

Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Hall, Rye, on Monday 10 December 2018

PRESENT Councillors Sam Barnes, Mike Boyd (**Mayor**), John Breeds, Cheryl Creaser, Bernardine Fiddimore, Rebekah Gilbert (**Deputy Mayor**), Charlie Harkness, Pat Hughes, Jo Kirkham, Ray Prewer, Andi Rivett, Shaun Rogers, Andy Stuart

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Paul Goring – Town Sergeant; The Reverend Canon David Frost – Mayor’s Chaplain; Rother District Councillors Lord Ampthill and Gennette Stevens; East Sussex County Councillor – Keith Glazier; John Minter – *Rye News*; Colonel Anthony Kimber – RNPSG Vice-Chairman; 2 members of the public

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm.

107 PRAYERS

Prayers were said by the Mayor’s Chaplain.

108 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence – and the reasons as lodged with the Clerk – were accepted from Cllrs Jonathan Breeds, Justin Erswell and Ian Potter.

109 CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no disclosures of interest nor requests for dispensation.

110 MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that, since the last Council meeting, the Mayoral engagements he had attended included: the 90th Anniversary Mary Stanford Memorial Service; the RDC Chairman’s Civic Reception in Udimore; the East Sussex Music Service ‘Big Sing’ at the White Rock.

*The Mayor adjourned the meeting for the reports of the County and District Councillors and Public Question Time (see **APPENDICES A-B**).*

The meeting reconvened.

RESOLVED To bring forward consideration of item 117.

117 CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT (CPE)

Members were invited to consider commenting on the proposed scheme for Rye (*deadline: 14.1.19*).

Cllr Harkness spoke to his proposal for resolution (**APPENDIX C**) - adding/ highlighting: CPE does not operate in isolation – it will have a wider impact on the town; large ticket machines (such as the example displayed at the recent consultation drop in sessions) would have an adverse impact on the Conservation Area and many of Rye’s pavements are too narrow to accommodate them safely; business owners will struggle to respond to the CPE consultation by 14.1.19 – given that Christmas-New Year is a busy trading period; RTC should reflect the concerns of businesses; onstreet charging for parking will displace those drivers used to parking unlawfully to Tilling Green and Military Road; some of Rye’s car parks (particularly Gibbet Marsh) are underused; all the local authorities – together with businesses – should be working together to ensure there is a coherent and comprehensive approach to CPE; many households in Rye do not have either a garage or a driveway; what is being

presented for Rye is basically the status quo – there is no provision for additional residents' parking; a clear way forward is needed.

Cllr Glazier responded – commenting as follows: There had been a consultation process prior to RDC asking ESCC to introduce CPE – and RTC had agreed to support CPE in principle; ESCC's focus is ensuring that the legal process for achieving CPE is followed – related concerns are for the people of Rye to decide how take forward (including via the RNP); the final scheme will apply across Rother; we are at the informal consultation stage – formal opportunities to comment will follow; any delays/distractions now could mean that the April 2020 implementation might have to be postponed; once CPE is introduced there will a 12-month monitoring period – after which, amendments to the scheme can be considered; Park & Ride could not form part of the scheme and would need to be considered separately; smaller ticket machines (such as those in Lewes and Hastings Old Town) are available; all consultation responses will be assessed; it is too late to halt the process

Cllr Amptill read out the section of his report (**APPENDIX B**) addressing CPE.

Cllr Fiddimore expressed her delight, regardless of how it eventually pans out, that the problem of inadequate parking enforcement is finally being addressed. Over the years Cllr Amptill has regularly updated RTC on CPE – including its implications. When she was Mayor she spent some considerable time working with the Police on onstreet parking issues. The main car park in the town is privately-owned and enormous difficulties would arise if it was no longer available for this purpose.

Councillor Stuart had been unable to attend the two drop-in sessions and suggested they had had been arranged at short notice – and it would have better to have held them on two separate weekends. Cllr Glazier considered that sufficient notice had been given.

Cllr Stevens reported that an ESCC officer had advised previously RDC that the ticket machines would be small and wall-mounted.

Cllr John Breeds suggested that CPE might cause some local residents to walk into the town rather than drive – which would be a good thing in respect of climate change.

Cllr Hughes reported that the Rye Chamber had, previously, advised RDC that it wanted CPE. She is the only person to have undertaken regular surveys of vehicles parked in the High Street. Those recognising the registration plates of many of the vehicles she had recorded overstaying in parking bays had advised that they belonged to local residents or businesses. A number of local traders are known to park as close as they can to their premises. As far as vehicles being displaced is concerned, drivers are less likely to park in 'non CPE' streets if nearby car parking is reasonably priced. CPE does not provide a complete solution. It may be that parking restrictions will need to be introduced on the north side of Military Road to prevent it becoming impassable.

