

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held via Zoom on
Monday 22 February 2021**

PRESENT Councillors David Amphill, David Bookless, Michael Boyd, Cheryl Creaser, Rebekah Gilbert (**Mayor** – Speaker of the Cinque Ports), Chris Hoggart, Pat Hughes, Jo Kirkham, Andi Rivett (**Deputy Mayor**), Shaun Rogers, Sam Wood

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk (Host); Colonel Anthony Kimber – RNP Co-ordinator; 3 members of the public – including Scott Lavocah (RDC Principal CIL Officer)

The meeting commenced at 6.31pm.

72 APOLOGIES

There was none.

73 CODE OF CONDUCT

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

Cllr Creaser stated that she considered that, to comply with the Nolan Principles, the Minutes should record the names of those Members who were not present and who had not given their apologies for absence.

74 MINUTES

RESOLVED To approve, as an accurate record, the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 8 February 2021 (C10).

75 ROTHER DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN (2020-27)

Members were invited to consider whether to comment on the proposed 10 new priority objectives. *Deadline: 17.3.21.*

Colonel Kimber spoke to his paper. He had commented on the 5 'Priority Objectives' that are relevant to Neighbourhood Planning. He could submit his observations as an individual – or RTC might like to consider endorsing them.

Cllr Amphill made the observations/comments following:

- There can be no issue with RDC's aim to deliver more effective services and increase the supply of affordable homes.
- Given the £tens of millions RDC will be borrowing, it is uncertain that the aim to 'rectify' the financial deficit by 2025-26 can be achieved.
- Why is RDC proposing to 'bring Rother above a 5-year land supply by the end of 2023 when it has consistently struggled to achieve 3?'
- It is the role of Parliament to work towards a 'fairer society' – not local authorities. The latter should be focussed on delivering services – especially for those considered to be vulnerable.

- Public attendance at RDC meetings has been relatively low. One hopes that the money [£70,000] that RDC is about to commit to addressing this will prove to have been worthwhile.
- The commercial development 'actions' under the 'Development of Rother's economy' priority are all located in Bexhill.
- Why has 'A Town Council for Bexhill-on-Sea' been added as a priority objective when this has already been agreed?
- It is understandable that RDC wishes to save money by devolving services to parish & town councils, however, the result could be Rye tax payers paying more tax overall because the cost of RTC delivering the same services could be higher. Before considering taking on services RTC will need to know all the likely costs. Previous assessments of the cost of taking on public conveniences revealed the considerable cost that would be involved.

Cllr Hughes confirmed that RTC had concluded previously that taking on public conveniences was unviable without a share of RDC's car parking revenue.

The Clerk advised that the question of devolving grounds maintenance to RDC had been raised recently at a meeting between the Mayor and Clerk – and RDC's Leader, Deputy Leader and CEO. The CEO acknowledged that 'funding would need to follow the function'.

The Mayor highlighted RDC's poor record on local consultation – citing the 'eviction' of Rye Hire as a recent example.

RESOLVED To use Cllr Ampthill's comments – and the paper drafted by Colonel Kimber – as the basis of RTC's response to the consultation.

Clerk

76 CPE: IMPACT ON RDC'S CAR PARKS

The meeting was asked to consider whether to respond to RDC's consultation. *Deadline: 12.3.21.*

It was noted that the Chamber (which will be responding to the consultation) had asked if RTC remains supportive of its view that the Rye CPE scheme should incorporate one hour's free parking.

Given the extent to which the COVID pandemic had reduce demand for on – and off street – parking since CPE was introduced in October, it was agreed generally that it was not possible to respond meaningfully to the consultation.

The Mayor suggested that, given ESCC's loss of anticipated parking receipts since October, it was unlikely to agree to an hour's free parking.

Cllr Hughes considered that CPE appeared to be working well for local traders – and the Chamber might like to (re)survey its members.

RESOLVED To suggest to RDC that it should consider deferring its consultation until all businesses had re-opened and town's visitor economy had started to recover – perhaps carrying it out in September 2021. Clerk

The meeting ended at 6.56pm.

Date Chairman