

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Hall, Rye, on
Monday 9 December 2019**

PRESENT Councillors David Amphill, David Bookless, Michael Boyd (**Mayor**), John Breeds, Cheryl Creaser, Rebekah Gilbert (**Deputy Mayor**), Chris Hoggart, Jo Kirkham, Andi Rivett, Andy Stuart

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Paul Goring – Rye Town Sergeant; County Councillor Keith Glazier; 13 members of the public

The meeting commenced at 6.31pm.

116 PRAYERS

In the absence of the Mayor's Chaplain, these were said by the Town Sergeant.

117 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence – and the reasons as lodged with the Clerk – were accepted from Cllrs Pat Hughes, Ian Potter, Sam Souster and Sam Wood.

It was noted that the two Ward Members, Howard Norton and Gennette Stevens were unable to attend.

118 CODE OF CONDUCT

Cllr Hoggart *items 124,125, 126* Trustee of the proposed HC CIO

Mayoral Announcements

The Mayor reported that recent events/places he had attended included: an additional meeting of the Standing Committee of the Confederation of the Cinque Ports; the Investiture of the Deputy Constable of Dover Castle; the Rye Christmas Festival. He considered that the Festival had exceeded previous standards and thanked all those who had been involved with its organisation.

*The Mayor adjourned the meeting for the report of the County Councillor for Rye; the Reports of the Rye Rother District Councillors; Public Question Time; the appointment of the Mayor Elect 2020-21 – and presentations by Dalia Redman, Jeremy Nobbs and Ben Hassall (See **APPENDIX A.**)*

The meeting reconvened.

119 DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY TOWNS

The meeting considered Dalia Redman's presentation with a view to agreeing a course of action.

**RESOLVED That the Clerk should meet with Mrs Redman in order to explore how RTC might be able to support her efforts to make the town more 'dementia-friendly'.
Clerk**

120 RYE RUGBY CLUB: RENT REVIEW

Members noted that:

- a) The next rent review (for the Club's exclusive use of the Freda Gardham Playing Field) is due 23 February 2020;
- b) The current rent payable to RTC is £500pa (frozen for the last 20 years or so);
- c) The current Rateable Value of 'the field and premises' is £5,400.

Comments from Members included: the Club appears to be working very hard to raise funds; it would have been helpful to have had the latest Club accounts available; RTC could freeze the rent for a year and then review the situation.

The Clerk advised that the sub-lease stipulates that rent reviews take place every 5 years.

RESOLVED To note that the Club has undertaken to provide accounts prior to Christmas – and to defer a decision until January. Clerk

121 MINUTES

To approve, as an accurate record, the Minutes of the Council meetings held on: 19 August 2019 (C8); 2 September 2019 (C9); 16 September 2019 (C10); 30 September 2019 (C11); 28 October 2019 (C12); 28 October 2019 (C13) and 11 November 2019 (C14).

122 AMENDED TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS

RESOLVED To adopt the amended Timetable (APPENDIX B).

123 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 items 124-128 (with the exception of the trustees of the proposed Heritage Centre charity who need be present for item 123) on the grounds that they include consideration of commercially sensitive information or staff terms of employment.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting for disrobing.

The meeting reconvened.

124 PROPOSED RYE HERITAGE CENTRE CHARITY

On behalf of the trustees, Simon Parsons (SP) and Anthony Kimber (AK) spoke to their Group's business proposal – adding/highlighting:

- The Group has received considerable public support for its desire to ensure that Model remains accessible to the public at its current location.
- The Group had received guidance from staff and members of the public (volunteers).
- The business proposal divides the HC into 3 physical areas – Model Room, sales area and (first floor) exhibition space.
- The Group considers that the HC has not achieved its full potential and that there should be a greater emphasis on Rye's history (in particular, maritime).
- The Group had examined the operation of the HC since 2005 (when RDC was grant funding the TIC element to the tune of c£50k pa).
- Currently, the biggest costs are staffing, business rates and certain overheads.
- The Group has the ability to raise funds and its objective would be to ensure that the HC is sustainable.

- The Group is currently a 'self-declared' small charity; however, as soon as it receives the 'go-ahead' from RTC it will seek to register as a Foundation CIO with the Charity Commission.
- In Year 1 it is aiming for a turnover of £60,000-£70,000.
- The Group is seeking a lease of 3-5 years – at a peppercorn rent – with a 12-month break clause. It would also like 6 hours of 'handover guidance' from the HCM.
- Access to furniture & fittings – and unpicking the Town Hall's involvement in the HC's systems, procedures, insurances etc – would need to be negotiated.
- In order to safeguard its future, the charity would like RTC to sell the Town Model to it for a nominal sum.
- The Group would like to attend the Council meeting scheduled for 27 January to present a progress report (including more detailed business information).
- Once it has secured the promise of a lease, the Group would like to be as open and transparent as possible.
- The extensive list of prospective volunteers includes former and current staff – and those with expertise in business, tourism, retailing and marketing (including social media).
- The retail offer will focus on the top 10 best-selling items.
- The top priorities will be promoting the Model and enhancing the exhibition space.
- In order to make it a more manageable read, the business proposal is an outline document (it could have been much longer).