Cllr Gilbert advised that the Rye Area Business Forum had, last week, considered the CPE consultation. All those present expressed grave concerns. Whilst appreciating that CPE won't please everyone, the proposed scheme for Rye does not reflect Rye's unique environment. There is concern about displacement, a preference for the operator of the scheme to be 'not-for-profit' and a fear that Rye will become a 'cash cow' for the rest of the District. Introducing CPE in isolation risks penalising drivers if alternative options are not in place – eg Park and Ride, discounted charges within RDC car parks.

The Mayor observed that the former Lower School Site had the potential to provide a considerable number of offstreet parking spaces – particular if a two-floor facility could be provided.

Cllr Harkness emphasised that he was not suggesting that RTC should object to the introduction of CPE – just that there needs to be a joined-up approach and plan of action.

RESOLVED 1 (on the Mayor's casting vote) **That a small working group of Town Councillors and interested parties be formed to draft an action plan and timetable to put to relevant bodies for their consideration.**

RESOLVED 2 **That the Working Group should comprise 5 Members of the Town Council – Cllrs Creaser, Gilbert, Harkness, Prewer and Stuart.**

Colonel Kimber suggested that the WG should be mindful of the material on parking within the RNP. Although what had been said this evening did not appear to conflict with the Plan, it was important to ensure conformity – otherwise it might be necessary to amend the Plan.

RESOLVED 3 **To hold an additional Council meeting to consider the WG's report and recommendations on 14 January.** Clerk

Note Cllr Glazier indicated that it would probably be acceptable if RTC's response to the CPE consultation was 1-2 days late.

111 COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED To approve the draft Minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2018 (C11).

112 COMMITTEE MINUTES

RESOLVED To receive the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning & Townscape Committee held on 29 October 2018 (PT09) and 12 November 2018 (PT10).

113 HERITAGE CENTRE

a) **Progress Report**

The Clerk advised that the General Assistant was hoping to complete the HC Strategic Review by the end of the week. It would be considered by the HC Options WG prior to full Council.

RESOLVED To receive and note the HCM's Report as at 6.12.18.

b) **Payments and Income**

RESOLVED To receive and adopt Income by Customer Summaries and Expenses by Supplier Summaries for October 2018.

c) **Budget Monitor**

RESOLVED To receive and note the actual income and expenditure against budget to 31 October 2018.

114 FINANCE

114.1 Town Hall

a) **Schedule of Authorised Payments and Statement of Income**

Responding to a question put by Cllr Rogers, the Clerk confirmed that rental/arrears repayment plans in respect of RTC's residential lets are up-to-date.

RESOLVED To receive and adopt the Schedule of Authorised Payments and Statement of Income for October 2018.

b) **Budget Monitor**

RESOLVED To receive and note the actual income and expenditure against budget to 31 October 2018.

114.2 Account Balances

RESOLVED To receive the Statement of Account Balances as at 31 October 2018.

114.3 Earmarked Reserves

RESOLVED To receive a Statement of Earmarked Reserves as at 31 October 2018.

114.4 Former Rye Airfield

Members were asked to consider a proposal, drafted by Colonel Anthony Kimber, which included an invitation to the Council to contribute towards the cost (£1,105 + VAT) of relocating a mounting stone and fixing a memorial plaque (both donated).

Colonel Kimber advised that the British Legion was not able to use its funds for this purpose. He suggested that if RTC was minded to contribute one-third the Little Cheyne Court Wind Farm – and local businesses – could be approached for the remainder.

East Guldeford Parish Meeting had agreed to clear the proposed installation site (within its parish boundary) and the Harbour Master had donated the mounting stone.

RESOLVED 1 To commission – and make the payment for the work – so that the VAT could be recovered.

RESOLVED 2 To contribute £375 of the Council's own funds and to fund the balance from donations/grants received towards the project.
Clerk

114.5 Grant Application

The meeting considered a request from the Pett Level Independent Rescue Boat Association for a grant of £250 plus towards the refurbishment of a reserve launch vehicle.

