

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held via Zoom on
Monday 24 August 2020**

PRESENT Councillors David Amphill, David Bookless, Michael Boyd (**Mayor**), John Breeds, Jonathan Breeds, Cheryl Creaser, Rebekah Gilbert (**Deputy Mayor**), Chris Hoggart, Jo Kirkham, Ian Potter, Andi Rivett, Shaun Rogers [*part*], Andy Stuart, Sam Wood

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Jessica Neame – Deputy Town Clerk; 4 members of the public

The meeting commenced at 6.31pm.

At the invitation of the Mayor – and for the benefit of members of the public – the Clerk summarized the ‘ground rules’ for the meeting.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence – and the reasons as lodged with the Clerk – were accepted from Cllrs Hughes and Souster.

2 CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no disclosures of interest – nor requests for dispensation.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED To approve, as an accurate record, the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 23 March 2020 (C18).

The Mayor adjourned the meeting for questions/contributions from members of the public (see APPENDIX).

The meeting reconvened.

RESOLVED To bring forward consideration of item 7.

7 LAND AT STRAND QUAY

Members were invited to consider the Environment Agency’s request for the Town Council’s view on the use of its land by visiting motorcyclists.

Comments from Members included:

- There issue of access to the EA land is not linked directly to speeding and unnecessary noise associated with some riders.
- If riders are displaced from the EA land there could be more incidents of parking on pavements and private land in the vicinity.
- Biker groups organise/encourage charitable work.
- The MAG is well-placed to help to promote responsible behaviour amongst bikers visiting Rye. It has indicated that it would prepared, in the future, to set up occasional information/liaison stands on the Strand Quay.
- It is known that a proportion of bikers return to Rye by car – with their families.
- It has been noticeable that incidences of speeding and unnecessary noise have reduced somewhat – perhaps because of the increased number of Police speed checks.

- The Rugby Club might be interested in accommodating bikers in order to generate additional income.
- Access by wheelchair users and those with push chairs should be retained.
- Bikers have been accessing the EA land for many years. It is an attractive place to park because it is free (which is the case generally) and secure – riders can keep an eye on their (sometimes expensive) machines.
- RTC should continue to press for the Police to address speed and unnecessary noise.
- It is understood that the Harbour Master's preference is to continue to permit access by riders – however, it is obliged to consider the complaints it has received.
- Unnecessary noise generated by bikers is known to have contributed to the decision of one household to move away from the town.
- RTC should advise the biking media that Rye welcomes responsible bikers.
- A press release has been drafted.

RESOLVED 1 To advise the EA why RTC's preference is for bikers' access to the Agency's land at Strand Quay to continue. Clerk

RESOLVED 2 To issue a suitable press release and work with the MAG to produce a suitable poster. Clerk

7.05pm Cllr Rogers left the meeting.

4 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2019-20 AND ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2019-20

RESOLVED 1 To receive the annual [non COVID-19] Risk Assessments (2020) and agree the 'further actions' identified.

RESOLVED 2 To receive and adopt the recommendations/suggestions contained with the Report of the Internal Auditor, Angela Alexander (report dated 17.8.20) - and to receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report 2019-20 (within the AGAR).

RESOLVED 3 To receive the Review of Internal Controls 2020 and approve the recommended controls therein.

RESOLVED 4 To receive and approve the updated Summary of Main Day-to Day Financial Controls (as at 1.4.20).

RESOLVED 5 To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2019-20 (Section 1 of the AGAR).

RESOLVED 6 To approve the (Consolidated) Town Council Accounts for 2019-20.

RESOLVED 7 To approve the Annual Accounting Statements 2019-20 (Section 2 of the AGAR).

RESOLVED 8 To re-appoint the Internal Auditor, Angela Alexander at a fee of £265.

RESOLVED 9 To approve the Internal Auditor's Terms of Reference for 2020-21.

RESOLVED 10 To approve the draft Internal Audit Plan 2020-21.

5 COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

RESOLVED To resume the agreed Timetable of Meetings 2020-21, conducting meetings via Zoom until such time as it is considered safe to meet 'in person'.

6 COVID-19

RESOLVED To record the Council's gratitude to Rye Mutual Aid, Rye Food Bank and other local voluntary organisations - and individuals - who have worked tirelessly to help others during the 'acute stage' of the pandemic.

8 MAYORALTY

Members noted that The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020 allow councils to postpone the annual election of a Chairman/Mayor from May 2020 to May 2021 – or some earlier date.

Members agreed with Cllr Potter's suggestion that Members should be invited to express a preference for either (or neither) of the options following:

A Postpone the appointment of a Mayor and Deputy Mayor until 3 May 2021 (the Bank Holiday when Mayor Making would normally take place).

B Proceed immediately to appoint immediately to appoint a Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the remainder of 2020-21.

VOTE A – 1; B – 12; abstain - 1

9 MAYOR 2020-21

Cllr Jonathan Breeds proposed – and Cllr Sam Wood seconded – Cllr Gilbert.

There being no other nominations Cllr Boyd declared Cllr Gilbert elected.

Because Cllr Gilbert was not in a position to sign her acceptance of office form, Cllr Boyd continued to chair the meeting.

10 DEPUTY MAYOR 2020-21

Cllr Creaser proposed – and Cllr Wood seconded – Cllr Rivett.

There being no other nominations Cllr Boyd declared Cllr Rivett elected.

The meeting ended at 7.28pm

Date Chairman

ADJOURNMENT

7 Land at Strand Quay Steve Mallett (SE rep, Motorcycle Action Group) made the comments following:

- MAG is riders' rights organization promoting responsible biking.
- The MAG is in favour of the continued availability of the EA's land at Strand Quay.
- MAG is aware that, during the COVID lockdown, there was an issue with social distancing.
- A minority of bikers speed on the approaches to Rye and generate unnecessary noise.
- MAG is happy to help facilitate the continued responsible use of the land.
- Some sort of 'Behave or you will lose this facility' poster might usefully be displayed.