

Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Hall, Rye, on Monday 14 January 2019

PRESENT Councillors Sam Barnes, Mike Boyd (**Mayor**), Cheryl Creaser, Bernardine Fiddimore, Rebekah Gilbert (**Deputy Mayor**), Pat Hughes, Jo Kirkham, Andi Rivett

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Rother District Councillors Lord Amptill and Gennette Stevens; East Sussex County Councillor – Keith Glazier; John Minter – *Rye News*; Colonel Anthony Kimber – RNPSG Vice-Chairman; 5 members of the public

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm.

132 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence – and the reasons as lodged with the Clerk – were accepted from Cllrs John Breeds, Jonathan Breeds, Charlie Harkness, Ian Potter, Ray Prewer and Andy Stuart.

It was noted that the General Assistant, Jessica Neame was unable to be present.

133 CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no disclosures of interest nor requests for dispensation.

134 COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED To approve the draft Minutes of the meetings held on 10 December 2018 (C12) and 17 December 2018 (C13).

The Mayor adjourned the meeting for contributions from members of the public on item 135 (See APPENDIX).

7.19 The meeting reconvened.

135 CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT CONSULTATION

Members were invited to consider the CPE Working Group’s draft response to ESCC’s initial consultation – as well as a draft letter to interested parties concerning working together on a parking strategy for the town.

Comments from Members included:

- RTC should make some form of a response to the consultation.
- If the CPE Officers do not operate in a considerate manner they could alienate those living and working in the town.
- The suggested items for discussion by the proposed working group are not set in stone and are intended to stimulate debate.
- Any residential parking permits issued should be restricted to one per household.
- Second home owners should receive a permit only if they reside in Rye for a reasonable amount of time during the year.
- Parking will be displaced to streets outside the controlled area.
- Drivers would be more likely to use the public car parks if they were cheaper.
- CPE will ensure a more rapid turnover of parked vehicles in the High Street – which will be helpful, if for example, you just need to nip into a chemist.
- The abuse of the loading bay is frustrating – CPE will help to ensure that it is used in accordance with the regulations.
- Some new residents appear to consider that they can park where they like.

- Parking on pavements is unsafe and damages them (creating trip hazards).
- The Cinque Ports Street car park could be made 'shorter stay'.
- The 'Corrals' car park is rarely full (at least at this time of the year) and is relatively accessible.
- 'Commuter parking' in Military Road appears to be increasing on weekdays (not just Thursday), making it difficult for larger vehicles to navigate the road. It is possible that commuters to London are parking there and walking to the Railway Station.
- Controls in Military Road could be considered during the post CPE rollout review period.
- The proposed parking strategy working group would benefit from greater residents' representation.

Draft Response from RTC to ESCC

RESOLVED 1 To delete Q1.

RESOLVED 2 To ask why ESCC has decided not to simply 'carry over' the existing parking regulations unamended (thereby reducing the need for new signage/re-lining).

RESOLVED 3 To clarify the intended provision of Blue Badge spaces.

RESOLVED 4 To submit the response, as amended. Clerk

Draft Letter to Stakeholders

RESOLVED 1 To delete the reference to the Lower School site.

RESOLVED 2 To delete the reference to allowing parking (at any time) on the Bonfire Salts.

RESOLVED 3 To insert 'Increasing the usage of Gibbet Marsh'. Clerk

136 DRAFT TOWN HALL BUDGET 2019-20

The meeting was asked to consider an early draft of the 2019-20 Town Hall Budget (version 1) - prior to agreeing the final Town Hall and Heritage Centre Budgets - and the precept for 2019-20 - at a future meeting.

The Clerk advised that:

a) Once the Draft HC Budget 2019-20 had been completed (dependent upon the adoption of the HC Strategic Review), the level of HC Support provided for would be reviewed.

b) NALC recommends that a council's general reserve balance should be 25-100% of operational expenditure. Last year, RTC's operational expenditure was £341,411. At 25%, RTC's general reserve should be £85,411. However, the forecast general reserve as at 31.3.19 is just £17,725.

c) Ewhurst Parish Council, serving a population of just over 1,000, has a total reserves balance of £101,000 – compared with RTC's forecast total reserves balance of £99,065.

d) If the proposed relocation of the Town Steward to Tilling Green Community Centre is accepted, the initial occupancy agreement will be 6 years from 1 April 2019 (to run in tandem with ESCC's lease with Rye Partnership).

e) Provisions influencing the proposed precept increase of £21,624 are:

i)	HC Support	£10,000
ii)	Town Steward relocation	£3,500
iii)	Replacement Steward vehicle	£5,500
iv)	New Business Support Fund	£5,000
v)	Employment advice/representation	<u>£3,400</u>
		£27,400

Comments included: the Draft appears to have been well thought out; the proposed New Business Support Fund was to be welcomed.

RESOLVED To consider the Draft further once the Draft HC Budget 2019-20 was available for consideration. Clerk

137 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 items following on the grounds that item 138 involves consideration of matters that may impact on terms of employment and item 139 is likely to include consideration of a possible claim against the Council.

138 HERITAGE CENTRE STRATEGIC REVIEW

Members were invited to consider version 2 of the report – which incorporates a number of minor amendments agreed at the meeting of the HC Options WG held on 7.1.19.

It was noted that, if approved, a number of proposals within the report would need to be costed in order to complete the Draft HC Budget 2019-20.

RESOLVED To approve and adopt the report. Clerk, Gen Asst, HCM

139 STAFFING

Members received an update on a grievance and long-term absence.

RESOLVED 1 To appoint Derek Stevens as the Appeal Hearer at the Grievance Appeal Hearing. Clerk

RESOLVED 2 To emphasise the importance of Members attending meetings where the grievance will be considered. Clerk

The meeting ended at 8.20pm

Date Chairman

ADJOURNMENT**135 CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT CONSULTATION**

RNP context Colonel Kimber advised that RDC Planning Officers had expressed concern about the Lower School Site 2-storey car park suggested discussion point within the CPE WG's draft letter to interested parties. Any such proposal would conflict with the RNP (which makes provision for housing on the LSS). An amended application for a housing development had just been submitted. Colonel Kimber considered that the suggested discussion point could remain – but without the location being specified.

The recent Reg 16 consultation had generated 30 responses which would be assessed by RDC. Most of them related to 'well known' issues. Some may require minor wording changes. Anything material would be brought back to RTC.

Rye Airfield memorial Sufficient contributions have now been received to cover the cost and the mason is about to be instructed to proceed.

Colonel Kimber added that there is provision for off street parking in the RNP. It is possible that a number of private sites could be made available – as well as public sector brownfield sites. The RNP provides a strategic framework, within which to consider a parking strategy for Rye.

Responding to a question from a member of the public, Colonel Kimber advised that, given the high water table and flood risk, the provision of underground parking would be problematic; however, a low profile, screened two-storey car park was a possibility (subject to an investor coming forward).

Comments from members of the public included:

- CPE needs to be considered as part of a wider parking strategy.
- If CPE is not introduced in an appropriate way it could have an adverse impact on businesses.
- The plan that had been published suggested an intention to change the maximum waiting time in the Citadel.
- How could parking provision in Rye be made into a positive feature?
- Why is responsibility for parking provision so fragmented?
- Who has responsibility for co-ordinating a parking strategy?
- Have Rye, Battle and Bexhill town councils met to discuss their mutual interest in this matter?
- Would CPE be applied sensitively – recognising that overnight visitors often do some shopping mid-morning before returning home?
- There will be even more 'displaced vehicles' on Thursdays.
- The consultation proposes that Sundays will be excluded from the scheme in Rye; however, for many businesses this is an important trading day.
- Any scheme surpluses generated in Rye should be expended in Rye.
- Instead of meters, drivers could be asked to pay by phone, online or by purchasing a permit disc from shops.
- Rye has comparatively few car parks (compared with Hastings).
- Market Street now has one commercial property – and so it would be appropriate to consider introducing a 'Church Square style' residents' permit scheme.

Cllr Glazier advised that, prior to the formal CPE process commencing, RDC had held discussions with interested parties (including RTC and Rye Chamber of Commerce). The message from businesses was that the current parking enforcement regime had an adverse impact on trade – and most parish councils are supportive of introducing an alternative to Police enforcement. The intention is to largely incorporate the existing TROs – but to review the CPE scheme 12 months after its implementation.

The process for introducing CPE has to follow a legal process. RDC asked ESCC to commence this process – which can address on-street parking only. The current, informal consultation will be followed by a formal 12-week consultation – prior to a scheme being submitted for approval by the Secretary of State. Once approved, it would be enforced by ESCC's contractor (which currently covers Hastings, Lewes and Eastbourne). Nationally, there are less than a dozen councils that do not have CPE. Any consultation responses submitted by this Friday (18 Jan) would be taken into consideration.

Cllr Glazier left the Chamber to attend a meeting elsewhere.

Cllr Lord Amphill advised that RDC's 'pre-CPE' consultation indicated strong support from stakeholders in Bexhill, Battle and Rye for CPE – the impetus being the Police announcing that parking enforcement was now a low priority. CPE will not address the matter of where displaced cars will go. The amended planning application for housing on the Lower School Site had been received by RDC and would be published shortly. There is free public car parking in Wealden – but it does have more money than Rother.

Colonel Kimber reported that Rye has in excess of 900 off street parking spaces – including those at the (under-utilised) Gibbet Marsh.

Cllr Hughes recalled that Cllrs Fiddimore and Gilbert had personally canvassed businesses in the town for their views on parking. The fines from tickets issued by the Police end up at the Treasury. The Hastings CPE scheme works well – there always seem to be onstreet spaces available.

Cllr John Breeds suggested a park & ride scheme from Gibbet Marsh, using electric vehicles. Cllr Hughes advised that park & ride schemes are expensive to run and need to be subsidised.

Recording

At this point, having been advised that a member of the public and been (audio) recording the meeting, the Clerk explained that although the law allows meetings to be recorded, the protocol is that the intention should be announced before recording is commenced. Members of the public have the right to request that they are not recorded.

Speaking from the Gallery, John Minter (present on behalf of *Rye News*) apologised for not having disclosed his intention to record the meeting (to help him write up a piece). He advised that he does not normally mention members of the public by name in his articles – and was happy not to do so on this occasion. In future, he would make known his wish to record a meeting before doing so.