Comments from Members (not addressed above) included: there is considerable demand for volunteers from charity shops, the Museum and Lamb House; without a peppercorn rent the venture might struggle to be viable; a previous operator of the HC vacated early – leaving debts; the proposal's assessment of the risks is basic; the proposal does not mention working/co-operating with the Museum; there would be some duplication with the TH Information Point; the trustees appeared to have achieved a lot within a comparatively short space of time.

(With the exception of Cllr Hoggart) The trustees of the proposed charity left the Chamber.

125 FUTURE OF THE RYE HERITAGE CENTRE FROM APRIL 2020

Members considered carefully the charity's business proposal – as well as the points/concerns raised at item **124**.

RESOLVED (with Cllr Hoggart abstaining) **To offer the Group a tenancy, in principle - at a peppercorn rent - on the basis that the Group is able to accept the following:**

- a) The term of the lease to be 3 or 5 years;**
- b) The lease to incorporate a 12-month break clause (initiated by either party);**
- c) No artefacts to be transferred (either permanently or temporarily) from the Town Hall to the Heritage Centre;**
- d) Should the initiative not be successful, the Council shall not be liable for the tenant's outstanding debts (if any);**
- e) Ownership of the Town Model to remain with the Town Council (The Council may ask the charity to fund/contribute towards the cost of insuring the Model);**
- f) The charity being registered with the Charity Commission prior to taking possession of the Centre (with the Group being encouraged to submit its proposal to register as a Foundation CIO without delay).**

g) A progress report (containing more detailed business information) being presented to the Council at its meeting scheduled for 27 January 2020. Clerk

126 RELOCATION OF VISITOR INFORMATION

The Clerk advised that two members of staff had advised that they do not wish to be redeployed to one of the two new Information Assistant posts with effect from April 2020.

RESOLVED To ask the HR Working Group to consider – and recommend – appropriate redundancy payments. HRWG

127 ANNUAL LEAVE (TOWN CLERK AND DTCD)

Members were invited to consider the HR Working Group's Recommendation.

RESOLVED That, at 31.3.20:

a) Richard Farhall be paid for 2.5 weeks of any untaken annual leave – and be permitted to carry over (into 2020-21) any remaining balance of untaken leave.

b) Jessica Neame be paid for 1.5 weeks of any untaken annual leave – and be permitted to carry over (into 2020-21) any remaining balance of untaken leave. RF

128 REMUNERATION (TOWN CLERK AND DTCD)

Council was asked to consider the HR Working Group's Recommendation.

RESOLVED That the Draft 2020-21 Budget should make provision for the hourly rate increases following: Rye Town Clerk - £1.50; Deputy Town Clerk - £1.00. RF

The meeting ended at 8.46pm

Date Chairman

APPENDIX A

Rye Town Council C15

9th December 2019

ADJOURNMENT

a) District Councillors' Reports

The Ward Members were not present and no written reports had been received.

b) County Councillor's Report

Cllr Glazier reported/advised that:

The George – scaffolding He would forward information he had received to the Clerk. ESCC cannot stipulate the design of scaffolding, its construction, nor when work must commence once it has been erected. It must issue a permit if the application process has been followed correctly. However, ESCC highways has met with Costain (the relevant contractor).

Pot holes He had invited the Highways Steward to inspect some in the town recently. Please continue to report them via the East Sussex Highways web site.

c) Public Question Time

Affordable housing Colonel Kimber (RNPSG Vice Chairman) reported that, following RDC's approval of the Lower School site housing development applicant – which saw the developer being exempted from the requirement to provide affordable homes on the site on 'viability' grounds – he had discussed the matter with RDC's Planning Committee Chairman and RDC Planning.

The problem is is that the viability of a development is calculated on the basis of estimated land value – and not its purchase price. The c£78,000 that the LSS developer is required to pay in lieu of building affordable homes on the site was calculated by an independent valuer.

Mindful that the Planning & Townscape Committee had asked him to explore the possibility of forming a Community Land Trust to provide lost cost housing on the land occupied by the former Tilling Green School, Colonel Kimber advised that, with the Council's approval, he was happy to spend more time on CLTs and ways to increase the supply of affordable housing in the Parish next year.

RX Birdwatchers had confirmed that turtle doves have been observed in the elder within the 'railway corridor' [subject to a TPO]. This had been drawn to RDC's attention in relation to the LSS planning consent but was unlikely to be considered significant.

