

**Minutes of a Special (Priority Setting) Meeting of the Town Council held at the
Town Hall, Rye, on Monday 8 June 2015**

PRESENT Councillors Mike Boyd, John Breeds, Jonathan Breeds (**Deputy Mayor**), Cheryl Creaser, Bernardine Fiddimore (**Mayor**), Rebekah Gilbert, Charlie Harkness, Pat Hughes, Jo Kirkham, Ian Potter, Ray Prewer, Andi Rivett, Shaun Rogers, Andy Stuart

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; 1 member of the public

The meeting commenced at 6.52pm

30 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence – and the reason (as notified to the Clerk) - were accepted from Cllr John Izod.

31 CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no disclosures of interest nor dispensation requests.

32 COUNCIL MINUTES

Cllr Potter considered that, at 13, the PRGP Committee had too many Members and he advised that he wished to resign his membership.

RESOLVED 1 *Page 1, PRESENT* To delete **Shaun Rogers** and insert **Charlie Harkness**.

RESOLVED 2 To adopt the amended Minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2015 (C2 – Committee Formation).

33 COMMITTEE MINUTES

(a) Planning & Townscape

RESOLVED To adopt the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning & Townscape Committee held on 26 May 2015 (PT01).

(b) Public Services

RESOLVED To adopt the Minutes of the Public Services Committee held on 27 April 2015 (PS04).

34 PRIORITIES

Members were invited to agree the Council's priorities for 2015-16.

Cllr Potter proposed, and Cllr Rogers seconded, the Clerk's recommended courses of action.

Referring to the priorities that RTC had agreed in 2011, Cllr Gilbert considered it would be helpful (for newly-elected Members in particular) if Members could be updated on the status of the priorities – ie whether they had been achieved or were 'ongoing'. She added that she supported the 'in principle' decision to establish an Economic/Business Development committee.

The Mayor reminded Members that draft terms of reference for the proposed new committee would be considered at the next PRGP Committee meeting.

The Clerk responded to a question put by Cllr Gilbert concerning the likely cost of the 'operational priorities' he had highlighted as follows:

Updating the accounting software This had been purchased and data entry was around 80%.

Transferring data and software to a new desktop The necessary new software had been installed – data transfer was outstanding.

Fixing the Town Hall telephone system The cost (if any) was unknown. Currently the Town Hall was functioning with one line (rather than two) and BT had twice failed to rectify the problem.

Improving access to the Chamber for the non/partially ambulant The cost could be considerable; however, the challenge was to find a practical solution. A possibility had been found identified and would be assessed (initially by a person with mobility difficulties) shortly.

Overhauling the Town Hall web site Quotes had not yet been obtained. The current platform was 'vulnerable'.

RESOLVED A That RTC seeks to draft a business plan and asks the Sussex & Surrey Association of Local Councils to help kick-start this process by conducting a (free) 'visioning' exercise with Members. Clerk

RESOLVED B That, in the interim, RTC focusses on the Top Priorities following:

- (i) Refurbishing and letting out the Town Hall Cottage**
- (ii) Completion of the Rye Neighbourhood Plan (adoption via referendum)**
- (iii) Providing two units of affordable rented accommodation Clerk**

35 A268 RESURFACING

Members were asked to consider the impact of the scheme and to agree a course of action. It was noted that a number of emails had been exchanged between interested/responsible parties.

Cllr Hughes (who emphasised that she had involved herself in this matter as Co-ordinator of RDCT) highlighted the concerns/observations following:

- It had been known that the work was on the horizon but there had been limited consultation – the first Rye Hospital and the Rye Medical Centre know about it was when they received the Public Information Pack from Highways the Wednesday prior to the start date (1 June).
- The Highways Authority began planning the scheme in January but did not actually speak with anyone representing those likely to be affected.
- Beckley and Peasmarsh Schools were not notified (it was half-term when the PIP was distributed).
- There appears to have been no discussion with the relevant parish/town councils, healthcare providers or bus companies.
- There are an estimated 300 vehicle movements daily from/to the Hospital, Medical Centre or St Bartholomews.
- Phase I had not gone well – with misleading signage being displayed. RDCT had negotiated escorted access for the school run but the driver had to wait 10 minutes to gain access – and had not been allowed to return empty to collect more pupils.
- Although the work was supposed to take place 9.30-3.30 Monday-Friday, it overran last Thursday and Friday.
- Karl Taylor (ESCC) has provided assurances that access will be maintained for Hospital staff and patients but it is difficult to see how this will not disrupt the works.

- Night-time working would inconvenience some but cause less disruption overall.

The comments ensuing included: some signage had been poorly placed – thereby inhibiting the passage of vehicles and/or pedestrians; if full access is permitted at the Hospital site the resurfacing could go on for 2-3 times longer than programmed; road closures are increasing required to safeguard the wellbeing of those working on the highway; there should be adequate consultation in future; the A268 was not suitable for the operation of a formal convoy system; at this stage representations from RTC are unlikely to be effective – and, in any case, RTC would not wish to be responsible for the scheme overrunning; night-time working is more hazardous for operatives; RTC has worked successful previously with utility providers to ensure that disruption for the ‘travelling public’ is minimised.

RESOLVED To make representations to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport, Rupert Clubb (copied to Cllr Glazier) outlining RTC’s concerns and requesting that future schemes build in more notice and consultation with local stakeholders. Clerk

The meeting ended at 7.29pm

Date Chairman