RESOLVED To advise the applicant that the Council is minded to award a grant, subject to receiving a:

- a) Breakdown of the upgrade and refurbishment costs;**
 - b) List of other prospective/actual funders.**
- Clerk**

115 RYE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The RSPSG Vice-Chairman reported that:

- The Reg 16 consultation ends on 11 January. Thus far, RDC has received four comments.
- If – in relation to CPE – RTC ends up taking a position out of kilter with the RNP, it may be necessary to adjust the Plan.
- A briefing paper prepared by Rother officers will go to Cabinet on 19 December.
- The developer of the Lower School Site (LSS) has advised that it is intending to resubmit a planning application in the near future for a residential development. There had been legal, flood risk and access issues to address. The proposed housing density in the new application is unknown.
- A Rock Channel development application is expected in early 2019.

Cllr Gilbert thanked Colonel Kimber for his input in helping to oppose the BP appeals against RDC's refusal to grant planning consent for a filling station and convenience store at the top of Udimore Road.

Responding to a question put by Cllr Harkness, Colonel Kimber confirmed that a Plan summary would be published in time for the RNP Referendum. This could be based on the summary that appears at the beginning of the current Plan.

116 WORK PROGRAMMES/UPDATES

(a) Clerk

The Clerk advised that he anticipated that the application for consent to repair/refurbish the cupola would be submitted by the end of the week.

RESOLVED To receive and note a summary of the status of key tasks/projects as at 3.12.18.

(b) General Assistant

RESOLVED To receive and note the update on the post holder's work programme.

118 TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2019-20

RESOLVED To Adopt the Provisional Timetable of Meetings 2019-20. Clerk

119 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING (6 MARCH 2019)

RESOLVED To hold this at the Rye Community Centre. Clerk

120 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 the item following on the grounds that it includes consideration of personal information in relation to a member of staff.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting to facilitate disrobing.

The meeting reconvened.

121 STAFFING

It was noted that a member of staff’s entitlement to occupational sick pay will (assuming they are still absent) expire on 8.1.19 – and that the Council’s Sickness Scheme provides for periods of entitlement to be extended in exceptional circumstances.

RESOLVED Not to extend the member of staff’s current period of occupational sick pay. Clerk

The meeting ended at 8.25pm

Date Chairman

ADJOURNMENT**110a) County Councillor's Report**

Cllr Glazier reported that:

Lobbying/Funding He has met with a number of Government Ministers to press ESCC's case for additional funding. They are now aware that ESCC is a well-run authority with Children's Service rated as outstanding.

The Core Offer consultation is intended to facilitate with the county's residents and Government. ESCC had applied for a scheme which, if successful, would see 70% of the business rates collected by ESCC and the county's district/borough councils retain 70% of the business rates collected.

The Leader of KCC had joined with him to meet Liz Truss. Children's Services were discussed; however, there are not enough children in care in East Sussex to apply for a new pilot grant.

Brexit had delayed the announcement of the Local Government Settlement for 2019-20. Hopefully, this would happen before Parliament rises on 15 December. Late announcements make budgeting even more difficult.

Cllr Creaser *Within the last 6 months or so there has been a lot of publicity given to the problem of young people with MH issues being relocated to areas of the UK well away from their family home. Does this take place within ESCC? (It is preferable to maintain family connections.)*

Cllr Glazier There are times when specialised treatment is not available locally. Outcomes are determined following Mental Health Assessments.

Cllr Harkness hoped that there would be discussions between ESCC, RDC and the parish/town councils regarding any issues that arise in connection with the implementation of CPE in Rother.

Cllr Glazier responded that ESCC is focusing on what RDC asked it to do – namely, introducing CPE. This is a tightly regulated legal process – and it may be that some parking-related concerns need to be addressed separately.

110b) Reports of the Rother District Councillors**Cllr Amphill**

Cllr Amphill delivered his report (**APPENDIX B**) – which included his initial contribution to the agenda item **117 – Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE)**.

Cllr Stevens

Cllr Stevens reported that she had recently attended a Tourism Task Group meeting – at which, there had been a number of presentations (including one by Ian Bowden).

She observed that the Police had been actively enforcing on street parking violations earlier in the day.

Cllr Fiddimore *Could the Tourism Task Group consider the reintroduction of the £9,000 Rye area New Events Fund?*

Cllr Amphill The Fund stills exists but is administered by RDC. Grants are awarded following consultation with the local Ward Members.

Cllr Stuart *What had the c£70k for the Landgate urgent repairs actually been spent on and would any monies remain?*

Cllr Amphill This would be reported at the next Landgate Steering Group meeting. At one point there was a projected underspend; however, the architect had suggested

– to the Steering Group - other pressing work that could usefully be undertaken at the same time.

110c) Public Question Time

There were no questions/contributions.

