

Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Hall, Rye, on Monday 12 February 2018

PRESENT Councillors Sam Barnes, Mike Boyd (**Deputy Mayor**), Jonathan Breeds (**Mayor**), Cheryl Creaser, Justin Erswell, Bernardine Fiddimore, Rebekah Gilbert, Pat Hughes, Jo Kirkham, Ray Prewer, Andi Rivett, Shaun Rogers, Andy Stuart

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Paul Goring – Town Sergeant; East Sussex County Cllr Keith Glazier; Rother District Cllr Gennette Stevens; John Minter (*Rye News*); 2 members of the public

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm.

99 PRAYERS

In the absence of the Mayor’s Chaplain Prayers were said by the Mayor.

100 APOLOGIES

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

It was noted that Rother Cllr Lord Amphill was unable to attend.

101 CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no disclosures or interest nor requests for dispensation.

102 MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

There was none.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting for the reports of the County and District Councillors, a presentation by Chris Hoggart – and Public Question Time (See APPENDIX A.)

103 ENGLAND COAST PATH

Comments on the presentation included: the project should be supported in principle; the Government must not renege on its intention to give funding to ESCC for maintenance; ESCC should undertake to ring fence the funding; the Eastbourne-Camber section must not be installed in such a way as to risk jeopardising any future proposal to reinstate the Rye-Camber tramway.

RESOLVED To support the England Coast Path project in principle.

104 COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED To adopt, as an accurate record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2017 (C11).

105 COMMITTEE MINUTES

(a) **Planning & Townscape**

RESOLVED To adopt the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning & Townscape Committee held on 27 November 2017 (PT13), 11 December 2017 (PT14), 15 January 2018 (PT15) and 29 January 2018 (PT16).

(b) Policy, Resources & GP

RESOLVED To adopt the Minutes of the meeting of the Policy, Resources & GP Committee held on 27 November (PR04).

106 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

RESOLVED To note that, because of a communication breakdown, a publicity flyer was not published with the February *Fixtures* – and, in order to give parishioners a month’s notice of the meeting, to move the ATM date from 7 March to 4 April.

Clerk

107 FINANCE

a) Heritage Centre: Nat West Bank

RESOLVED To allow the Town Clerk and General Assistant to view (only) account transactions online by making the declaration provided.

b) Electronic Payments

RESOLVED To approve the draft Electronic Payments policy (APPENDIX B).

108 MEETINGS 2018-19

RESOLVED To adopt the draft Timetable of Meetings 2018-19.

109 FERRY ROAD NURSERY

The update from the Council’s representative, Cllr Creaser included:

- There is a strong relationship between staff (caring and professional) and the children.
- The play group has been in existence for 50 years.
- It is currently full and it needs to increase its capacity.
- The facility received a good Ofsted Report.
- A Building Committee is working with the Senior Management Team on plans for the proposed extension (including access considerations).
- Fundraising is underway for the extension – the Nursery could be considered for any CIL receipts?
- She and Cllrs Gilbert and Rivett have been working on a fundraising ball – to be held on 21 April at the Mermaid. Cllr Gilbert, in particular, has put a lot of time into engaging with local businesses.

110 7 WISH WARD (LAND ADJACENT)

Members were invited to consider establishing a small working group to explore possible uses.

RESOLVED Not to take this forward, for the time being.

111 RYE CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

RESOLVED To thank formally the Rye Christmas Festival Committee for organising another successful event.

112 DISCOUNTED ACCOMMODATION

RESOLVED 1 Not to proceed with the proposed ‘Deposit Grant Reserve’;

Amended Discounted Accommodation Policy

Following consideration of the Clerk's Draft, the Clerk was asked to adjust the document to take into account the comments following:

- A judge had advised informally that, because RTC would not be providing social housing, the proposed restrictions in relation to, for example, disclosing savings, are unenforceable. Additionally, RTC would be entitled to receive information about prospective applicants' convictions only – and not, for example, unsuccessful prosecutions.
- Adding 'studying' and 'working/owning a business' to the local connection criteria – and to allow applicants draw on more than one criteria in order to meet the minimum 10 years qualifying criterion.
- Referring to the document as a 'scheme' rather than a 'policy'.

RESOLVED 2 To re-consider the document once the amendments proposed had been incorporated. **Clerk**

Cllr Hughes declared an interest in the item following by virtue of being a Director of Rye Amenity CIC.

113 RYE ALLOTMENTS

Members noted that Rye Amenity CIC had applied to RDC to have the Love Lane and South Undercliff allotments added to the Rother Register of Community Assets.

RESOLVED To support the application. **Clerk**

The meeting ended at 7.36pm

Date Chairman

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

Cllr Glazier reported that:

Finance Since Christmas County has been working on its 2018-19 Budget. The Government has announced that ESCC can raise last year's 2% ASC increase to 3%. This will mean that County's share of Council Tax for 2018-19 will increase by a total of 5.99%. However, it still needs to find savings of £22m. ESCC has just found out that the Government will be giving it a one-off payment of £1.6m towards ASC. The aforementioned will see a Band D Council Tax payer paying ESCC an additional £1.50 per week in 2018-19.

Household Waste & Recycling sites ESCC is looking at closing the sites at Wadhurst and Forest Row.