Tree planting Colonel Kimber advised that RDC may be able to provide some funding and REG will be considering whether to get involved at its January meeting. It should be possible to identify suitable space towards the periphery of the Parish.

The Mayor suggested that a number of Members might like to assist Colonel Kimber with his efforts to determine how the supply of affordable homes might be increased. Colonel Kimber observed that interested individuals could be sourced from the RNPSG.

d) Dementia-Friendly Towns

Daliea Redman's (DR) presentation included:

- For some years, the Alzheimer's Society has been facilitating/encouraging the formation of local dementia action alliances – to increase public awareness of dementia and the needs of those with the condition.
- There are 1m dementia sufferers in the UK and it is more cost-effective to keep them in their homes.
- Volunteers are trained to train others in how to spot those with dementia and how to support them in day-to-day situations.
- In September 2019, the number of Dementia Friends in the UK reached 3m.
- Businesses are encouraged to allow their staff to be trained. The businesses can be identified by way of a sticker displayed in a window.
- The Bexhill DAA is a successful one that has been running for 6-7 years.
- The Hastings Alliance received £4,500 from its local CCG. Morrisons and Priory Meadow are dementia-friendly. Sainsbury's has a 'slow till'.
- Due to funding issues and DR being unwell for a while, the Rye DAA has not progressed as much.
- The Rye DAA was grateful to receive a £500 grant from the PCC.
- DR has spoken with – or trained staff at – ESFRS and the heath food shop. Heringtons has supported some events. Jempsons has not responded to approaches.
- DR would like to publish a Rye & District dementia-friendly directory.
- DR would be happy to train Councillors.

e) Rye Rugby Club

Jeremy Nobbs (Secretary) and Ben Hassall (Treasurer) reported that:

- The current Committee took office around 5 years ago – when the Club was in a poor state: leaking roof, overgrown trees, electricity problems; a reduced number of players – and the loss of the youth programme (there were 100 young players at one stage).
- It is only within the last 2-3 years that the Club has come out of 'fire-fighting' mode.
- The Club's turnover has gone from c£37,000pa to c£60,000pa.
- The Club would like a second adult team and is seeking expressions of interest in women's rugby sessions.
- All Clubs are having difficulty attracting young people – they seem to be less interested in organised sport generally.
- The club house now has a new roof and guttering; refurbished bar, beer cellar and wcs; replacement plumbing and waste water system – and doors and windows are being replaced.
- Tree maintenance is up-to-date and the grassed area is mown regularly at a cost of £4,000pa.
- There remains a long list of maintenance tasks – which will cost an estimated £50,000. Once completed, the lifespan of the clubhouse should be extended by c15 years.
- Over the last 2 years, the Club has diversified its revenue sources by allowing Rye Town FC and Hastings Youth Academy to play there; letting the club

house for parties, meetings, wedding receptions, wakes; making the field available for car & bike shows, caravanning etc.

- Membership would need to double in order to generate sufficient funding to cover expenditure.
- The sub-lease is a full repairing one.
- Most revenue is generated May-August.
- The Club has fixed overheads of £1,500pm and needs to raise £2,000pm to keep going.
- Last year the Club finally made a small surplus of £370 (reinvested).
- The recent long run of wet weather has resulted in games being cancelled.
- Over the last 3 months, Committee members have contributed £3,000 of their own money.
- There are currently 3 changing rooms but, potentially, this could be increased to 5.

f) Appointment of Mayor Elect 2020-21

Cllr Creaser proposed – and Cllr Lord Ampthill seconded – Cllr Gilbert.

There being no other nominations, Cllr Gilbert was declared to be appointed.

APPENDIX B

Rye Town Council C15

9th December 2019

Timetable of Meetings 2019-20 (AMENDED)

Meetings are held normally on Monday at 6.30pm

Month	Council	Planning & Townscape	Personnel <i>Meets as and when required</i>
May	2E 20MM(6.30pm) 21CF (Tues) 21SH	28(Tues)	
June	24 AR	10 24	
July		8 22	
August	<i>Normally no meetings</i>	<i>Normally no meetings</i>	<i>Normally no meetings</i>
September	2	2 16 30	
October	28	14 28	
November		11 25	
December	9 NOM A	9 16	
January	27 PRE	13 27	
February		10 24	
March	4 ATM (Wed)	9	

		23	
April	6 NOM B	6 20	
May	8 MM(11am) Fri 11 CF 21SH (in Rye)	5 Tues 18	

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| MM Mayor Making | CF Committee Formation |
| ATM Annual Town Meeting | BUD Budget Meeting |
| E Parish/Town Elections | PRE Agreeing precept |
| TBD To be determined | AR Annual Return approval |
| NOM A Nominations for Mayor Elect (not in an Election year) | SH Speakership Handover |
| NOM B Nominations for Deputy Mayor Elect (not in an Election year) | |