness to adopt Nat West's Model Bank Mandate) The bank had provided an unsatisfactory response to RTC's complaint about it being required to sign a model mandate authorising Members to administer the account electronically. It was understood that the Government had undertaken to make suitable provision within upcoming legislation in order to make electronic banking available to parish councils.

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

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24a) Grant application: Rye Cricket Club, Recommendation (£1,000 towards practice net) Actioned.

24b) Grant application: Rye Community Centre Association, Recommendation (£750 towards emergency lighting) Actioned.

Pages 4-5 (Confidential)

Recommendations 1-10 Actioned.

34 FINANCE

34.1 Town Hall

a) Schedules of Authorised Payments and Statements of Income

RESOLVED That the Schedule of Authorised Payments and Statements of Income for August-September 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 30 September 2010 against that budgeted, be received and noted.

34.2 Heritage Centre

a) Progress report

The Heritage Centre Manager, Peter Cosstick (PC) advised that sales were on track with some revenue streams exceeding targets.

- Guided Ghost Walks had already passed the £500 target
- The Centre had taken accommodation bookings that had generated £33,000 for providers
- A 'rival' ghost tour had appeared on 1 October. Unlike the rival tour, the HC tour was restricted to 12 people and included places that could not normally be access by the public at night – such as the Ypres Tower
- (Probably) As a result of competition from Oliver Campion the HC's Audio Tours will not reach their target
- Total salary costs remain lower than 2009-10. A member of staff had left recently and the post would be frozen until March
- The HC web site was in need of a refresh and full content management would be helpful
- Revenue streams combined were up 11.5%
- Retail sales had achieved 76 of their target (15% growth)
- The Town Model had achieved 76% of its target within 7 months
- PC had discussed the possibility of walks at Rye Harbour Nature Reserve
- The sale of books and maps had fallen – presumably because these are sold by the TIC

It was agreed generally that, given the competition from Rye TIC/Tourism SE, the HC had performed well. PC considered that visitors were more likely to call into the HC because the use of the 'i' symbol had been retained externally.

Responding to a question from Cllr Russell, PC advised the HC did not receive regular updates of vacancies from accommodation providers. Providers were encouraged to ring the HC on Fridays with this information and this largely seemed to work.

PC acknowledged that Oliver Campion's downloadable audio was a convenient method of delivery – and observed that it also had the advantage of being promoted by the TIC. Cllr Rogers suggested exploring adding downloaded audio tours to the new HC web site.

b) Payments and income

RESOLVED To receive and adopt Income by Customer Reports 1 July 2010-30 September 2010 and Supplier Balances Reports 1 July 2010-30 September 2010.

c) Budget Monitor

RESOLVED To receive and note the actual income and expenditure against budget – and previous year comparison – to 30 September 2010.

34.3 Account Balances

RESOLVED That the Statement of Account Balances as at 30 September 2010 be received and noted.

34.4 Earmarked Reserves

RESOLVED That the Statement of Earmarked Reserves as at 30 September 2010 be received and noted.

35 TOWN CLERK ACTIVITY SUMMARY

RESOLVED To receive and note the Clerk's Activity Summaries for August and September 2010.

36 WORK PROGRAMME

Allotments The Clerk was aware that preparations were underway to launch a community petition, calling on RDC to return Rye's two remaining allotment sites to RTC.

RESOLVED To receive and note the Work Programme as at 1 November 2010.

37 RYE ENVIRONMENT BEQUEST

Members were advised that Rother District Council was minded to transfer the balance of this fund (£7,485.62 – after the deduction of the agreed contribution towards the replacement Station Approach bus shelters) if the Town Council was able to indicate its likely application/s.

RESOLVED To advised RDC that RTC envisaged that the balance would be used to support 'actions' identified within the Rye Local Action Plan 2009-14.
Clerk

38 GRANT APPLICATIONS

Members noted that: the balance in the Grants revenue budget 2010-11 was £9,350 and the Council was expecting to receive the annual application for £5,000 as its match contribution towards the Rye Marketing Group.

Members proceeded to consider, and recommend, the Council's response to the applications following:

(a) 1st Rye Scout Group

An additional £5,000 towards the provision of a new Rye Scout Building (*note: £3,000 was previously ring fenced for this project*).

