

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy, Resources & General Purposes  
Committee, held at the Town Hall, Rye, on  
Monday 18 January 2016**

**PRESENT** Councillors Mike Boyd (**Committee Vice-Chairman**),  
Jonathan Breeds (**Committee Chairman - Deputy Mayor**),  
Cheryl Creaser, Justin Erswell, Bernardine Fiddimore (Mayor),  
Rebekah Gilbert, John Izod, Jo Kirkham, Ray Prewer, Andi Rivett,  
Shaun Rogers, Andy Stuart

**IN ATTENDANCE** Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Cllr Pat Hughes

*The meeting commenced at 6.30pm.*

**42 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence – and the reason as lodged with the Clerk – were accepted from Cllr John Breeds.

It was noted that Peter Cosstick, Heritage Centre Manager, was unable to attend.

**43 CODE OF CONDUCT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Cllr Hughes	<i>pecuniary</i>	<b>46.6b)</b>	Employee of RDCT
Cllr Rogers	<i>non-pecuniary</i>	<b>46.6b)</b>	RDCT Deputy Chairman
Cllr Boyd	<i>non-pecuniary</i>	<b>46.6b)</b>	RDCT volunteer driver

**RESOLVED To approve Cllr Hughes’s request for a dispensation to enable her (if she so chose) to speak – but not vote – on item 46.b in respect of the RDCT provision.**

**44 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED To adopt the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2015 (PR03).**

**45 MATTERS ARISING**

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*51.2d) HC – Structure (seeking guidance on alternatives from Hedleys and SSALC. Outstanding.*

*5.5 Grant application (ascertaining whether the Rye Festival’s Constitution provides for RTC representation) Outstanding.*

*52 Supporting Local Businesses, Recommendation (Holding an annual reception for all Rye businesses – to coincide with Small Business Saturday) Outstanding.*

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*10 Chamber Acoustics (inviting the company that assisted Lydd Town Council to assess the Chamber) The Clerk and Cllr Harkness had met with Show Connections – which is to submit a costed proposal. Chased.*

*12 Memorial Plaque (inviting the family to submit proposals) Outstanding.*

21.1b) *Town Hall Budget Monitor, para 2 (briefing on the TH and HC financial reports)*  
To be arranged.

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34.1a) *Drafting appropriate procedures to facilitate online banking* Outstanding.

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34.5 *Millennium Wall: insurance (all risks) Ascertaining the additional premium*  
Outstanding.

36 *Draft Events SLA 2015-16 (querying a number of amendments)* Actioned –  
response awaited.

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38 *Business Planning (drafting a matrix of the Visioning priorities)* Outstanding.

39 *67 New Road (meeting informally with the Rugby Club to agree addressing flooding)* Communications between the Club and tenant of number 67 had improved significantly. The parties were discussing an interim solution and the Club had agreed to implement one of the solutions identified by RTC's drainage consultant.

## 46 FINANCE

### 46.1 Town Hall

#### a) **Schedule of Authorised Payments and Statement of Income (October-November 2015)**

Responding to a question from Cllr Izod, the Clerk advised that the Deputy Town Crier vacancy had been advertised in/via *Friday Ad, Wealden Ad* and *Rye Fixtures*.

**RESOLVED To receive and adopt the Income by Customer Summaries and Expenses by Supplier Summaries for October 2015-November 2015.**

#### b) **Budget Monitor**

**RESOLVED To receive and note the actual income and expenditure to 30 November 2015 against budget.**

### 46.2 Heritage Centre

#### a) **Progress report** Members noted the HCM's Update (**Appendix**).

#### b) **Payments and Income**

**RESOLVED To receive and adopt the Income by Customer Summaries and Expenses by Supplier Summaries for October 2015-November 2015.**

#### c) **Budget Monitor**

**RESOLVED To receive and note the actual income and expenditure to 30 November 2015 against budget.**

#### 46.3 Account Balances

**RESOLVED To receive the Statement of Account Balances as at 30 November 2015.**

#### 46.4 Earmarked Reserves

**Cllr Gilbert** What is the purpose of the £20,000 Capital Fund Attractions Earmarked Reserve?

**Clerk** *In case the Model is severely damaged and RTC decides to replace it with another attraction.*

**Cllr Gilbert** The Robes & Regalia Earmarked Reserve appears to rather high.

**Clerk** *The £2,561 includes provision for 3 Past Mayors Badges and a new Town Crier coat.*

**RESOLVED To receive the Statement of Earmarked Reserves as at 30 November 2015.**

#### 46.5 Grant application/s

Members considered the application/s following:

- (a) *Rye Bowls Club* £576 to fund ten bowls collectors.

