



# Battle Town Council



## MINUTES of the COUNCIL MEETING held on TUESDAY, 18 JULY 2017 in The Almonry, High Street, Battle, at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllrs D Furness (Chairman), J Boryer, C Davies, G Favell, P Fisher, M Howell, R Jessop, M Kiloh, A Ratcliffe and A Russell.

In attendance District Cllrs K Dixon and K Field, Jane de Garston ((t) Deputy Town Clerk)

**1. Apologies for absence** – Received from Cllrs J Gyngell, M Palmer and J Reeves.

Cllr Palmer tendered his resignation for the end of July. Cllr Furness paid tribute to Maurice for all his hard work and wished him well for the future.

**2. Disclosure of interest** –None

**3.**

**4. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 20 June 2017**

These were agreed and duly signed by Cllr Furness.

**5. Reports from County Councillor and District Councillors**

Cllr Field reported from County Council that the road accident figures for injuries and deaths for East Sussex have increased and that the 2 safety zones approved for Hastings and Bexhill schools have not been started. She advised a closer eye must be kept on road safety.

In relation to the District Council, Cllr Field advised that the decision regarding civil parking enforcement has been referred for a detailed review and that next week's planning meeting will discuss the Darvel Down planning application. Cllr Jessop expressed his dismay that the RDC planning officer has approved this development over the Netherfield development. This was agreed by all members. Site visits were due to be undertaken today. Cllr Kiloh asked if the Town Council is able to make representation at this meeting. Cllr Dixon advised attendance is permitted but there is no entitlement to speak and that questions have to be submitted in advance. Maurice Holmes will be speaking against Darvel Down based on the Neighbourhood Plan consultation and a supporter of the alternative development site will be speaking to represent local views.

Cllr Dixon reported the governance review for Bexhill has been delayed as a fourth option has been suggested by Rother's cabinet.

**6. Correspondence and communications** None

**7. Minutes and recommendations from Committee meetings:**

**Finance & General Purposes** – 4 July. Cllr Furness presented the minutes and these were noted.

2 late **grant applications** had been referred to this meeting:

- Netherfield Playschool have requested a grant to extend their safety play area. No accounts were submitted with the application and the funding already in place was not clear. **Members declined this grant until further information is available regarding Netherfield Pre-school's accounts.**

- Journey's Dance Festival have requested a grant to promote a dance event in the town. No accounts were with the application. **Members declined this grant until accounts were available**



# Battle Town Council



*(Post meeting the accounts were located, attached to their application email and an additional F&GP meeting has been set for 25 July to discuss)*

**Security at The Almonry.** The (t) Deputy Town Clerk reported on systems available from Amazon, similar to the one already installed at the rec. Cllr Favell commented that any system needed to have clear images to show faces. Cllrs Kiloh & Jessop requested advice be sought from Sussex Police with regard to requirements. Cllr Dixon advised he has recently installed a larger system but had been impressed with the result. Cllr Jessop requested Cllr Dixon send detail of the system to the Council. **Members agreed to delegate authority to the Clerk to purchase a CCTV system up to the value of £2,000.**

**Planning & Transport** Cllr Jessop presented the minutes and reported that the Tollgates development had been discussed. Cllr Furness thanked the Planning Committee for their commitment during what have been several difficult P&T meetings. Cllr Boryer requested that the feasibility study for a footpath on Netherfield Hill, suggested at the SLR, be considered at the next P&T meeting.

## **8. Payments and receipts**

The payments and receipts for June were noted as attached. Excluding internal transfers, income for the month was £45,300.11 and expenditure was £32,817.99

## **9. Update on the wildflower meadow scheme**

Cllr Furness reported there had been mixed responses to the scheme. It has worked well in some areas. ESCC's initial interest had been keen but it is not clear if their expectations have been achieved. Keith Datchler had always advised that it would take some years for this to all become established. Cllr Favell advised she did not feel that Caldbec Hill was an appropriate site. Cllr Jessop reported that concerns regarding the view over the roundabout would be addressed with the safety auditor when he comes to sign off the lights. Cllr Boryer advised there is still no decision as to whether Darvel Down will be designated a wildflower site. Cllr Furness advised the next meeting of the wildflower volunteers is 4<sup>th</sup> August. He welcomed any comments that he could take to this meeting.