Colonel Kimber advised that he would be happy to speak to agenda items 114.4, 115 and 117.

110b) Report of Rye Ward member, Cllr Lord Amphill

In respect of the Landgate, works have progressed well; and the Action Group of stakeholders and interested parties will meet again soon to review what has been achieved and seek to plot what happens next. This will include the medium-term future of the structure; whether it needs a roof; and how we get the clock and the floodlighting going.

The appointment of an operator for the new **Waste & Recycling, Street and Beach Cleaning and Associated Services** contract will be announced as soon as the partner Councils (Hastings, Wealden and ourselves) together with ESCC, the Waste Disposal Authority, have taken the appropriate decisions. The contract runs from 29th June.

The appeal against RDC Members' decision to refuse the **Udimore Road Petrol Station** planning application was duly dismissed by the Inspector.

Clearly the number one topic for the Rye neighbourhood is **Civil Parking Enforcement**. On several occasions last year, I suggested that, for every person who wishes to see the urgent implementation of an enforcement scheme, there is another who will not wish to see his current arrangements stopped. The recent consultation/exhibition at the Town Hall was well attended and County Council officers went away with a heightened understanding of a number of contradictory problems. Parking spaces, loading bays, residents' spaces, spaces for work vans and blue badge use in the town centre are extremely, almost catastrophically, limited. And, if cars are to be pushed out of the High Street and elsewhere in order to make room for short-term parking, the scheme which we are reviewing does not suggest whither they should go - and this is its great weakness.

All told, RDC offers 531 pay and display spaces in six car parks. These are at Bedford Place, Cinque Ports Street, Gibbet Marsh, Lucknow Place, Rye Swimming Pool and The Strand. At Gibbet Marsh there are 80 underused spaces plus 200 spaces of overflow provision. There are 9 permit-only spaces at Gun Garden and 10 at the "reserved" part of the Strand. There is some "amenities" parking at Rye Cricket Salts. So there is an almost desperate need for, let me suggest, another 1,500 spaces of off-street parking within, say, a ten minute walk of The George. Should the Javelin train ever stop at Rye on its way to St Pancras, that number should provide for commuter parking - although, another consideration, not everyone wishes to see a heightened status of Rye as a dormitory or second-home town.

It is good that Cllr Gilbert's Business Forum has taken an opportunity to consider these issues. Strong points are made about displacement of vehicles from the centre which will, without appropriate remedy, cause even more chaos in the likes of Military Road, Love Lane and many more. Traders, hospitality businesses and others have known that these proposals were coming. There is seldom a good time to launch a consultation. The shortage of parking is well known as are the difficulties of residential access. Therefore, please let us respond without delay.

There is a major misapprehension that the outlined scheme will make millions in revenues. For some years, it is likely to make considerable losses - before any modest surpluses are realised which will be ploughed back into relevant services.

Further strong points are made about the scale and appearance of the proposed parking meters, the narrowness of pavements and the need for improved signage. Park & Ride should certainly be considered along with the associated costs, location and hours of operation. The Salts can be considered for parking: but will almost certainly be widely opposed. The Lower School site would certainly be near perfect for perhaps a two-storey car

park for a mixture of short-term and permit use: and this is under consideration. The cost of an annual permit at Gibbet Marsh is £321: *but it is hardly taken up.*

As to a meeting to discuss all these issues, we are having one now: and local councillors are always available at short notice to battle through a potential calamity like this. It is correct that there are groups with differing interests: thus it is up to them to make their cases *now* and not wait for plenary meetings. Other periods of consultation will follow. This is *not* the only opportunity - but an important one to set all the balls rolling.

117 Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE)**PROPOSAL FOR RESOLUTION**

RTC notes ESCC's proposals on CPE and invites its local ESCC and RDC councillors and relevant officers to a working meeting as soon as possible in Rye before the consultation ends with business and council representatives, and the Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP, to discuss Rye's long term parking problems (including in particular displacement caused by CPE) , a programme of action to tackle those problems including CPE, and serious concerns about the current CPE proposals.

That programme of action to include a joined-up approach to Rye's problems by all three councils, possible improvements to CPE within relevant timescales, improvements to existing car parks (and their usage) and the provision of additional car parking space which both meet Rye's needs and provide additional revenues.

RTC agrees to set up a small working party tonight of RTC councillors and relevant others to draft an agenda of items for that meeting, and the first draft of a comprehensive programme of action, in addition to establishing what is happening in Wealden DC over police enforcement.

RTC also asks ESCC to extend the consultation period as businesses are particularly busy over this period.

Cllr Harkness