Comments included: the Club appears to be relatively well off; RTC also has reserves; there is no match funding – the Rye Fund is a potential source; the Club has not provided a team for the annual (2 day) Cinque Ports Bowls Tournament for at least 6 years (this is remarked upon at Cinque Ports Mayors Association events); the Club could obtain more revenue if it promoted the availability of its facilities to the public.

**RESOLVED To contribute £150 subject to the Club identifying match funding and endeavouring to field a team in this year's CP Bowls Tournament. Clerk**

- (b) *Rother District Citizens Advice Bureau* £394.80 to purchase a new lap top to serve the Rye outreach service.

Comments included: the charity appeared to have sufficient funds to purchase a lap top; the sum sought would fund a 'cheaper' lap top only – which might not be durable; the service was highly valued when it was provided at TG Community Centre.

**RESOLVED Not to award the grant requested.**

#### 46.6 Draft Budgets 2016-17

The Committee was asked to consider – for Recommendation to Council - the 2016-17 Draft HC and TH Budgets.

- (a) **Heritage Centre**

The Clerk advised that, because of the uncertainty around overseas visitor numbers in relation to the heightened terror threat, the budget was a cautious one.

Responding to Cllr Gilbert's concerns about the £200 bank charges provision and estimated telephone/internet costs, the Chairman advised

that bank charges are not unusual for businesses needing to deposit cash.

**RECOMMENDATION That the Draft 2016-17 HC Budget, as presented, be adopted.**

**(b) Town Hall**

The Clerk highlighted/advised that:

- The purchase of a stair climber, loss of Town Hall Cottage letting income and Cottage refurbishment meant that reserves were forecast to fall by just under £40,000 by 31 March 2016.
- As the Council increased the number of staff employed over the years the gap between the total staffing cost and precept had narrowed.
- He hoped that the actual 'post-refurbishment' TH Cottage monthly rental would be closer to £925-£950 (rather than the estimated £875).

**Cllr Erswell** Why was there no revenue budget provision for computer software and training?

**Clerk** *There is a small Forecast Earmarked Reserve [£380 – note 25].*

**Cllr Erswell** Why is there no revenue budget provision for economic development/marketing?

**Clerk** *There is £15,000 in the Forecast Earmarked Reserve. RTC is yet to decide whether to appoint a PT Business Development/Promotions Officer. If it does, c£3,000 will be needed from the General Reserve to cover employee NIC, travel/admin costs etc.[note 30].*

The Clerk added that most earmarked reserves can be vired (transferred) by resolution.

**RECOMMENDATION That the Draft 2016-17 TH Budget, as presented, be adopted – and that the precept for 2016-17 be set at £122,100.**

**46.7 Town Hall Hire**

The meeting was asked to review the charge for private and commercial hires (ie hires other than weddings/ceremonies or not-for-profit organisations).

It was noted that (disregarding weddings and other ceremonies) the current rates for hiring the Town Hall are:

Chamber (8am-6pm)	£14 per hour
Chamber (6pm-11pm)	£16 per hour
Kitchen	£4.50 per hour
Buttermarket	£4.50 per hour

The Clerk advised that there are relatively few 'non wedding/ceremony' lets per year - most of the voluntary/community organisation hires are Mayoral free lets (up to 12 pa). Occasionally, the TH is approached for private parties. These are not encouraged because of the potential for damage/mess. When they are accepted it is usually because the hirer is known to staff.

It was agreed generally that the existing rates were overly reasonable in respect of private and commercial hires.

**RESOLVED That the hourly rates for private individuals and commercial concerns be doubled with immediate effect. Clerk**

**46.8 Honorary Freeman scroll**

The Clerk advised that it is likely the Council will receive (at least one) Honorary Freeman nomination in the near future and that the design and production of a hand-illuminated scroll was likely to cost in the region of £750.