## **10. Licence to manage the Amenity Field as a wild meadow**

Cllrs agreed it had not been financially viable before when the Council were paying licence and maintenance charges. Cllr Kiloh expressed concern that more and more responsibility is being pushed onto the Council so if it is incumbent on ESCC to designate wild flower meadow where is the benefit to the Council? Cllr Jessop responded that if the Council do not have a licence to manage the land, ESCC could grant themselves planning permission to develop the site. Cllr Boryer commented that if a peppercorn rent were to be agreed then allowing the hay to be cut could be beneficial. Cllr Russell agreed to ask the Neighbourhood Plan if this would be of community value. Cllr Kiloh recalled negotiations at the time of the previous licence included the Council having first refusal to purchase the land if it ever became available for purchase.

## **11. Basic Parish Allowance**

Members agreed unanimously that the Basic Parish Allowance should remain at £240 per annum.

## **11. Reports from representatives of the Council**



# Battle Town Council



- Cllr Furness
- Met with Head Teachers at both Claverham Community College and Battle & Langton Schools.
  - Opened the cavalcade of cars at Pestalozzi Village
  - Met with the Managing Director of Littlewood Fencing who are looking to recruit local staff
  - Opened the Photographic Society exhibition
  - Attended the opening of the new cemetery; Cllr Furness thanked Cllr Favell for all the work she undertook on the new cemetery and the opening event. Cllr Favell responded that thanks need to be passed to the Town Clerk.
  - Attended meeting of the wildflower verge volunteers
- Cllr Russell
- Meeting of BVADC was cancelled as this would not have been quorate. The update from BDAVC is included in Cllr Reeves report.

Cllr Reeves had submitted a report which included attendance of:

- a training session for new Councillors run by SSALC, which was extremely useful;
- the formal opening of the new Cemetery.
- the BVADC meeting which had reported the progress as:

Contact has been made with a good number of local groups, and more detailed presentations have been given to some of these, including Battle & Langton Primary School and Battle Abbey School. A diverse range of topics for research have emerged from discussions with local groups, ranging from the history of the 'sounds and smells of Battle' to the impact of war and conflict on the town. The first set of interviews has been recorded. Following the first tranche of publicity at the Parish Assembly back in April, information about the project and how to participate in it has been disseminated more widely (see front page story of Battle Observer, 7<sup>th</sup> July). It is hoped that this will also be placed in parish magazines. Social media is being used effectively to promote the project. Finances are on budget. Given the significant increase in the cost of Portland Stone since the project's inception, it has been agreed to reduce the number of stone markers to be purchased from six to four.

Fundamental policies on Accessibility, Inclusivity and Health & Safety have been finalised and were to be considered for approval at the July meeting – this will now happen in September. There is also a policy which sets out 'Ethical Guidelines for Social Research.' All policies are in line with those of Battle Town Council.

- Cllr Favell
- Attended the opening of the new cemetery
  - Judged the allotments for the Battle in Bloom competition
  - Attended the SAA committee meeting, positive comments were made with regard to the work of Michael and Jane with regard to the allotments.
  - Met with judges for SSEiB at the Cemetery
  - Met with RVA re grant application for the castle theme play area at the rec
  - Hosted the first meeting of the 'Friends of Battle Cemetery'. There were only a few attendees but interest in future meetings was expressed by visitors to the cemetery.
- Cllr Boryer
- Attended the AGM of Netherfield Hall; issues arising will be discussed at an AGM due to be held soon.



