

**Minutes of an Additional Meeting of the Town Council held at Rye Town Hall
on Monday 10 June 2024**

PRESENT Councillors David Bookless, Michael Boyd, Cheryl Creaser, Willy Everett, Bernardine Fiddimore, Rebekah Gilbert, Vagn Hansen, Chris Hoggart (**Deputy Mayor**), Pat Hughes, Jo Kirkham, Andi Rivett, Shaun Rogers, Andy Stuart (**Mayor**), Sophie Thorpe

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Jessica Neame – Deputy Town Clerk; Colonel Anthony Kimber – RNPSG Co-ordinator; Sarah Broadbent – Rye & District Chamber of Commerce Vice-Chair; Jane Brook - Rye & District Chamber of Commerce Chair; James Stewart – Rye News; 1 other member of the public

The meeting commenced at 6.53pm.

35 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence – and the reasons as lodged with the Clerk – were accepted from Councillors John Breeds and Sue Learoyd Smith.

36 CODE OF CONDUCT

The Disclosures of interest following were made:

Cllr Creaser	<i>item 39</i>	Ward Member of freeholder
Cllr Gilbert	<i>item 37</i>	Rye Recreation & Wellbeing CIO Joint Project Manager

With Members' permission, the Mayor adjourned the meeting for any contributions from members of the public.

Sarah Broadbent (SB) advised the Chamber is continuing to consider short- and long-term solutions for Rye's public conveniences. It has £25k that could be made available for capital improvements – perhaps at the Gungarden – but revenue funding would have to be drawn from elsewhere over the next 12 months.

Would RTC consider funding cleaning if the Chamber spent £25k on refurbishment? The Chamber's view is that it is likely that residents would prefer the money spent on the conveniences (rather than, for example, landscaping).

In the long-term the BID might enable the Chamber to take on responsibility for the conveniences. The Chamber had now visited the conveniences with an expert and is awaiting a quote. He has asked if funding has ever been sought to provide a changing place for adults. He considered that this could be accommodated at Lucknow Place.

The Chamber had not sought cleaning quotes.

Cllr Hoggart observed that it would be useful for the Public Conveniences Working Group to meet with the Chamber.

SB confirmed that the Chamber has seen the conveniences condition surveys from last year.

The meeting reconvened.

37 WORKLOAD/BACKLOGS

Members were asked to note the current Office Priorities Action List and the suggested action points arising from the Human Resources Working Group meeting held on 30 May 2024 – and to consider whether to appoint an Admin Assistant for a 6-month period.

Comments included:

- The staff workload is particularly high currently.
- The employment of an Admin Assistant would help to address this problem in the short-term.
- RTC could consider whether elected Members could be utilised – and investigate how RTC compares with other parishes.
- RTC could explore taking on apprentices (like Faversham TC).
- Apprentices require supervision and training – and so might not result in much time being saved.
- Faversham has a larger population.
- RTC should not be too prescriptive when it seeks to recruit a temporary employee.
- Not being keen on Civil Service expansion.

RESOLVED To seek to recruit an Admin Assistant for a 6-month period.
Clerk

Cllr Gilbert offered to find out more about the Faversham Apprenticeship Scheme.
Cllr Gilbert

38 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 from the items following on the grounds that they include consideration of quotes/prices for works/services.

39 PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Members considered further the budget for the proposed temporary re-opening of the Strand Quay public conveniences.

Although Members' preference is to employ local contractors whenever possible, it was agreed generally that, on this occasion, paying a higher cleaning cost for a 4-month 'trial' period could not be justified.

RESOLVED 1 To appoint Wetton Cleaning Services Ltd to clean the Strand Quay conveniences for a 4-month period.

RESOLVED 2 To increase the budget to £11,000.

RESOLVED 3 To authorise the Clerk to introduce an additional check/tidy as soon as the need becomes evident.

Clerk

40

SKATEPARK

The Clerk asked for this item to be deferred to a future meeting.

The meeting ended at 7.35pm.

Date Chairman