



Battle Town Council



**MINUTES of a meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
held on TUESDAY, 27 NOVEMBER 2018 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm**

Present: Cllrs D Furness (Chairman), C Davies, G Favell, J Gyngell.

In Attendance: Carol Harris, Town Clerk

1. Apologies for absence – Cllr M Kiloh.

2. Disclosure of interest – None.

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2018 were agreed and duly signed by Cllr Furness.

4. Matters arising from minutes of previous meeting (not elsewhere on the agenda

The Clerk reported:

- installation of the additional **war memorial board** in the Memorial Hall foyer;
- the new **Town flag** received and flying;
- emergency **repairs to courtyard guttering** had been completed. Once the drying out process is completed, stain-stop and repainting work will be undertaken to the kitchen;
- the replacement **ribbon for Deputy Mayor regalia** had been received;
- an amended **advertisement** had been submitted and entered onto the new **Battle Guide**.

5. Wedding Venue Working Group

Cllr Gyngell confirmed that a Wedding Fayre on Sunday 17 February in the Wynne Room at the Memorial Hall will showcase local providers of wedding items. This is being arranged by a third party who is happy to communicate with providers.

6. Almonry project

The Chairman expressed the Council's disappointment that the application to Heritage Lottery Fund had not been successful. A discussion paper from Cllr Kiloh had been circulated. Members considered whether the bid should be resubmitted early in 2019 once criteria had been confirmed and complied with or to apply for a Public Works Loan Board to enable the main refurbishment work to be carried out. **Members agreed to recommend to Full Council that an application be made for a PWLB loan for £600,000 to carry out the work in line with planning approval and to consider submitting a bid to HLF for the education facility. This was agreed.**

7. Rother District Council advisor

The Clerk reported that an informal meeting had been held with members of RDC at which it had been agreed they would research appropriate costs and fees involved. This information is still awaited.

8. Policy Working Group

Cllr Furness reported that he would be meeting with Cllr Davies to take this forward in December.

9. Beautiful Battle

The minutes of meetings held on 17 October and 21 November had been circulated, as attached, and were noted.

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10. Town Development Officer

The **External Relations and Town Development Committee** recommended that a **Town Development Officer** be recruited to develop and assist with marketing, establish a tourist information point and liaise with external bodies for the benefit of residents, visitors and businesses in the town. **Members agreed that this should be considered next year, subject to the development of the refurbished Almonry building.**

11. Personnel sub Committee

Cllr Favell reported that all staff appraisals had been completed and **Members recommended to Committee:**

- **One-off payment to one staff member for exceeding expectations over the previous 6 months;**
- **Extending in-house staff training to (t)DTC for 6 months: office to be closed for one hour per week;**
- **A one point increase to the Clerk's salary spine point from April for exceeding expectations over the previous 12 month appraisal period, with a further spine point on successful completion of the CiLCA qualification in line with the contract of employment;**
- **An ex-gratia payment for office and grounds staff. This to be recorded as a final payment of this type;**
- **One more attempt to employ a grounds apprentice should be undertaken.**

These were agreed.

12. Action Plan Objective 4

This was agreed as attached.

13. Grants

Members considered **applications received and agreed:**

- **1st Battle Scout Group: £200** towards the purchase of gas water boiler;
- **Battle Area Community Transport: £500** towards cost of replacement bus;
- **Netherfield Village Hall & Playing Fields: £1,000** towards provision of new kitchen with equipment.

Members requested further information in relation to the additional **musical equipment for Every Last Friday** events for consideration at Full Council.

14. Financial matters

- The **budget report to 31 October 2018** was noted, as attached. The Clerk was authorised to purchase a shredder, to comply with GDPR, and a folding machine, that will assist with production of leaflets and mass mail-outs, to a cost of £500 from Office Equipment(4075). As a result of change in communication methods, a virement of £200 from Postage(4050) to Stationery(4055) was agreed.
- The **Bank Reconciliation statement at 31 October 2018** was noted and duly signed by Cllr Furness.
- Members agreed a donation of **£50 to the Royal British Legion** in recognition of the provision of this year's **Remembrance Wreath**. Members asked that the Events sub Committee request the reading of names of those laying wreaths at the Remembrance Service.
- **It was agreed to recommend to Full Council that Member allowances for 2019-20 remain the same.**

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- **Budget 2019-20.** The Clerk highlighted a potential cost of £7,500 for the forthcoming election. Members agreed:
 - Election costs be taken from General Reserves;
 - General maintenance(4205) £10,000, unused due to Almonry project not progressed, be transferred to Almonry EMR(325)
 - Member's Parish Allowance(4265) £1,000 be moved to an EMR to allow for any additional expenditure for this after the election.
 - Staff salaries(4000) and Staff Employer's NI & Pension(4005), under budget as recruitment for an apprentice unsuccessful to date, be placed in Staff EMR(385).

The Clerk was asked to compare and contrast costs and benefits for a van lease and new van purchase for consideration by Full Council.

Members agreed to recommend to Full Council a draft budget and precept for 2019-20, based on individual Committee's Action Plans, as attached. This will result in an approximate (RDC figures not yet available) increase of 68p per month on a Band D property.

The Clerk was asked to consult with Rother Voluntary Action in relation to an accessibility audit.

15. Matters for information and future agenda items

16. Date of next meeting: 22 January 2019

The meeting closed at 9pm.

**CLLR D FURNESS
CHAIRMAN**