# Battle Town Council



- Attended Beautiful Battle meeting; the wall at the rear of St Martins has not received necessary repairs
- Attended Cllr Howell's social event, which had been a very pleasant evening.
- Attended SLR meeting

Cllr Kiloh had circulated her report which included:

- Attendance at a meeting of Battle Museum of Local History Committee of Management. Major points discussed at the meeting were as:
  - Finance** This is currently relatively healthy due to the 950th celebrations but is very dependent on visitor numbers. 10,600 predicted for this season. Now that there is no entry fee income depends on donations and sales so new and improved stock is important. Rother is late with its payment of the Service Level Agreement.
  - Volunteers** New regular volunteers always required.
  - Education** The museum is now working closely with Battle and Langton School. There have been six visits so far this season and more are planned.
  - Events** Family Fun days planned for August but details not yet available.
  - Collection** The museum had been offered a number of items that it was not able to accept, either for reasons of space or because they did not fit in with the rest of the collection. It did not feel able to accept responsibility for the gunpowder mortars due to lack of expertise as to their conservation but would be willing to help with the text for any label/explanatory panel.
- Escorted judges for the South and South East in Bloom competition on their tour of the town centre.
- Attended the annual lunch of the Battle and District Historical Society.

Cllr Howell

- Attended opening of new cemetery
- Attended RALC meeting
- Attended Neighbourhood Plan meeting

Cllr Davies

- Attended opening of new cemetery, reported it is the nicest cemetery she has seen

Cllr Ratcliffe

- Attended 1066 board meeting
- Attending Battle Marketing Board meeting

Cllr Jessop had circulated his report which included:

- South East Region Counties Association Forum at Milton Keynes: This included a presentation by Tristram Cary of Geosphere on digital mapping,
- Surrey and Sussex Association of Local Councils at East Grinstead: Items discussed included the current financial position – satisfactory – the pension provisions to be made to the SSALC staff, this will be offered via the NEST facility, the increase in subscription levels will be pitched at the CPI increase rate of 2.75%, the NALC governance as above, photos should be taken of padlocked gates as proof of a break in by any travellers if they enter parish owned land – this will enable the police to move them on promptly, Anna Beams is confirmed as the Office Manager and looking after training, Lois has now finished her basic training and is to be responsible for East Sussex support and recruitment.
- The Rother Association of Local Councils at the Emanuel Centre. This meeting was the AGM and all posts were filled by the current incumbents. There was a presentation by



# Battle Town Council



Carl Greenwood of Geosphere Ltd who provide digital mapping for parish and town councils. The meeting agreed to fund a year's group license for all RALC member parishes out of RALC funds. Where some parishes already have their own licenses paid by their council, there will be a pro rata refund from Geosphere. There was no important news from either the police or Rother District Council.

- will be attending Bexhill Town Hall to undertake a peer review of Rother Council activities and report back at the next Full Council.

Cllr Fisher

- Attended the opening of the new cemetery
- Attended a meeting of the sports centre; bookings are doing ok and there is an expectation of being able to remain competitive
- Attended a meeting of the Town Twinning Association who are planning the visit by residents of St Valery from 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> August.

### 13. Matters for information / future items for agenda

With regard to the report from the Heritage Trail Cllr Furness questioned the Portland Stone and it's connection to Battle. Cllr Russell advised Portland Stone is very durable and good for sculpting. The members felt this is an expensive option and suggested consideration be given to a reconstituted stone. **Cllr Russell agreed to take this request to the next BDAVC meeting.** Cllr Favell asked if anyone knew who the 'spokesperson' was who was referred to in the Observer article about the Heritage Trail. Cllr Favell expressed that it is better to have a named person. Cllr Russell responded that he believed this was Debbie Grant.

Cllr Furness thanked the (t) Deputy Town Clerk for all her work in covering for the Town Clerk's annual leave.

In light of Cllr Palmer's resignation a new deputy representative is required for the Battle marketing Group. Cllr Russell agreed to take this position. This will be ratified at the next meeting.

### 14. Date of next meeting: Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> August 2017

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm