

**Minutes of an Additional Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Hall, Rye, on Monday 18 September 2017**

**PRESENT** Councillors Sam Barnes, Mike Boyd (**Deputy Mayor**), John Breeds, Jonathan Breeds (**Mayor**), Cheryl Creaser, Justin Erswell, Rebekah Gilbert, Charlie Harkness, Pat Hughes, Jo Kirkham, Andi Rivett, Andy Stuart

**IN ATTENDANCE** Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Colonel Anthony Kimber – RNPSG Vice Chairman; John Minter – *Rye News*; 4 members of the public

*The meeting commenced at 6.46pm.*

**67 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence – and the reasons as lodged with the Clerk – were accepted from Cllrs Bernardine Fiddimore, Ian Potter, Ray Prewer and Shaun Rogers.

**68 CODE OF CONDUCT**

There were no disclosures of interest nor dispensation requests.

**69 MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor adjourned the meeting for any contributions from members of the public on the items on the agenda (see **APPENDIX**).

*6.55pm The meeting reconvened.*

**70 APPLICATION FOR A GRANT**

Members considered an application from Entertainment Workshops for a grant of £1,500 to purchase a Mac Book Pro.

It was noted that the grant reserve balance was £4,125.

The applicant, David Byrne was invited to speak to the application (see **APPENDIX**).

**RESOLVED (unanimous) To award the grant requested. Clerk**

**RESOLVED To bring forward consideration of item 72.**

**72 FORMER LOWER SCHOOL SITE**

Council was invited to consider the planning application following:

**RR/2017/1778/P** Former Thomas Peacocke School site, Ferry Road, Rye  
Erection of 72 residential dwellings comprising 43 houses and 29 flats with associated landscaping, car parking and other infrastructure.

*Applicant: Plutis Rye, c/o Icen Projects, 114-116 Charing Cross Rd, London*

**RESOLVED To submit the response following to the Planning Authority:**

**OBJECT Overdevelopment; unsafe vehicular access; insufficient parking spaces. Clerk**

**71 RYE HARBOUR DISCOVERY CENTRE**

The meeting considered a request from the Appeal Director for a letter of support for the proposed Centre. It was noted that a suggested draft response had been provided.

Cllr Hughes – a long standing resident of Rye Harbour - was not in favour of the proposed Centre: it was far too large for the setting; the 60-seat café/conference facility is unnecessary and would impact adversely on local eateries; facilities already exist – the (partly refurbished) Rye Sailing Club is close by; Lime Kiln Cottage dates back to the 1930s, was used as a residence – and there is a move to List it; the proposed position for the Centre is on the riverside of the flood defences; a key attraction of the Reserve is that it is ‘wild’ and uncluttered with buildings/structures.

Cllr Stuart supported the proposed Centre: it was originally going to be 2-storey; fears that the Kino would affect local businesses adversely proved to be unfounded and increased footfall to the area; Reserve visitors do not appear to patronise the existing eateries in the area – and they would benefit from additional visitors to the Reserve; there are currently few places to take shelter; 60 seats would occupy a modest amount of space; the Centre would be built on stilts; the Centre would be outside of the SSSI; the Reserve is completely manmade; the Centre would benefit the Heritage Centre in terms of reciprocal arrangements/initiatives.

Cllr Rivett advised that he was a member of the RHNR Management Committee and would, therefore, abstain from any vote. He agreed with the views expressed by Cllr Stuart and highlighted the benefits of providing a learning facility. He added that the plans are not set in stone.

Cllr Hughes advised that she had viewed the planning application and Icklesham PC had commented on it. Part of the development would encroach on the SSSI.

Cllr John Breeds suggested that the proposed Centre would help to facilitate visits by school children/students.

Cllr Gilbert also supported Cllr Stuart’s position.

Cllr Boyd proposed – and Cllr Kirkham seconded – a proposal that RTC supports the principle of improved visitor facilities being provided at the Reserve.

Cllr Harkness expressed support for Cllr Boyd’s proposal but, having previously lived close to the Reserve for a number of years, had some concerns about the proposed Centre: local businesses might suffer; the Centre was too large for the setting and local infrastructure might not cope with the increased vehicular movements and visitors (compounded if the Centre is let to other organisations). He added that, because of funding cuts school trips are less common - and that, based on his observations, most of the Reserve visitors are dog walkers.

Cllr Erswell supported the principle of improvements at the Reserve in order to provide both facilities for students and to attract more visitors. However, RTC needed to be sensitive to Icklesham PC’s views.

Referring to the draft letter of support provided, Cllr Boyd advised that neither he nor Cllr Gilbert recalled suggesting that such a letter be provided.

**RESOLVED To provide a letter to the Appeal Director conveying RTC’s in principle support for improved visitor facilities at the Reserve. Clerk**

*The meeting ended at 7.30pm*

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

**69 Adjournment**

*RR/2017/1778/P Former Thomas Peacocke School site*

Judy Greenwell's contribution included:

- Two of the proposed dwellings (central and SE corner) are 4-storey. Their height is unclear; however, it is conceivable that they could be 15m. Her view towards St Mary's Church would be obscured and these two buildings would create a 'canyon effect'.
- The design of the dwellings would be out of keeping with those in Ferry Road and Udimore Road.
- 72 homes could accommodate 150-200 younger people requiring access to education. Rye Primary currently has space for an additional 30 children. Rye Nursery will be full in January 2018.
- There will be increased pressure on health services locally. 300 additional residents represent 5% of the GP patients lists. The Ferry Road Practice Manager has advised that it is difficult to recruit GPs.
- Increased vehicle movements will create congestion and hazards – particularly because of the close proximity of the rail crossing.
- 92 on site parking spaces only have been provided for 72 dwellings – meaning parking will increase in Ferry Road and Tillingham Avenue (where there are no controls). Users of Rye College are parking in the Avenue's turning circle and the lorry that collects recycling has not managed to get down the road for 5 weeks because of poorly parked vehicles.
- Increase traffic will impact on air quality.
- The proposed entrance/exit to the development is just 10m from the level crossing. The application should be turned down for this reason alone. At peak times this will see vehicles queuing to turn right into the development – with the risk that drivers could be stuck between the crossing gates.

Colonel Kimber highlighted his assessment of the proposal within his RNP Update. RDC Planning officers appear to be of the view that the application represents overdevelopment.

Sue Leroy stated that she had moved to Rye for 'quality of life'. She was concerned about the safety implications of the development. The resulting congestion would deter visitors to the town.

**70 APPLICATION FOR A GRANT**

David Byrne's presentation included:

- He was the senior Founder of Entertainment Workshops nearly 9 years ago.
- EW takes younger people who are unable to engage with mainstream education.
- EW will receive its next intake in 3 weeks.
- There is less Government funding available and EW struggles financially from month to month.
- EW has helped 1,000 young people since it was founded.
- EW has a 100% success rate getting Year 11s into training or apprenticeships.
- EW has won two national awards (competing against 570 schools).
- Young people will soon be able to be placed overseas.
- EW has just one MacPro – which can be used by one young person only at any time.
- EW is grateful for the support RTC has given it in the past.