

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Hall, Rye, on Monday 28 January 2019**

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

**IN ATTENDANCE** Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Paul Goring – Town Sergeant; The Reverend Canon David Frost – Mayor’s Chaplain; Louisa O’Shaughnessy – Heritage Centre Manager; East Sussex County Councillor – Keith Glazier; Colonel Anthony Kimber – RNPSG Vice-Chairman; 4 members of the public

*The meeting commenced at 6.30pm.*

**140 PRAYERS**

Prayers were said by the Mayor's Chaplain.

**141 APOLOGIES**

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

It was noted that District Councillors Amptill and Stevens were unable to be present.

**142 CODE OF CONDUCT**

Cllr Gilbert 145 Receipt of indirect payments from the applicant in respect of a joint piece of work carried out at Canterbury University.

**143 MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported that, since the last Council meeting, the Mayoral engagements he had attended included: a Guided Tour of Shepherd Neame Brewery; the Holocaust Day Service at St Mary in the Castle, Hastings.

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

*The meeting reconvened.*

**144 COUNCIL MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** To approve the draft Minutes of the meeting held on 7 January 2019 (C14).

**145 GRANT APPLICATION**

Members considered further an application from The Music Well CIC for a grant of £2,400 towards music therapy provision – *enabling children and young people in Rye to access sessions with a state registered clinical music therapist.*

It was noted that, on 25.6.18, Council resolved to award £1,200 immediately and to review, in 6 months, whether it was in a position to make an additional contribution.

Speaking from the Gallery, the Music Well's Treasurer, John Hart advised that, for the year to 31.12.18, the CIC had spent £10,000 on therapist fees (c 90% of its total expenditure).

Most of the CIC's expenditure is to support service provision at the Rye Academy – paying 50% of the fee for those students eligible for the Pupil Premium – and 100% for those not eligible. If the CIC did not subsidise the Academy vulnerable students (some emotionally disturbed) would not benefit. The CIC is continuing to negotiate with the Academy for additional financial support.

Subject to funding and timetabling, plans are being made to provide afterschool sessions.

Responding to a number of questions put by Cllr Creaser, Mr Hart stated that he thought that there are around 10 children on the Music Well's waiting list (14 are receiving the service currently) – and that the service is provided for as long as the students need it.

Comments included: the Music Well's service helps keep students within mainstream education; the NHS has announced recently that it is investing in 'social prescribing'; some Members had seen first hand the beneficial effects of the CIC's work.

**RESOLVED To grant the remaining £1,200 of the grant sought. Clerk**

- 146 RYE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN** [www.ryeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk](http://www.ryeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk)  
The RNPSG Vice-Chairman, Colonel Kimber reported that he had, that day, attended a meeting with RDC Planning officers to discuss the 30 or so Reg 16 consultation responses.

The comments may be found on both the RDC and RNP web sites.

The nine objections relate to two specific sites, the development boundary, housing numbers and Plan detail.

The papers have been passed to the Examiner, John Slater (former Head of Planning at Portsmouth). He intends to visit Rye unaccompanied in February. It is possible that he may seek clarification or agreement on proposed Plan changes – or even arrange a hearing for a specific site.

Because the RNP meets Rye's housing target and conforms with local, regional and national planning policy it is 'well-positioned'.

- 147 PLANNING APPLICATION: LOWER SCHOOL SITE**  
Members were invited to determine the Council's position in respect of the application following:

RR/2017/1778/P (Amended) Former Thomas Peacocke School site, Ferry Road, Rye TN31 7DJ  
Demolition of Queen Adelaide PH and erection of 65 residential dwellings comprising 38 houses and 27 flats with associated landscaping, car parking and other infrastructure.

Comments from Members included: it remains the case that the developer is trying to squeeze in too many dwellings; the Queen Adelaide (proposed for demolition) has the potential to develop into a community hub; a significant section of the 'green corridor' would be lost; the railway corridor provides a valuable habitat in the middle of the town; insufficient parking spaces are proposed for the site – displaced drivers will park on Ferry Road and exacerbate existing congestion; the applicant has not even acknowledged its obligation to ensure that 30% of the homes are 'affordable'; the draft RCS response to the application contains useful information; the application does not mention – nor make provision for – the need for 'community infrastructure' improvements (such as increasing the capacity of GP services).

It was noted that the developer would be required to provide 30% affordable housing on the site – and the social housing mix would be agreed with RDC housing.

Colonel Kimber referred to his assessment of the application (**APPENDIX B**) in the context of the RNP. He stressed the importance of RTC confirming (in accordance with the RNP) that it accepts that the site has been identified for housing.

The RSC Chairman, David Bookless, highlighted key points from the RSC draft response. He added that the houses would need to be raised – and this would entail a stream of tipper trucks importing soil/hardcore on to the site.

Mike Eve observed that the LSS has been derelict for many years and blighted that part of the town. There had been little progress also in developing/improving other key sites in the town – notably the former Tilling Green and Freda Gardham school sites. In theory, car use will decline over the next 20 years as petrol/diesel engines are phased out. There will be a reduced need for parking provision and a greater emphasis on other forms of transport (including car sharing). The relevant parties should be sitting down with the LSS developer to come up with an acceptable scheme for the site.

**RESOLVED 1 To object to the application on the grounds following:**

- a) **Overdevelopment**
- b) **Unsafe access**
- c) **Insufficient parking spaces**
- d) **Loss of habitat (TPO'd area of woodland)**
- e) **No detailed SUDS scheme**
- f) **Loss of public amenity (Queen Adelaide PH)**
- g) **No identification of the proposed affordable homes/mix**
- h) **No indication that the applicant recognises the additional stress that would be placed on community infrastructure (eg GP services)**

**RESOLVED 2 To append a note to the response along the lines following:**

In accordance with the Rye Neighbourhood Plan and the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy, Rye Town Council accepts that the site has been allocated for housing and would welcome an appropriate and sensitive proposal that addresses its concerns.

**Clerk**

**148 DRAFT BUDGETS AND PRECEPT 2019-20**

Council was asked to consider – with a view to approving - the Draft Heritage Centre Budget 2019-20 and Draft Town Hall Budget 2019-20 (version 2) – and to agree the precept for 2019-20.

The Clerk advised that the Draft HC Budget 2019-20 makes provision for a number of recommendations contained within the (adopted) HC Strategic Review Report – notably, an Electronic Point of Sale (EPOS) system, reduced opening hours, replacement/additional signage, a replacement web site and replacement desktop. These had resulted in a need to increase the HC operating subsidy provided for within the Draft TH Budget 2019-20 (version 1) from £10,000 to £12,500. This had been achieved by reducing the provisions for contingency, New Business Support and the Rye Christmas Festival. The proposed precept remained unchanged at £174,545.

The HCM summarised the advantages of introducing an EPOS system:

- It is difficult to get rolls for the current till – it is estimated that supplies will run out in June.
- There is one engineer only in the area who can maintain the current till.
- Integrated credit/debit card transactions.
- Fewer cash handling errors (goods are barcoded).
- Quicker shopfloor transactions.
- Greatly reduced need to create reports manually.

- Smarter reports – possible to identify the best times of the day to be open.
- Easier to rectify cash handling errors.
- No need to price products individually.
- Would save around 2 days a month of the time the HCM spends manually creating reports – and fewer errors would free up the Finance & Admin Assistant's time.

**RESOLVED 1 To approve the Draft HC Budget 2019-20.**

Cllr Hughes stated that she would like to see RTC making specific provision to support the Music Well in future budgets. Cllr Creaser agreed that the Music Well merited greater support but suggested that this should be achieved largely by way of community fund-raising events.

Cllr Fiddimore suggested that there appears to have been a trend towards charities/voluntary organisations approaching grant funders as a 'first resort – rather than focusing on raising funds by way of community events. There is a risk of grant funders' pots running dry.

