

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy, Resources & General Purposes
Committee, held at the Town Hall, Rye, on
Monday 27 November 2017**

- PRESENT** Councillors Sam Barnes, Mike Boyd (**Committee Chairman** - Deputy Mayor), Cheryl Creaser, Bernardine Fiddimore, Rebekah Gilbert, Andi Rivett (**Committee Vice-Chairman**)
- IN ATTENDANCE** Jessica Neame (JN) – General Assistant; Cllrs Pat Hughes, Andy Stewart and Justin Erswell; Louisa O’Shaughnessy – HC Manager [part]; Col Anthony Kimber; Alan Dickinson and Trevor Collins – Rye Rotary Club [part]; Mike Eve
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The meeting commenced at 7.03pm.

32 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence – and the reasons as lodged with the Clerk – were accepted from Cllrs Jonathan Breeds and Jo Kirkham.

33 CODE OF CONDUCT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

34 MINUTES

RESOLVED To adopt the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2017 (PR03) as a correct record.

35 MATTERS ARISING

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

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

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

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

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

6.1a) Ceremonies – providing the number held so far this year – as well as the previous period. Outstanding.

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23.2a) Heritage Centre: progress report, Resolved 3 (Asking the Rye Ward Members to chase up the lack of progress in relation to brown ‘I’ signage) Outstanding.

44 Town Hall Access (Asking the Conservation & Design Officer to discuss the installation of a handrail on the main staircase) Outstanding.

26.2 d) HC – Governance options – pros and cons paper. See **36.2 (d)**.

26.5 £50 donation to St Mary's Flower Festival – Actioned.

29 Ferry Road Nursery – Should complete December / January.

30 Bench Saga – Resolved – Benches at Gibbets Marsh and Masons Field installed.

The meeting was adjourned to allow for a presentation by the Rotary Club from Alan Dickinson and Trevor Collins, in relation to proposals for the use of the land adjacent to 7 Wish Ward. See *Appendix A*.

The meeting reconvened.

36 FINANCE

36.1 Town Hall

a) Schedule of Authorised Payments and Statement of Income

Cllr Fiddimore enquired as to monies received to date and the regularity of rental payments on the Town Hall Cottage - and requested an update at the next meeting.

Cllr Gilbert requested fuller explanations in future for the Town Hall Schedule of Payments. JN advised that the reports generated from Quickbooks were somewhat limited.

RESOLVED To receive and adopt the Schedule of Authorised Payments and Statement of Income for August 2017 – September 2017.

b) Budget Monitor

RESOLVED To receive and note the actual income and expenditure to 30 September 2017 against budget.

36.2 Heritage Centre

a) Progress report

Members considered the HCM's Report and LO answered questions. It was agreed that no action was necessary at present, beyond continued support of the Manager's efforts.

RESOLVED to receive and note the HCM's report.

b) Payments and Income

RESOLVED To receive and adopt the Income by Customer Summaries and Expenses by Supplier Summaries for August 2017-September 2017.

c) Budget Monitor

Cllr Gilbert suggested applying for a savings account for part of the Heritage Centre capital in order to accrue greater bank interest. JN advised that this had

been considered, but bank interest was still low, and only by committing to a long fixed-term savings account could any significant rate of interest be gained.

RESOLVED to receive and note the actual income and expenditure against the (revised) budget as at 30.9.17.

d) Governance Options

Members received a summary of the pros and cons of charitable status, prepared by the Clerk. Cllr Fiddimore commented that, whilst a move to charitable status was clearly not appropriate at this stage, it is something that should be considered again in the future.

Cllr Gilbert agreed, and commented that perhaps further educational provision should be looked at in order to strengthen the case for charitable status.

RESOLVED to receive and note the Summary of Heritage Centre Governance Options prepared by the Clerk.

36.3 Account Balances

RESOLVED To receive the Statement of Account Balances as at 30 September 2017.

36.4 Earmarked Reserves

RESOLVED To receive the Statement of Earmarked Reserves as at 30 September 2017.

37 WORK PROGRAMMES

(a) Clerk

Comments were received from Cllr Gilbert that prospective completion dates for outstanding tasks/projects were not specific. JN advised that, in consultation with the Clerk, she would try to examine them with a view to giving more definitive targets.

Cllr Rivett enquired about the progress of the installation of speakers/microphones in the Chamber. Cllr Stuart explained that he had seen Andy Bantock at the Town Hall recently and progress was being made. JN advised that, as far as she was aware, the equipment had been purchased.

RESOLVED To receive and note the summary of the status of key tasks/projects as at 20.11.17.

(b) General Assistant

Cllr Fiddimore commented on how useful it was to receive updates of this sort.

RESOLVED To receive and note the update from the General Assistant.