Grass cutting ESCC is likely to reduce urban cuts from 6pa to 2 (the same as rural areas).

b) England Coast Path

Chris Hoggart's (CH - England Coast Path Advisor to Natural England) presentation included:

- The Eastbourne to Camber section is in the early stages of implementation.
- When completed, at 2,700 miles, the England Coast Path will be the longest in the world.
- The section in NE England has been completed.
- The project completion date is April 2020.
- Where possible, the area of land between the path and the waterline will be publicly-accessible.
- The completion date for the Eastbourne to Camber section is late 2019.
- The surface will be as natural as possible, with minimal signage.
- The England Coast Path will be maintained by ESCC with funding provided via Natural England.
- There are issues around routing the path from RHNR – the old tram track may have to be utilised – and it may be necessary to create a temporary section until the tidal defence wall is finished.
- In areas of cliff erosion the route of the path will need to be 'flexible'.
- CH is meeting with landowners locally and has arranged drop-in events for members of the public.
- Once preparatory work for the Eastbourne to Camber section has been concluded, a report will be submitted to the Secretary of State to be 'signed off' by the Planning Inspectorate.

Cllr Fiddimore *Can the Harbour Road cycle path be utilised?*

CH This has not been decided; however, two of the criteria for the path are that it should run as close to the sea as possible – and users should be able to view the sea.

John Minter *Is CH aware of the dangerous crossing point for pedestrians at the Rye end of Harbour Road?*

CH Yes – Highways has been consulted but it is not yet known if a solution can be found.

c) Reports of the Rother District Councillors

Cllr Stevens – a Member of RDC's CPE Working Group – advised that it was likely that, at its meeting scheduled for 21 May, RDC will ask ESCC to introduce a CPE scheme for Rother.

In response to complaints about overflowing recycling containers she had visited Gibbet Marsh and the area had, subsequently, been tidied up. A new waste collection contractor will be appointed in 2019 and she hoped that this would result in an improved service at Gibbet Marsh.

RDC is likely to raise its Council Tax in 2018-19 to just below the referendum trigger threshold.

She had been appointed to RDC's Housing Action Group. This had been established to address housing problems – for example, in the last year homelessness had risen by a third, there is a shortage of affordable housing, applications for temporary accommodation had increased – and private rents have soared. In the last year, 83 new affordable homes only had been added to the housing stock in Rother.

Cllr Creaser *Where are the 83 homes located?*

Cllr Stevens Mainly Bexhill – with a few in Rye.

Cllr Fiddimore observed that RDC appears to be happy to give planning consent for new executive-style homes – for which demand is limited - whilst being aware of the chronic shortage of affordable homes.

Cllr Gilbert reported that the state of the Gibbet Marsh Recycling Point regularly reaches the point of being unhygienic because the containers are not emptied often enough.

Cllr Gilbert advised that the Rye Area Business Forum would like an opportunity to discuss CPE – and she asked Cllr Stevens to let her know when she could attend a meeting.

Cllr Prewer *Will the introduction of CPE result in the provision of more parking spaces?*

Cllr Stevens This is being looked at.

d) Public Question Time

There were no questions/contributions on other matters.

**RYE TOWN COUNCIL
Electronic Payments Policy**

Wherever possible, payments are to be made by internet banking method. Payment by cheque is still possible where the payee expresses a clear preference for payment this way. In ALL circumstances, payments will be made to the PAYEE ONLY and not to a third party.

1. Documentation

- 1.1 Prior to any electronic payment, a (summary) BACs Payment Report will be produced detailing all payments that are to be made in the current payment run. This document will be completed by the appropriate Officer responsible for processing payments.
- 1.2 All source documents such as supplier invoices and other similar requests or supporting information for payments will be supplied alongside the BACs Payment Report.
- 1.3 The appropriate Officer will process all payments from the BACs Payment Report, via the Unity Trust Bank (UTB) online banking facility, in preparation for authorisation by two account signatories (as detailed on the bank mandate).
- 1.4 The BACs Payment Report and all source documents will be sent by email to all account signatories, with a request to log-in to the UTB online banking facility to approve payments.
 - a) The email will include scanned image(s) of invoices or other supporting information.
 - b) In the event that a signatory is not satisfied with the documentation, s/he should email the appropriate Officer, ensuring it is copied to all account signatories.
- 1.5 Whilst payments are pending authorisation, the appropriate Officer will monitor the bank account at frequent intervals until all outstanding payments are authorised.
- 1.6 Once authorised by two signatories, payments will be made from the account and will cease to be shown as 'awaiting authorisation'. The UTB account will also record the names of the account signatories that have authorised the transaction.
- 1.7 As soon as practical after the payments have been made from the bank account, the appropriate Officer will access the transaction record and print off the record showing authorisation. This record will then be filed with the

BACs Payment Report for that payment run, in lieu of the signatories initialling the cheque counterfoil.

2. Security

- 2.1 Each user of the online payment system has a different function which is pre-set by the bank and cannot be over-ruled. An appropriate Officer is authorised to view the account and create payments, but is unable to authorise payments. Account signatories are able to view payments pending and provide authorisation only. Each payment requires authorisation by two account signatories.
- 2.2 Each user has their own unique log-in details and password to access the UTB online banking facility. All log-in details will be held separately by each respective individual in a secure place.
- 2.3 Access to UTB online must be directly via the access page – **www.unity.co.uk** (which may be saved under 'favourites') and *not through a search engine or email link*. Computer auto-saving of bank log-in and password details is not permitted.

3. Audit

- 3.1 All records and reports of payments made through the online banking system will be made available to the Internal Auditor for validation during internal audits.