The Mayor reminded Members that there had been tentative plans to raise funds for Rye Relief in Need; however, these had been put to one side because of an ongoing staff resourcing matter.

Cllr Jonathan Breeds observed that principal authorities' continuing funding constraints were likely to increase the pressure on parish/town councils to step in and use their unrestricted precepting power to make up for service withdrawals/reductions.

**RESOLVED 2 To approve the Draft TH Budget 2019-20 (v2) – and to set the precept for 2019-20 at £174,545. Clerk**

**149 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 involves consideration of matters relating to the employment status of a member of staff – as well as a possible claim against the Council.**

*The Mayor adjourned the meeting to facilitate disrobing.*

*The meeting reconvened.*

**150 STAFF MEMBER ABSENCE**

Members considered guidance provided by the Council's legal advisor in respect of a member of staff's grievance and long-term absence.

Although the Council had not upheld the grievance, Members considered that, on balance, it was in the Council's interests to agree a settlement with the member of staff concerned.

**RESOLVED 1 To agree, in principle, a settlement package (lump sum plus an agreed reference).**

**RESOLVED 2 To agree the minimum settlement sum sought by the aggrieved employee.**

**RESOLVED 3 To agree a budget to cover any incidental/unforeseen costs associated with the proposed settlement.**

*The meeting ended at 7.56pm*

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

**143 a) County Councillor's Report**

Cllr Glazier reported/advised that:

*CPE* He welcomed the setting up – at the last RTC Council meeting, of a WG to consider a parking strategy for Rye, particularly finding a way to accommodate the vehicles that would be displaced following the introduction of CPE. The ESCC Rother CPE team is following a legal process and derogatory comments on social media are not helpful.

*ESCC Budget 2019-20* This has been signed off by Cabinet and referred to Council for approval. Originally, it was forecast that ESCC would need to find another £17m in savings; however, as a result of sustained lobbying the Government had agreed to make a one-off funding contribution which would mean having to find savings of 'just' £5m instead.

**b) District Councillors' Reports**

It was noted that neither Member was able to attend.

**c) Public Question Time**

Colonel Kimber gave notice that he would like to speak on items 146 and 147.

## RNPSG – Lower School Site January 2019 (Update on issues raised on 4 Sep 2017)

1. In September 2017, Plutus Rye, through its Planner ICENI and Architect Clague proposed a housing development for 72 homes on the Rye Lower School Site as RR/2017/1778/P. After some adverse comments it withdrew and has now resubmitted in amended form (Jan 2019).

2. In general, it is difficult to see in the 2019 proposal all the changes made to the 2017 version as many of the papers are resubmitted as before. It is also noted that the Plutus Rye website (copied below) labels the proposal in Ashford and suggests that the site is the Rye Academy sports field.



**FERRY ROAD, RYE,  
ASHFORD**

3. The revised proposal is for 65 (38 Houses and 27 flats) with associated landscaping, car parking and other infrastructure. Detailed changes include: access redesign, revised flood and sewerage risk mitigation; parking revision and some design changes.

4. Of some 120 documents in the proposal, 77 are dated 2017 and remain as before; 39, mostly plans, cover the revisions. As at 18 Jan there are over 50 comments.

5. The earlier plan proposal is compared with the amended version as below. The marked change is the access, which has been moved further west by

demolishing the Queen Adelaide pub.



2017 – 72 homes



2019 – 65 homes

6. Since the development team discussed their initial proposals with the RNPSG in 2016, there has been little contact except for some brief E Mails about progress. In the proposals, there is scant reference to the Neighbourhood Plan, other than passing references in the 2017 papers and in the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). The former dismisses the Plan as at the Regulation 14 stage and therefore non statutory. There has been no public consultation since late 2016.

7. In the context of the RNP (post Regulation 16), the site is allocated for housing as policy H8, with specific mention of the need to address: number of units (50); flood risk and sewerage provision, potential damage to woodland, safe access, adequate parking.

