

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy, Resources & General Purposes  
Committee, held at the Town Hall, Rye, on  
Monday 5 December 2011**

- PRESENT** Councillors Lord Amphill, Granville Bantick, John Breeds (Mayor), Mike Eve (**Committee Vice-Chairman**), Bernardine Fiddimore, Nigel Jennings, Jo Kirkham, Ian Potter (**Committee Chairman**), Shaun Rogers (Deputy Mayor), Sam Souster
- IN ATTENDANCE** Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Peter Cosstick – HC Manager *[part]*; 6 members of the public – including Ian Bowden *[part]* and Val Smith *[part]*

*The meeting commenced at 6.30pm.*

**46 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence – and the reasons (lodged with the Clerk) - were accepted from Cllrs Jonathan Breeds, Sonia Holmes and Mary Smith.

**47 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

- |                 |                 |                |   |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---|
| Cllr Mike Eve   | <i>personal</i> | <b>item 53</b> | Fletcher in Rye CIC Director  |
| Cllr Jo Kirkham | <i>personal</i> | <b>item 48</b> | Chairman of RVA (employs the Community Friends Development Officer)       |
| Cllr Ian Potter | <i>personal</i> | <b>item 48</b> | A property in which he has an interest is a potential Jazz Festival venue |
|                 | <i>personal</i> | <b>item 55</b> | Opposed to London hosting the Olympics on financial grounds               |

*The Committee Chairman adjourned the meeting for two presentations (See **Appendix**).*

*The Committee Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

**48 PRESENTATIONS**

Members considered the preceding presentations.

**a) Rye Community Friends**

**RESOLVED** To seek a volunteer for the proposed steering group at the next Council meeting.

**b) Rye International Jazz Festival**

**RESOLVED 1** To enthusiastically receive the presentation, wish the project well – and to look forward to considering an application for funding.

**RESOLVED 2** To ask Ian Bowden to provide a financial forecast with his intended application for grant funding. Clerk

**RESOLVED 3 To invite Ian Bowden to attend the Council meeting at which his funding application is considered.** Clerk

With the Committee's consent, the Chairman brought forward consideration of **51.2a**).

**51.2 Heritage Centre**

**a) Progress report**

The report of the Heritage Centre Manager, Peter Cosstick (PC) included reference to:

*November* It had been a good month (receipts up 29%) – probably because of the clement weather and increased number of ghost tours run.

*Salaries* The cost is as per budget – the pay increase agreed prior earlier in the year had raised the wage bill by £638 (to November).

*Accommodation* Over the past 6 months the HC had taken bookings worth £26,500.

*Opening hours* For 3 weeks in January the HC would open Fri-Sun only.

**49 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED To adopt the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2011 (PR03) as an accurate record of the proceedings.**

**50 MATTERS ARISING**

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*Matters Arising - 24 Allotments: Management (Recommendation to consider an invitation from RDC) Council consideration pending the RAA presenting its recent findings regarding the status of the Rye sites to RDC – and RDC responding.*

*Matters Arising - 21.5 Amended Bank Mandates Outstanding.*

*35.2a) Heritage Centre (PC providing summary of VisitRye concerns) Actioned – these were progressively being resolved with Neil Cunliffe.*

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*35.4 Earmarked Reserves (Deleting 'Rye Partnership' form the Marketing reserve description) Actioned.*

*38 Adverse Weather Response, Resolved 1 (Purchase of 4 lockable grit bins) Actioned.*

*38 Adverse Weather Response, Resolved 3 (Publicising RTC's winter maintenance preparations) Actioned.*

*39 ICT Policy Issued to staff.*

*41 Review of Polling Stations/Places (Supporting the cessation of the use of Ferry Road Medical Centre in favour of TG Community Centre) Actioned.*



and to add  
David Whitney Erskine Russell  
Shaun Robert Rogers  
Ian Edward James Potter  
Adam James William Smith  
Mary Jean Smith

**52 WORK PROGRAMME**

(In relation to devolved services) Cllr Amphill reported that Battle Town Council had just signed a 99-year lease with RDC in respect of the Watch Oak allotments.

Cllr Souster observed that there were no Rye or Battle ward Members on RDC's Devolved Services Working Group. A skills audit form had been issued to all RDC Members recently and he hoped that, in future, the membership of working groups would be based on skills/experience rather than political affiliation.

**RESOLVED To receive and note the Work Programme as at  
28 November 2011.**

**53 FORMER FE CENTRE/LIBRARY SITE**

Cllr Eve, a Director of the Fletcher CIC, advised that the purchase of the site had been delayed for 6-10 weeks whilst the Attorney General has confirmed its status (lawful use). He advised that St Marys and the Fletcher Group had sufficient funds to complete the purchase.

The CIC had re-designed the proposed theatre in order to reduce the capital cost from £1.3m to £850,000 and was fortunate to have acquired the involvement of the CEO of the Empire Cinema group.

**54 ADVERSE WEATHER RESPONSE**

It was noted that arrangements were now in place – with only the distribution of snow clearing equipment to a number of volunteers being outstanding.

*Cllr Potter re-stated his personal interest in the item following.*

**55 OLYMPIC TORCH ROUTE**

The Clerk advised that he and Cllr Foster had attended a briefing – which had been attended by Rye College, Rye Primary and surrounding schools - organised by RDC.

The Torch Relay would be staying overnight in Hastings on 17 July and was likely to reach the Rye parish boundary at around 8.20am the next morning. The route Through Rye was unknown but, for logistical reasons, was likely to be along the A259.

RDC was responsible for liaising with the London Olympics Committee Organising Group – including marshalling and ensuring there were safe viewing areas.

