

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Hall, Rye, on  
Monday 2 September 2019**

**PRESENT** Councillors Lord Ampthill, David Bookless, Mike Boyd (**Mayor**), Jonathan Breeds, Cheryl Creaser, Rebekah Gilbert (**Deputy Mayor**), Pat Hughes, Jo Kirkham, Andi Rivett, Andy Stuart, Sam Wood

**IN ATTENDANCE** Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Jessica Neame – Deputy Town Clerk Designate; Cllr Howard Norton (RDC); Cllr Keith Glazier (ESCC); The Reverend Christopher Breeds; Colonel Anthony Kimber – RNPSG Vice-Chair; Charlie Harkness – *Rye News*; 3 members of the public

*The meeting commenced at 6.30pm.*

**77 PRAYERS**

In the absence of the Mayor’s Chaplain, Prayers were said by the Reverend Christopher Breeds.

**78 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence – and the reasons as lodged with the Clerk – were accepted from Cllrs John Breeds, Chris Hoggart, Ian Potter, Shaun Rogers and Sam Souster.

It was noted that the Mayor’s Chaplain, The Reverend Canon David Frost and Cllr Gennette Stevens were unable to attend.

**79 CODE OF CONDUCT**

The interests following were disclosed:

Cllr Stuart *item 86* Involved with the Rye Arts Festival’s annual display of publicity material in the town.

**80 PARKING**

Cllrs Gilbert and Wood invited the Council to consider:

**(a)** Asking East Sussex County Council and Rother District Council to implement amendments to their proposed implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement so as to address the overwhelming concerns raised by local businesses in a recent petition.

**(b)** Designing an appropriate parking strategy for Rye to meet current and future needs as well as mitigate any predicted adverse effects to business as a result, prior to the implementation of a CPE scheme.

They added that both of the above considerations would allow Rye Town Council, local stakeholders and RDC to constructively assess the likely impact of CPE on trade, vehicle displacement, on and off-street parking and the requirement for more visitor spaces in car parks - most of which are located outside of the proposed CPE zones.

Cllr Wood advised that 55 businesses signed the petition – and that one of the main concerns is the prospect of the loss of 1 hour’s permitted/free onstreet parking in the

town. Businesses accept that more effective onstreet parking enforcement is required but it needs to form part of a wider parking strategy to accommodate vehicle displacement. Once CPE is introduced it is likely to be permanent – and so it needs to be fit for purpose at the outset. The Business Forum has been receiving mixed responses from ESCC's CPE team. Businesses are seeking RTC's support.

Cllr Amphill advised that, aside from responding to pressure to ask ESCC to introduce CPE within Rother, RDC currently has a limited role in this matter. However, RDC could be invited to consider the likely problem of vehicle displacement. He added that ESCC intends to review the operation of the Rother CPE scheme a year or so after its implementation.

Cllr Glazier understood that officers had responded to the representations made by the Rye Area Business Forum. ESCC is following a process set out in law – and the proposed scheme is currently with the Department of Transport. The (3-week) formal consultation is likely to start on 7 September and, when the responses have been analysed, any necessary amendments will be made. The revised CPE implementation date is summer 2020.

Cllr Glazier recalled that RTC had originally supported the suggestion that parking should be decriminalized.

The scheme will need to be self-funding. Use of a ticket machine will provide CPE officers with an indication of when a vehicle was parked – hence, the need to discontinue 1 hour of free/permitted parking.

Cllr Glazier suggested that a number of the concerns being expressed could, usefully, have been raised 3 years ago.

Cllr Wood responded that he had not been aware of there having been discussions on CPE until relatively recently. The trading environment was more challenging than 3 years ago.

Cllr Jonathan Breeds recalled a number of lively meetings in recent years at which, those attending had expressed their frustration about the lack of police enforcement of onstreet parking violations. Cllr Glazier did alert RTC to the possible repercussions of introducing CPE but RTC felt under pressure to support something – and agreed to the 'fast track' implementation timetable.

Cllr Hughes suggested that the business community appeared to have joined the debate somewhat late in the day. She and former Councillor, Berni Fiddimore had observed that business were not making use of the town's car parks. She suggested that commencing onstreet charging at 9am would be preferable – and considered the proposed charges (40p for 1 hour and 80p for two) to be very reasonable. She hoped that the problem of 'Blue Badge abuse' would be addressed.

