

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Hall, Rye, on  
Monday 16 September 2019**

**PRESENT** Councillors Lord Ampthill, David Bookless, Mike Boyd (**Mayor**), John Breeds, Cheryl Creaser, Rebekah Gilbert (**Deputy Mayor**), Chris Hoggart, Pat Hughes, Jo Kirkham, Ian Potter, Andi Rivett, Shaun Rogers, Sam Wood

**IN ATTENDANCE** Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Nicky Ledger – Rye Town Steward; John Minter – *Rye News*; 7 members of the public

*The meeting commenced at 6.30pm.*

**90 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence – and the reasons as lodged with the Clerk – were accepted from Cllrs Jonathan Breeds, Sam Souster and Andy Stuart.

It was noted that Cllrs Keith Glazier and Gennette Stevens had given their apologies.

**91 CODE OF CONDUCT**

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

**92 INTRODUCTION OF CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT (CPE)**

Members were invited to consider whether to comment on the formal consultation.

*With the consent of the meeting, the Mayor adjourned the meeting for contributions from the members of the public present (See **APPENDIX**).*

*6.50pm The meeting reconvened.*

The Mayor reminded the meeting that RTC had previously resolved to support the introduction of CPE ‘in principle’.

Comments from Members included:

- Businesses are not opposed to parking enforcement – so long as it is appropriate for Rye’s needs. The proposed ‘one size fits all’ Rother CPE scheme will affect Rye adversely.
- Introducing CPE in isolation is not the solution – it needs to be considered as part of a wider parking strategy.
- 90% of businesses in Rye are owned by those who also live in the Parish.
- Businesses are under financial stress as a result of Brexit and the fire at The George.
- It was a mistake for RTC to have agreed to the introduction of CPE ‘in principle’ without having any knowledge of what a scheme might entail.
- The old ‘lighter touch’ Traffic Warden parking enforcement regime had been largely effective.
- Parking enforcement remains a low Police priority.
- RDC – a key stakeholder – needs to identify additional off street parking to accommodate vehicles ‘displaced’ from the streets within the proposed CPE operational zone.

- Wealden DC can afford to provide free off street car parking because its tax base is much higher than RDC's.
- RTC has a role to play in pulling together the relevant stakeholders.
- Together with Battle TC, RTC had previously offered to fund jointly a PCSO to enforce parking violations; however, the Chief Constable declined to support the initiative.
- It is incorrect to suggest that businesses had not previously been involved in discussions about on street parking issues – Members had attended RDC meetings at which Neil Cunliffe had been present on behalf of the Chamber.
- RTC had agreed to the introduction of a 'fast track', 'as is' CPE scheme on the basis that implementation could be achieved by around April 2020 (rather than 2021-22).
- It is important that CPE should accommodate Rye's unique features.
- Parking meters will be unsightly and obstructive.
- Despite ESCC's protestations, it is not true that the existing parking restrictions will be incorporated within a CPE scheme unamended.
- A delay/pause would give local stakeholders more time to consider how the proposed scheme could be 'tweaked' to reflect Rye's specific circumstances.
- CPE will not be 'light touch' – the appointed contractor will be looking to make a profit.
- Following the closure of The George, some businesses have seen their turnover decrease by 15%.
- The Parking Strategy Review WG (which includes all three tiers of local government) needs to meet again.
- Drivers who have become used to parking for free in the town centre will gravitate towards streets on the periphery – such as Military Road.
- The Police do not have sufficient resources currently to enforce parking restrictions effectively.
- The needs of those with mobility difficulties should to be taken into account.
- Stakeholders in Battle appear to be supportive of the CPE scheme proposed there.
- RTC could ask ESCC to introduce the CPE model operated in Tenterden – which provides for 'Code 30 enforcement' to facilitate free parking.
- Karl Taylor has stated that ESCC would not support Code 30 enforcement on cost grounds.
- Gibbet Marsh Car Park remains under-utilised.
- Cllr Potter and Mike Eve advised RDC on how to increase take-up at Gibbet Marsh but their suggestions were not acted upon.
- Some business owners park all day on streets in the Citadel. This is counterproductive because it deprives potential customers of nearby free parking.

The Town Steward, Nicky Ledger (NL) added:

- He had been a CPE officer for Ashford BC for 3 years.
- In the course of his current work he finds it difficult to find a safe spot to work on the highway.
- In the interest of fairness, CPE has to be applied consistently.
- It is important that those with concerns respond to the current consultation by 27 September.
- ESCC has stated that it will review the operation of CPE within 12 months of its introduction.
- Generally, after CPE is introduced, people quickly adapt to it.

- Most visitors to Rye will be coming from areas with CPE (and so will know what to expect).
- In order to share costs, Ashford BC enforces on behalf of KCC.

**RESOLVED To withdraw RTC's support for the introduction of CPE, as currently proposed for Rye – and to encourage ESCC to engage with local stakeholders in order to devise a scheme that meets Rye's specific needs and circumstances.**

**Clerk**

*The meeting ended at 7.50pm*

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

## **APPENDIX**

*Rye Town Council C10*

*16 September 2019*

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Comments from the members of the public present included:

- How will CPE be enforced in Rye?
- CPE is supposed to ease congestion.
- Will there be private spaces for residents and provision for Blue Badge holders?
- (Un)Loading restrictions are difficult to understand – drivers might not realise that they will be allowed to (un)load from the on street parking bays.
- For H&S reasons, delivery drivers are not permitted to carry goods too far from their vehicles.
- Currently, vehicles can be parked on double yellows on hazardous corners.
- Will there be exemptions?
- More people are having home deliveries.
- How many people responded to the first (informal) consultation and has ESCC taken the comments on board?
- The proposed on street ticket machines will be an eyesore. Payment could be made via apps instead – or tickets could be purchased from the Library.
- A summary of the informal consultation comments appear on ESCC's web site.
- Most business owners object to the proposed CPE scheme.
- The proposed CPE scheme will make Rye less attractive to visitors.
- No consideration has been given to the likely (adverse) impact on Rye's economy.
- One hour of free on street parking is the norm in other areas.
- Tickets machines will have an adverse impact on Rye's historic streetscape.
- Wealden District Council voted not to ask ESCC to introduce CPE.
- ESCC has estimated that the introduction of CPE in Rother will generate a surplus of £100,000pa.
- The Leader of ESCC is taking CPE forward with no regard for the likely impact on visitors and businesses.
- RTC should demand that the CPE process be halted (pending a review and assessment of 'best practice').
- What is the alternative to CPE?
- Visitors saying overnight will leave early the next day in order to avoid having to pay for on street parking on their departure day.
- Could Park & Ride be introduced?