38 DATA PROTECTION

Cllr Gilbert highlighted that it should be ensured that necessary controls should also be applied to the Heritage Centre, particularly relating to databases used for marketing purposes.

RESOLVED to receive and note the Clerk's briefing paper on the General Data Protection Regulation.

39 PROPOSED PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER

There was discussion as to whether the behaviours mentioned occur with any frequency in Rye. However it was agreed that any number of these could become problematic in the future and that by adopting this proposal, Rye would be prepared in the event of there being a future upsurge in anti-social behaviours. Cllr Gilbert highlighted that whilst these sorts of controls may well be useful, they are only effective if enforced.

RESOLVED To support Rother District Council’s proposed restrictions.

40 NEW EVENTS FUND

Cllr Fiddimore reported that Cllr Amphill had agreed with all previous grant decisions made by RTC in relation to the New Events Fund, and objected heavily to the fact that RDC Rye ward members would be advising on grant assessment decisions in future. It was agreed that RTC members were far better placed to make these decisions in line with Rye’s ‘cultural and tourism priorities’, rather than those of RDC. Concern was also expressed that this fund may end up allocated elsewhere in the district if distributed by RDC.

All Members were in agreement that representation should be made to RDC, to make clear how strongly RTC objects to this decision. It was also suggested that RTC speak to RDC ward members and ask for their support that this be returned to RTC.

RESOLVED to note the correspondence from RDC and respond to request that this decision be reconsidered.
Clerk

41 LANDGATE TOWER RESTORATION

Cllr Boyd gave a verbal summary of the Stakeholders meeting held that day. *See Appendix B for the official minutes.*

Discussion following Cllr Boyd’s summary centered around the fact that as the owners of the Landgate, RDC has been very slow, and little progress has been made since this was last discussed. Members support any positive action, and agreed that RTC should ‘lead from the front’ in any efforts. However Cllr Boyd noted that any progress in terms of Heritage Lottery Funding would be slow.

RESOLVED 1 To support the formation of a group of interested parties.

RESOLVED 2 That Cllrs Boyd and Stuart be appointed as Rye Town Council’s representatives.

42 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING, 7 MARCH 2018

Cllr Creaser proposed Tilling Green Community Centre as the venue for the ATM as it is easily accessible, comfortable and there was a good turnout at last year’s meeting held there. Cllr Gilbert seconded this. Cllr Fiddimore suggested that availability and cost of hire must also be considered.

RESOLVED That subject to availability and cost of hire, that Tilling Green Community Centre be considered the preferred venue for the Annual Town Meeting on 7 March 2018.

The meeting ended at 8.36pm.

Date Chairman

Presentation by the Rotary Club from Alan Dickinson and Trevor Collins, in relation to proposals for the use of the land adjacent to 7 Wish Ward.

- The Rotary Club is no longer proposing a wishing well, as discussed in the past.
- It is considering an installation that could incorporate a bench, but something more unusual ie a sculpture that included a seating area and a collection facility.
- Photos of existing Rotary Club features in Rye, and installations in other towns were circulated to members. For Wish Ward, the Rotary Club favoured something similar to that in Petersfield (a sculpture of a shepherd and sheep, incorporating a seating area), but reflecting Rye's history or local industry.
- Pictures were circulated of unusual benches, including a rotating bench idea, however it is realised this would require additional consideration in light of insurance liabilities and maintenance costs.
- Given the site in Wish Ward, a design could include seating in the form of barrels to reflect the historic site of the Wish Ward Brewery nearby.
- The Rotary Club mentioned that whilst the idea had been mooted for the Wish Ward site, they were not fixed on location. If a donation box were to be incorporated then perhaps the Town Hall garden could be considered as it is a more secure location.
- The Rotary Club is able to fund the initial costs of an installation, but would not be able to manage any ongoing maintenance costs.
- In order to progress ideas for this project, they enquired as to details of the space available within the site, and any considerations such as boundaries and access of neighbouring properties.

Following the presentation, Rotary Club representatives took questions from Members. It was agreed by all that any installation must be long lasting, with minimal maintenance required. Concerns were raised about the security of a donation box at the Wish Ward site. Cllr Fiddimore highlighted that the previous bench on the site had been removed due to anti-social behaviour issues. Cllr Gilbert enquired as to the ownership of any such installation provided. The Rotary Club stated that it would be provided as a gift, as a charity collection facility.

It was agreed by Members that a working party should be considered, formed of RTC representatives (possibly the Mayor, as it was an idea proposed by him initially) and members of the Rotary Club. A formal proposal should then be submitted to full Council.