Cllr Gilbert emphasised that the business community is not saying 'no' to enforcement – just that any scheme needs to be 'right for Rye'. ESCC must take note of the responses to the consultations and recognise that there is a 'bigger picture' to consider.

The Mayor read out Amber Rudd's letter to him of 29 August in which she relayed information she had obtained from Cllr Glazier. He added that he was aware of an initiative that could see greater Police enforcement prior to CPE being introduced.

The Clerk was asked to distribute, to Members, a paper drafted for the Parking Strategy Review WG by Colonel Kimber on the RNP and parking considerations.

**Clerk**

Colonel Kimber advised that there are 900 car parking spaces in the Parish – but a number of car parks (notably Gibbet Marsh) are not being fully utilised. Signage needs to be improved. Realistically, there are limited options for the creation of new car parks.

Comments from other members of the public included:

- The lay-by outside The George is likely to be unavailable for some time and the restoration work will put pressure on onstreet parking spaces.
- Over the years, parishioners have regularly complained to RTC about traffic congestion because of hazardous street parking.
- Employees driving into Rye should receive concessions to encourage them to use Rye's car parks – especially during the run-up to Christmas.
- It is human nature to want to park for free and as close to your destination as possible. People are parking as far from the town centre as Valley Park.

**RESOLVED 1 To write to ESCC asking it to confirm that it has received**

–

**and logged – the Business Forum's petition.**

**Clerk**

Cllr Bookless suggested that the Business Forum's concerns should not be allowed to delay the pressing need to introduce effective onstreet parking enforcement.

**RESOLVED 2 To arrange another meeting of the Parking Strategy Review WG – ensuing that all 3 tiers of local government are represented.**

**Clerk**

## **81 MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported that recent events/places he had attended included the Rye Festival of the Sea, the Rye Country Fayre and the Cinque Ports Bowls Tournament (which Rye had not competed in for many years).

*The Mayor adjourned the meeting for the report of the County Councillor for Rye; the Reports of the Rye Rother District Councillors and Public Question Time. (See APPENDIX A.)*

*The meeting reconvened.*

## **82 FINANCE**

### **82.1 Heritage Centre**

#### **a) Progress Report**

The Heritage Centre Manager, Louisa O'Shaughnessy spoke to her written report – adding/highlighting:

- Total till takings for August were £14,947.02 – down £1,242 on last year – and £2,647 under budget.
- Town Model viewings are holding up but visitors are spending less in the shop.
- The HC had a stall at the Festival of the Sea – principally to promote the HC to residents. A peg board game was created

specially and a cheap gazebo was purchased. A small surplus of £85 was generated.

- Unfortunately, the 'Meet the Maker' events did not result in dramatically-increased sales. However, the associated social media activity did raise the HC's profile.

**b) Payments and Income**

**RESOLVED To receive and adopt the Income by Customer Summaries and Expenses by Supplier Summaries for June-July 2019.**

**c) Budget Monitor**

**RESOLVED To receive and note the actual income and expenditure against budget to 31 July 2019.**

**82.2 Town Hall**

**a) Payments**

The Clerk advised that, because TH income tends to consist mainly of weddings receipts, an Income Report is no longer produced. Details of income to date may be found in the Budget Monitor.

**RESOLVED To receive an Expenses Summary for June-July 2019.**

**b) Budget Monitor**

**RESOLVED To receive and note the actual income and expenditure against budget to 31 July 2019.**

**82.3 Account Balances**

**RESOLVED To receive a Statement of Account Balances as at 31 July 2019.**

**82.4 Earmarked Reserves**

**RESOLVED To receive a Statement of Earmarked Reserves as at 31 July 2019.**

**83 DASA**

Members were invited to consider the RNPSG Vice Chairman's Recommendation.

The RNPSG Vice-Chairman, Colonel Kimber stated that the RNP and DaSA appear to be 'in step'.

**RESOLVED To note the submission version of the Rother DaSA.**

**84 REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES**

The Clerk advised that RDC was seeking comments on the review by 30 September.

It was noted that RDC is proposing to relocate the HI001 Polling District Station back to Tilling Green Community Centre (from Badger Gate).

**RESOLVED To support this proposal.**

**Clerk**

**85 HONORARY FREEMAN SCHEME**

Members were invited to review the scheme.

Discussion focused on the maximum number of Freeman/woman who should hold the award at any one time – and the minimum period of voluntary work expected.

It was noted that the scheme makes provision for there to be more than 8 Freeman/women at any one time.

**RESOLVED 1 To amend the scheme so that it specifies that nominees should have undertaken a voluntary role (or roles) for at least 10 years.**

**Clerk**

**RESOLVED 2 (At a future meeting) To consider Cllr Jonathan Breeds' suggestion that Honorary Freeman/women should be presented with a badge (as well as a scroll).**

**Clerk**

**86 FLY POSTING**

Council was asked to consider adopting the draft formal policy.

Comments included:

- Rye International Jazz Festival signs are widespread and remain displayed in the countryside many months after the event (as well as being displayed 5 months prior).
- The Jazz Festival is a commercial organisation and, strictly speaking, where there is no consent, its posters should be taken down; however, it brings revenue into the town.
- When seeking permission to display publicity material, an enforcement officer advised Rye Arts Festival that no action would be taken if it was displayed no earlier than a week before the Festival.
- The Sea Festival display material was displayed a week before the event.

**RESOLVED To approve the draft Fly Posting policy.**

**87 RECOGNITION OF LOCAL BUSINESSES**

Cllr Rivett asked Members to consider presenting local businesses that have traded for 25 years with a certificate recognising their achievement.

Cllr Stuart suggested that most of the pubs in Rye – and quite a few hotels and restaurants – would immediately qualify. He also queried whether checking the ethical credentials of past trading practices would be fair: given that society's views on what is – or is not - ethical can change over time.

**RESOLVED To ask Cllr Rivett to review his draft scheme.**

**Cllr Rivett**

*8.17 The Mayor adjourned the meeting for disrobing.*

*8.22 The meeting reconvened.*

**88 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 is likely to involve discussion on the terms for the disposal of property.**

**89 GENERAL RESERVE: REPLENISHING**

*Land adjacent to 7 Wish Ward* A meeting with the owners of number 7 had been arranged for w/c 9.9.19.

*Flat Mouth bust* The auctioneers had suggested the bust should be cleaned prior to auction – and had obtained an estimate of £1,200-£1,300 + VAT.

Cllr Stuart offered to obtain an opinion on the pros and cons of cleaning the bust from a friend with relevant expertise. **Clerk, Cllr Stuart**

**RESOLVED Not to have the bust cleaned for the time being.**

*Visitor Information relocation* A site assessment had been arranged at the Library w/c 9.9.19. Consideration was being given to how the Town Hall might be reconfigured. Rye Club had not responded to a follow up enquiry.

*Town Model (possible relocation)* Bridgepoint and Rye Museum have been approached. Electrosonics had advised that the sound and light show could last a number of years, if undisturbed. It had been asked to provide an estimate to replace the electronics and electrics.

*HC staff* The HCM had been informed about the relocation decision; the remaining HC staff members are being updated.

*The meeting ended at 8.40pm*

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

Cllr Glazier reported/advised that:

*South Undercliff A* parishioner had complained about congestion had suggested a bypass; however, there is virtually no chance of such a scheme being funded.

*A259 (Winchelsea)* He had received complaints about traffic backing up because of people using strimmers. It transpired that the users were being trained.

*A259 (New Road)* It had been 3 years since he – and other interested parties – had met with Highways England to discuss traffic calming. HE had suggested that it would erect new signs and would bid for funding for a suitable scheme. However, nothing appeared to have been taken forward and he had contacted HE to ask why this was the case.

In a few days it will be known how much money will be available to ESCC for service delivery in 2020-21.

**81 b) District Councillors' Reports**

Cllr Norton advised that RTC and RDC meetings often seem to clash.

As from May, there is a new administration in RDC. Over half of the Members are new to RDC. The administration comprises the Lib Dem, Labour, Green and Independent groups. So far, they are working well together.

The newly-elected Members are receiving intensive training.

RDC's financial settlement for 2020-21 is currently unknown.

There will be social and environmental initiatives in the New Year.

**81 c) Public Question Time**

There were no questions/contributions.