It was noted that the applicant intended to encourage other groups to share the use of the proposed new facility.

RECOMMENDATION To allocate a further £5,000.
statutory power: Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s19

Cllr Potter re-stated his personal interest in the application following:

(b) Rye United FC

£2,000 towards the provision of hard standing and a walkway from the club house to meet FA/DDA requirements.

It was noted that, like the previous application, the applicant had already secured funding from the Rother Community Projects Grant Fund, subject to RTC agreeing to contribute to the project. The Committee Chairman observed that the Club had a long-standing desire to secure its own premises elsewhere.

RESOLVED To defer further consideration, pending the receipt of confirmation from:

(a) RDC of the length of time it is prepared to ring fence its grant allocation;

(b) Rye Cricket Club that it is happy with the route of the path.

Clerk

(c) Rye & District Chamber of Commerce

£1,000 towards the 2010 Christmas Lights and Festival.

RECOMMENDATION To contribute £1,000.
statutory powers: LGA 1972, s144 & s145

**39 DEVOLVED SERVICES
LOCAL ACTION PLAN**

The Clerk advised that Battle Town Council's discussions with RDC concerning devolved services had hit a stumbling block because RDC was prepared only to lease its car parks to BTC; would expect to receive an annual payment equivalent to the surplus the car parks would otherwise have generated for it – and would require BTC

to increase parking charges by 5%pa. The net result of such an arrangement would be that BTC would find itself acting effectively as an unpopular managing agent.

The Mayor observed that the issue of car park revenue had been raised at one of the Rye LDF Core Strategy Working Group meetings. Cllr Rogers spoke in favour of Rother being broken down into 3 area committees – with each area retaining surpluses generated locally.

Cllr Holmes advised that, as part of its preparation for inevitable Central Government grant support reductions, RDC was undertaking a review of its services – and it was likely that devolved services would be back on the agenda.

RESOLVED To note that further progress in both these areas (devolved services and LAP) would accelerate once the Council's Quality Council re-accreditation application had been submitted.

40 QUALITY COUNCIL STATUS: PREPARATION

The Clerk advised that he was working towards submitting the application on the evening of the Members' Update training at the Town Hall (29 November). Cllrs Fiddimore, Hall, Holmes and Rogers confirmed they would be attending. The Committee Chairman was unable to attend.

41 TRANSPORT CONSULTATIONS

The meeting was invited to consider appointing Members to draft responses to the following (*deadline 4.1.11*):

- (a) Draft East Sussex Local Transport Plan 2011-2026
- (b) Draft Freight Strategy
- (c) Draft Community Transport Strategy

Cllr Potter offered to review (a). The Clerk would email a link.

Clerk, Cllr Potter

Cllr Fiddimore would review (b).

Cllr Fiddimore

RESOLVED To ask RDCT to share its response to (c). Clerk

42 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED Not to exclude the public and press from agenda item 43 on the grounds that the Recommendation was likely to be adopted without discussion.

43 TOWN HALL KEEPER: COVER ARRANGEMENTS

RECOMMENDATION That all the while the Town Clerk is not receiving payment to provide cover for the Town Hall Keeper outside his normal days of working, he be permitted to claim travel expenses at the agreed prevailing rate – and that this policy should apply from 16 August 2010.

The meeting ended at 8.00.

Date Chairman

PR03 8 November 2010

REACT PRESENTATION

The presentation by the REACT Chairman, Anthony Kimber (AK) included the following:

- Part 1 of the Rye Emergency Plan was on the RTC web site
- REACT had recently met with the Environment Agency and Southern Water to devise an action plan in relation to Tilling Green drainage/sewerage. All parties – including the Internal Drainage Board – were being extremely co-operative
- REACT was surveying ditches and recruiting volunteer flood wardens
- There is an issue concerning ownership and maintenance of the water channel that runs under the Old Brickyard and Udimore Road, 'emerging' in Ashenden Avenue. AK was hoping that Southern Water would clear it as a goodwill gesture.
- REACT would be supporting the EA's Exercise Watermark in early March 2010.
- AK offered to provide RTC with a further progress report in 1-2 months.