APPENDIX B (ROLL)

The Landgate, Rye

Monday 27 November 2017

Rye Town Hall

Meeting Notes

Attended By:

Cllr Lord Ampthill	-	Chair, RDC Elected Member for Rye
Dr Tony Leonard	-	Director of Business Operations, RDC
Brenda Mason	-	Service Manager, Community and Economy, RDC
Diana Hajikakou	-	Rye Museum Association
Julian Lockett	-	Rye Conservation Society
Wayne Jones	-	Rye Conservation Society
David Bookless	-	Rye Conservation Society
Heidi Foster	-	Friends of Landgate
Gillian Roder	-	Friends of Landgate
Cllr Mike Boyd	-	Rye Town Council
Cllr Andrew Stuart	-	Rye Town Council
Cllr G Stevens	-	RDC Elected Member for Rye
Richard Farhall	-	Rye Town Council
Lisa Hayward-Bartlett	-	Operations Team Leader, RDC

Apologies:

John Griffiths	-	Rye Conservation Society
Jo Kirkham	-	Rye Museum

Item	Notes
1.	<p><u>Welcome</u></p> <p>Cllr Lord Ampthill welcomed all to the meeting. He offered apologies for the delay since the last meeting and provided an insight into the current pressures on RDC resources.</p>
2.	<p><u>Update since last meeting</u></p> <p>Brenda Mason gave an overview of what work and steps had been undertaken within the last 12 months. This included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Working with John Bailey (Thomas Ford and Partners) to seek informal advice from Historic England (HE) on the possibility of grant funding. The outcome of which was that funding out of the HE South East pot was highly unlikely giving the pressures already on this fund. The advice from David John was to seek funding through the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), he confirmed that HE would support the application.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal clean of the base of both towers was undertaken in May 2017 • Sourcing contractors to remove flagpole (Steeplejack) • Informal meeting with the Friends of the Landgate
3.	<p><u>Outline Vision</u></p> <p>Brenda Mason introduced the vision document that had been prepared by John Bailey and summarised each section, confirming that fundamentally the structure was secure, however that accelerated decline in the condition may occur if some maintenance works were not completed.</p> <p>The options for works were drawn out along with the options for ownership, which included remaining with RDC or a sale or lease into private ownership, a trust or similarly constituted group. It was confirmed that as a Scheduled Monument disposal by RDC would require the permission of central government.</p> <p>A general discussion on the current options available to maintain the arch, desired long term outcomes and future ownership was undertaken with each of the stakeholders providing an insight into their concerns and views on the future of the Landgate. The discussion extended to include the potential of bringing all of the historical assets in Rye into a HLF bid, to create a wider educational and enhanced visitor experience as well as the future of traffic management within the town such as access routes to the High Street and the potential of pedestrianisation which could impact on the development of any proposed plans.</p> <p>All stakeholders recognised the challenge in obtaining funding through the HLF and the emphasis on the community and educational benefits they had when considering projects to fund. To meet these requirements the issue of restricted access into the Landgate may need to be resolved. It was also noted that a HLF application would be considered more favourably if it was from a local community group or partnership.</p> <p>Tony Leonard advised that funding did not exist within Rother District Council to complete the full works identified to consolidate as a ruin. Finances raised from the recent sale of RDC assets within the area were not ring fenced to Rye with Officers tasked to use these receipts to invest to provide an on-going income to support statutory services. There was a possible option that a small pot of funding could be made available for either an annual maintenance programme that would be carried out on a needs basis to ensure health and safety only or as a match fund for a grant application if a trust or similar group came forward.</p> <p>Brenda Mason confirmed that the Landgate Arch has not as yet been put on the HE 'at risk' register but that David John had indicated his intention to do so.</p>
4.	<p><u>Stakeholders Response</u></p>

	<p>Following on from the discussion local stakeholders confirmed that their organisations were not prepared to take on the ownership or management of the Landgate Arch at this time. Consideration of a transfer to a trust / community group could be looked at if there was confirmation of funding for the works. The local stakeholders unanimously agreed that in their view the responsibility of the Landgate should remain with RDC for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>It was further clarified that RDC did not have the necessary funding to carry out the identified works or officer capacity to undertake a HLF bid.</p> <p>Mike Boyd put forward a recommendation that the assembled groups nominated a person to sit on a constituted group to explore an approach to the HLF which might indicate the level of support available from them. This in turn could then lead to the transfer to local ownership, if successful. This was agreed by the stakeholders.</p>
5.	<p><u>Next Steps</u></p> <p>Provisional group members identified as Julian Lockett, Heidi Foster, Mike Boyd, Andrew Stuart & Cllr Lord Ampthill. Rye Museum to confirm their attendance.</p> <p>RDC Officers to draw up a terms of reference for the group and share for consideration and set date.</p> <p>Cllr Lord Ampthill to work with Rye Town Council on a joint public statement.</p>