The school representatives present discussed: how to get students into Rye in time, using Rye College as a base, organising a procession and giving students some kind of a memento.

It was likely that there would be traffic congestion.

A proposal that 'RTC no longer considers itself to be an interested party' was lost.

**56 ASSETS REVIEW**

Cllr Eve observed that RTC's assets had not be re-valued since 2002. Property amounted to £770,000; other assets c£455,000. The price of silver had risen significantly over the last 9 years.

**RESOLVED 1 To ascertain current values - with a view to undertaking a review of RTC's assets to help determine appropriate levels of holdings and risk.**  
**Clerk**

**RESOLVED 2 To use the exercise as an opportunity to seek quotes from other insurers.**

**57 GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Members were invited to consider an application from Rye & District Boys' Club for £1,500 towards works associated with the operation of a proposed boxing club.

**RESOLVED To defer consideration until the Clerk had obtained further information.**  
**Clerk**

**58 STAFF RECRUITMENT: TOWN HALL KEEPER**

Members noted that there had been an encouraging number of enquiries and that, to date, 6 application forms had been received.

*The meeting ended at 8.20pm.*

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

5 December 2011 (PR04)

## Adjournment

### (a) Rye Community Friends presentation

Val Smith (VS), Community Friends Rother Development Officer, circulated information about community friends schemes and explained that she was hoping to facilitate the setting up of a Rye scheme – and she was looking for a Councillor to volunteer to join a steering group.

- RVA's Community Friends Project (encouraging neighbours to help neighbours) had its roots in Local Action Pans – many of which had identified their communities as having problems with access to transport and services.
- The project was essentially a 'good neighbour' scheme – with volunteers lending a helping hand by, for example, giving lifts, making tea, changing light bulbs.
- The project is funded by the Tudor Trust.
- Tilling Green had been identified as a (relatively) isolated area.
- VS was keen to foster community spirit on the estate and would be distributing a survey in the spring to establish need and likely number of volunteers.
- VS did not wish to burden the TG Residents' Association with the scheme – hence the desire to establish a separate steering group.
- Thus far, support had been received from St Mary's, Rye Baptist Church, Kate Head, AmicusHorizon and the Ferry Road Health Centre. She would be speaking to the British Legion in January.
- Volunteers need to be CRB checked (this can be done at just £5/head via HVA), be insured and made aware of safety/risk issues.
- The intention was to identify a core group of volunteers who would hold a mobile (on a rota basis) in order to refer/sign post calls for assistance.
- If the TG scheme was successful it could be expanded.

Comments following the presentation included: the Community Centre Steering Group was likely to be supportive; both volunteers and 'clients' gain benefits and community cohesion is enhanced; there are vulnerable people in other parts of the parish; there was a risk volunteers could be taken advantage of; 'informal volunteering' works best because there is no 'red tape' involved; 'informal warding' of the parish would mean that there would be Councillors taking an interest in the well-being of residents within their patch; a lot of informal volunteering goes on and is largely unrecognised; RDCT has increased its journeys from TG to the Rye Medical Centre; those new social housing residents at Valley Park will also have service access issues.

### (b) Rye International Jazz Festival 2012 presentation

Ian Bowden (IB), Director of Rye International Jazz Festival and CEO/Producer of PRIMO, spoke to his supporting document - highlighting:

- The Festival would take place 31 May-4 June; however, if it proved necessary, no later than February, a decision could be taken to postpone it until later in the year.
- IB was seeking endorsement and financial support from RTC.
- He had been working on the idea for 5-6 years.
- The music offered would include not only jazz but R&Bs, gospel, soul and world music – and would be aimed at a range of age groups.

- Rye College and Primary would be invited to become involved in a youth project.
- PRIMO had an experienced team and a team of local people had been assembled – a Councillor would be welcome to join the steering group.
- IB had liaised with many local organisations including RDC in respect of licensing and H&S.
- The event would attract new visitors from Kent, Sussex and London – thereby supporting local businesses and jobs.
- The *Rye & Battle Observer* had agreed to be the media partner. There would be a live Radio Kent broadcast which would be syndicated.
- Funding: in addition to RTC, the RDC Community Grant Fund, Little Cheyne Court Fund and the Arts Council would be approached.
- The £5,000 sought from RTC (12 December) would be seed funding and would be necessary to 'release' corporate sponsorship. To ensure the project was sustainable it was important to evidence local commitment.
- A teaser web site was about to be launched.
- Draft budgets had been prepared; however, the events/activities would be tailored to fit the funding available.

Responding to questions from Members, IB added:

- He was working with Chrissy Stower to create a number of festival-related internships (linked to NVQs)
- He had liaised closely with Neil Cunliffe regarding support from the Chamber and would be meeting with HotCats shortly.
- The organisation of the festival would be open and transparent.
- IB was unlikely to benefit financially in the short-term – he had committed 6 months' of his own time to the project, which required considerable organisation; however, it was hoped that, in the longer term, IB/PRIMO would receive a management fee.
- Regardless of the number of acts, the fixed marketing price was likely to be in the region of £15,000 – with admin and management fees of approx £8,000-£10,000.

Observations from Members included: the (long-established) Rye Festival has difficulty producing a surplus; Rye Goes Rock/Pop has made losses; as a charity, Rye Festival cannot make large surpluses; RTC could pledge a grant but withhold it until it was assured that the project was able to proceed; Rye Festival had reserves to guarantee that it could pay acts if ticket receipts were disappointing; without financial forecasts it was difficult to assess the scale of the risk; it would be advantageous to remain below the VAT threshold; during a period of financial restraint, should RTC be addressing social welfare issues rather than supporting the local economy?

The Clerk added that there would be a number of free community events and questioned whether RTC would be happy to endorse the festival (rather than strongly support it).