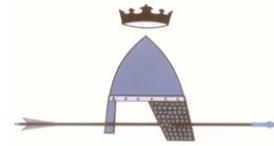




Battle Town Council



Minutes of the COUNCIL MEETING held on TUESDAY, 16 JANUARY 2018 at
The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs D Furness (Chairman), J Boryer, C Davies, G Favell, P Fisher, J Gyngell, M Howell, M Kiloh, A Ratcliffe, A Russell.

In Attendance: District/County Cllr K Field, P Mills (Beautiful Battle), C Harris (Town Clerk)

Cllr Furness reminded Members that this is the first full meeting of Council since the sad passing of Cllr Richard Jessop and invited a quiet time of reflection.

1. **Apologies for absence** – None.
2. **Disclosure of interest** - Cllr Ratcliffe declared a personal interest in item 9 as a tenant of the building.
3. **Minutes of the Council meeting held on 19 December 2017** were agreed and duly signed by Cllr Furness.

4. Reports from County Councillor and District Councillors

District

Cllr Dixon had sent his apologies but confirmed that there was nothing to report.

County

Cllr Field advised that a proposed increase of 5.99% is being discussed by Cabinet next week; 2.99% general increase plus 3% for Adult Social Care levy.

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

The Clerk reported that no letter has yet been sent to RBS although at the recent Chamber of Commerce meeting the changes within the banking organisation including the ATM charging system had been highlighted. The Clerk was asked to send a letter to RBS and to invite the Manager of NatWest to speak at the Parish Assembly.

6. Correspondence and communications

A letter from a resident at Battle Gates raising concerns at Wildflower Meadows had been sent to all Councillors. The Clerk reminded Members that this is an ESCC initiative which the Council has endorsed but there has been no formal Group formed. **Members agreed that ER&TD should form a Working Group with ESCC and Keith Datchler to discuss future action.** It was suggested that this could be a subject for the Parish Assembly to ensure public input.

Members noted the **invitation from the Battle Twinning Association to a new Battle Tapestry Challenge Project** at the Memorial Hall on Saturday between 10am and 1pm.

Rother Neighbourhood Watch had instigated **No Cold Calling zones** in Ninfield and Battle and now offer advice on the consultation and implementation of this scheme in other areas. It was suggested that this could be raised at the Parish Assembly.

An email had been received from **East Sussex County Council** advising of proposals to save £720,000 from the **waste services budget** for 2018/19. If this is agreed by Cabinet, a public consultation will then be held on changes to Recycling Sites in the County.

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7. Minutes and agree any recommendations from Committee meetings:

- **Events sub Committee** on 19 December 2017 were presented by Cllr Russell and noted. It was suggested that Keith Datchler or Fergus Garrett be approached to **speak at the Parish Assembly** for 5 minutes on the Wildflower Meadows.
- **Finance & General Purposes** on 2 January 2018 were presented by Cllr Furness and noted. Cllrs Favell, Fisher and Howell agreed to be members on the **Wedding Venue Working Group** and request Margaret Emeleus as an external participant.
- **Planning & Transport** on 9 January 2018 were presented by Cllr Gyngell and noted.

8. Governance review and Councillor recruitment

The Clerk reminded Members that, despite various attempts at recruitment, there are now only 10 Councillors. She confirmed that 2 names have been suggested and these have been contacted. The Clerk highlighted the implications both on the level of commitment required by each Member and the Council's potential to gain the Power of Competence. RDC had confirmed that there would be no charge to undertake a Governance Review although a formal request and justification for public consultation is required; this could take several months and up to a year. The Clerk recommended that a formal request be submitted immediately to enable a revision to numbers in time for the next election in May 2019. She suggested 13 Councillors: Telham 1; Netherfield 2; Marley 4 and Watch Oak 6; based on elector numbers in each Ward. The Clerk confirm that to qualify for the PoC, in addition to a qualified Clerk, there must be 2/3rd Councillors elected; not co-opted - 9 elected Councillors in May 2019. As a fairly large Council with several projects to undertake she suggested that too few Councillors could make these tasks onerous. **Members agreed unanimously to request Rother District Council to carry out a Governance Review to reduce the number of Battle Councillors to 13.** In the meantime, promotion of the vacancies should be made via the Church, Schools and other organisations in Battle.

Cllr Ratcliffe repeated his personal interested in the following item as a tenant of the building.

9. Almonry Restoration/Heritage Centre

The Clerk reminded Members that F&GP had approved the engagement of JD Clarke to take forward the project to tender stage. However, on investigation it transpires that the Heritage Lottery Fund application should be submitted prior to this work being carried out and by 16 August 2018. **Members agreed that a Working Group should be formed to take this project forward; including the application of grant to HLF.** The Clerk confirmed that terms are awaited from experienced bid writers to assist with the 'robust specification' that will be required; although Rother Voluntary Action had confirmed that they would be happy to discuss this for an initial free period. **Cllrs Furness, Gyngell and Kiloh agreed to form the Almonry Heritage Project Working Group with one member from the Museum. Cllr Howell agreed to be a reserve member of this group.** The Clerk was asked to invite the Museum to nominate a member to the group and arrange a meeting with the RVA as soon as possible.

10. Beautiful Battle

The **minutes from previous meeting** had been circulated to Members.

The Clerk had circulated the current **Agreement** that expires on 31 March 2018. Mr Mills was invited to speak on behalf of Beautiful Battle. He confirmed that a revised draft Agreement encompassing wider areas than are currently incorporated will be discussed the following day and presented to Council for consideration at the next meeting.

11. List of payments and receipts for December 2017

The income of £36,902.39 and expenditure of £65,158.35, excluding transfers between accounts, was noted as attached.

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12. Reports from representatives of the Council

- Cllr Howell - Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group;
- Rother Voluntary Action workshop;
- Cllr Favell - Battle Health Pathway Group – the minutes to be circulated shortly;
- Battle Visual Arts Development Committee – minutes circulated with ER&TD papers;
- Cllr Russell - BVADC: trail routes agreed in principle but concern over Uckham Lane – Marley Lane route because of narrow/inaccessible footpath; carvings for stone markers approved; HLF agreed to payment of second half of grant. They have also agreed with change to plans; commission of play abandoned and replaced by commission of poetry based on history of Battle;
- BVADC Finance sub group: spending on target; no projected overspends; time sheets reviewed; funding of ceramic Battle history pots declined by HLF; film company selected for short film on Battle history; 2 wood benches to be incorporated into 2 of the stone markers: it was felt that the river bench is not feasible within the timeframe and the allocated cost due to the proposed donated timber not being suitable;
- Cllr Gyngell - Battle Festival: Launch event to businesses in the Memorial Hall on 31 January;
Cllr Boryer - Beautiful Battle as previously reported;
- Carried out work in Mansers Shaw. Raised concern at access restrictions and suggested that Council consider permitted path rights. Members agreed that this should be discussed at the next Environment Committee meeting;
- Cllr Furness - Lights of Love;
- Battle Festival: the Winter Giant artwork is being donated to the Town and displayed at various sites. To be exhibited in the Council Office when not allocated elsewhere;
- A meeting with Stephen Jempson about the Market Square;
- Sussex Police;
- Sussex Fire & Rescue;
- Battle & Langton School;
- Battle Museum;
- Rother Association of Local Councils;
- Battle Abbey School.

13. Matters for information / future items for agenda

Members noted the usual Section 137 donation of £50 to the Poppy Appeal for the Council's Remembrance Day Wreath.

14. Date of next meeting: Tuesday, 20 February 2018

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm

CLLR D FURNESS
CHAIRMAN