Comments included: Council Tax Payers were unlikely to support this level of expenditure; the award of the honour is of greater significance than the tangible evidence of it; an electronic 'scroll' would be more cost effective; there is a risk that a cheaper scroll/certificate would devalue the honour; an electronic scroll could be enhanced by it being printed on parchment; RTC could organise a local design competition (with a cash prize) in order to create a template; the design would appropriately be a task for a graphic designer; the going rate for hand illumination is £1/letter; RTC has a supply of 'certificates of merit/commendation' (designed and printed by Adams) for the period when it was without the power to appoint Honorary Freeman.

A proposal that RTC initiates a design competition to provide a scroll template (within which there would be spaces for name, dates etc to be completed by way of copperplate calligraphy) was deferred until the next meeting, pending the Clerk researching what other local councils have done nationally.

**Clerk**

**46.9 Chamber Re-launch (4 Feb)**

Members were asked to agree a budget to cover the use of the Kino (including refreshments) of up to £150.

The EDWG Chairman reported that the Chamber of Commerce had undertaken to underwrite any costs incurred on refreshments above £150.

**RESOLVED To agree a budget of up to £150 towards refreshments.**

**46.10 Town Hall Cottage**

The Clerk advised that the refurbishment should be virtually complete by the end of the month – with attaching the multi fuel stove to the liner being the only significant matter outstanding. The final cost was likely to be c£20,000. He was arranging market rental appraisals.

**47 WORK PROGRAMME (as at 11.1.16)**

This had been omitted from the supporting papers and would be emailed to all Members.

**48 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING (2 MARCH 2016) AND POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER MEETING**

It was noted that the ATM would be held at Rye Community Centre (6.30pm for a 7pm start) and the PCC-Police Public Meeting would be held on 3 March, 6pm, Rye Community Centre.

The Mayor intended to display enlarged photographs of local parking problems at the PCC meeting and asked Members to pass to her any suitable images.

**49 RYE POST OFFICE**

Members were invited to consider whether to respond to the (re)consultation (*deadline: 25.1.16*) on the proposal to relocate the Post Office into Jempsons supermarket .

Comments included: the new parking scheme would deter/penalise those who wished to use the post office services only; the move should not proceed until the long-promised store extension had been undertaken; the Post Office should remain where it is; Post Office users will have to go through the turnstile to access services; the PO

servicing points will be close to the wines and spirits; parking should be free for PO users; Jempsons is operating similar systems elsewhere (including Peasmarsh).

**RESOLVED To respond as follows:**

**1 If the facility will change to a 'new main style branch' should not the range of services be improved?**

**2 Will users of postal services only be able to park in the store car park free of charge (at least up to 30 minutes)?**

**3 How will confidentiality (discussion between PO staff and PO customers) be safeguarded?**

**4 What security measures will be in place for people withdrawing cash and foreign exchange?**

Clerk

**50 DEPUTY TOWN CRIER/TOWN CRIER DESIGNATE**

**RESOLVED To note that Paul Goring had been appointed with effect from 1 January 2016.**

**51 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 (1)(2): To exclude the public and press because item 52 could entail discussion on the terms and conditions of employment of a member of staff.**

**52 TOWN STEWARD**

**RECOMMENDATION That:**

**(a) The Town Steward takes on the role of 'team leader' in respect of those staff with a partial/full maintenance role, for a trial period of 3 months;**

**(b) If the arrangement proves to be successful, the post holder's remuneration be increased by one scale point to reflect the additional responsibility.**

*The meeting ended at 7.43pm.*

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

# HERITAGE CENTRE UPDATE JANUARY 20165

PRO4 APPENDIX

- **FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE – APRIL - OCTOBER 2015**
  - A slight growth on income generation
  - 84% of 'financial year end' income generation target achieved
  - Close monitoring of costs in place to counter any significant fall of income generation. Still on track to deliver a modest profit for 2015/16
  
- **WINTER CLOSING**
  - The Centre will be resume 7 day opening from 6<sup>th</sup> February 2016 (subject to weather conditions)
  
- **STAFFING 2016/17**
  - All existing staff will continue to work at HC, although some roles will change in line with agreed re-structure.....very good news
  - In view of the above, a part time (6 month contract) vacancy is soon to be advertised
  
- **OUTLOOK**
  - The performance of the Heritage Centre is difficult to predict with such uncertain times ahead such as security threats, & problems at Calais. Both of these key factors could have a significant impact on visitor numbers to Rye & the UK.
  - The proposed budget is very cautious & is based on the above
  - The Heritage Centre will continue to provide an outstanding source of visitor information & serve as a key attraction for the town of Rye