8 The questions raised by this 2019 proposal are below.

- **RNP Allocation:** The RNP allocates this site (H8) for housing development of up to 50 dwellings; the developer proposed 72 in 2017 and has now reduced to 65. The proposal is around twice the density of Tilling Green. A dense development of a site constrained by natural boundaries – railway, drainage sewers and road - means a high demand for integrated parking (residents and visitors) and communal space. Because parking is such an issue in and around Rye, the RNP calls for new developments to cater adequately for on-site parking. The table below provides an illustration of the likely population and number of vehicles. The population could be close to 150, with a vehicle holding of upwards of 100 vehicles (cars, vans and motorcycles, but not boats or caravans)<sup>1</sup>, for which there are 94 places in the proposal, of which 31 are either unallocated or for visitors. During the current discussion about Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) for Rye, there is a wide perception that there will be an increased displacement of car parking from the Town Centre, by those seeking casual parking away from the controlled area. Without parking control measures, the 31 unallocated and visitor places in this proposal could be attractive places for visitors to Rye to park. The Developer hopes that car use by the residents in the proposal will decrease and states that the allocation meets the ESCC parking formula. However, in Aug 17, ESCC decided that car parking was inadequate and little improvement in provision is seen in the latest proposal. *Question: Is the parking provision sufficient?*
- **Access:** The entrance to the development has been moved by around three cars' length westwards to the site of the Queen Adelaide. This is claimed to improve the safety and meet earlier objections. However, the access is still close to the railway line and Fire Station egress. Pavement improvements are required on the north side of Ferry Road on the approach to the railway crossing. ESCC in Aug 17 objected to the arrangements for access and connectivity. *Question: Is the access now appropriate and safe?*
- **The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).** In Sep 17, ESCC found that more information was required on the FRA to allow others to understand the proposal. Some issues have now been addressed; the revision includes:

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<sup>1</sup> Calculation is below.

- the need for a **SUDS system** to handle surface water northwards to the existing sewer. *Question: What is its design?*
- The need for an **emergency evacuation plan** in the event of a flood. The plan involves evacuation to a shelter in the Community Centre, Conduit Hill. *Question: Has this arrangement been approved by Rother DC?*
- **Sewerage:** S Water reported in June 2017 that there would be inadequate sewerage handling in the short term; adding that “it would take several years before adequate infrastructure could be provided”. It is known that there are existing capacity issues in the immediate location, resulting in occasional spillage behind Ferry Road, particularly after extreme rainfall. S Water indicates that an extended new link (rising main) is required to link the development to an existing pumping station 1.3 km to the SE. *Question: Given that it is not clear whether this work is in the Utility's capital core programme, how will it be dovetailed with the development?*
- **Developer's Contribution:** *What is the agreement for CIL and S106 and what about 30% affordable homes?*
- **Wider Impacts:** *Question: Has the impact of around 150 more residents in Rye been addressed by agencies such as NHS for health services and the Academy for education?*

Anthony Kimber PhD  
For RNPSG

23 January 2019



<b>Lower School Site (Ferry Road) 2017 - 2019 Proposals: An illustration of Residents and Vehicles</b>											
<b>2017</b>						<b>2019</b>					
<b>Houses</b>		<b>Flats</b>		<b>Total</b>		<b>Houses</b>		<b>Flats</b>		<b>Total</b>	
43		29		72		38		27		65	
<b>Occupants by unit size</b>				<b>Vehicles</b>		<b>Occupants by unit size</b>				<b>Vehicles</b>	
13 x4	40	24x2	40	30 + 25		13 x4	40	22x2	48	25 + 25	
21x3	45	5x1	7	30 + 7		18x3	40	5x1	7	30 + 7	
9x2	15			10		7x2	12			8	
100		57		<b>102</b>		92		55		<b>95</b>	
<b>157 people with some 102 vehicles</b>						<b>147 people with some 95 vehicles</b>					
<b>Parking provision in 2017 = 92</b>				<b>92</b>		<b>Parking provision in 2019 = 94</b>				<b>94</b>	
<b>(11 visitor)</b>						<b>(63 allocated; 19 unallocated; 12 for visitors)</b>					