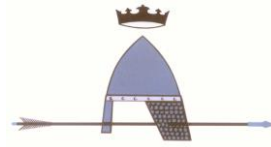




Battle Town Council



**DRAFT MINUTES of a meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
held on Tuesday, 10 March 2015 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm**

Present: Cllr M Kiloh - Chairman
Cllrs: R Bye, D Furness, R Jessop, S Pry, D Wilson

- 1. Apologies for absence** – None.
- 2. Disclosure of interest** – None.
- 3. Minutes of the meetings held on 13 January 2015** – These were proposed by Cllr Jessop and seconded by Cllr Furness, and duly signed by Cllr Kiloh as a true record of the meeting.
- 4. Matters arising from previous meetings** – None.

5. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

The Town Clerk had prepared and circulated draft copies to all Members prior to the meeting. Members went through each section to clarify understanding and agree where information was needed to be included. The Town Clerk also informed Members of the correct VAT regulations affecting other organisations.

Members acknowledged that adopting the new versions of these documents would change a number of working practices for both staff and councillors, but accepted the benefits of adapting to a more business-like environment.

Members agreed unanimously to adopt the updated Standing Orders with immediate effect. The new Financial Regulations would be adopted from the 1st April 2015, with signing rule amendments to be made after the election. The Town Clerk to contact directly the organisations affected by the VAT regulations.

6. Committee and working group procedures

Members discussed the current working arrangements for the different meetings. The Town Clerk pointed out that where committees have delegated authority to make decisions, they should use this whenever possible. More contentious or important decisions should still be referred to Full Council. Cllr Kiloh recommended that the committee chairmen are required to make regular reports to Full Council to ensure all Members are kept informed of decisions made under delegated authority.

7. Consultation on Draft Charging Schedule and Draft Regulation 123 List

Members agreed to leave the Planning and Transport Committee to respond to the consultation on behalf of the Town Council.

8. Council business plan

Cllr Kiloh commended the Planning and Transport Committee for agreeing their strategic aims. The other committees had begun work on their strategic aims and it was agreed to revisit this at the next committee meeting with a view to presenting to the new council after the election.

9. The Almonry project

Cllr Kiloh informed Members that to progress the project further, a decision was needed with regard to an acceptable level of rental income to be charged to RDC if they were to move into the Almonry. Members agreed that this would have to be more than the Town Council would be losing through displacement of existing tenants as a result of the planned alterations. Cllr Furness also pointed out the significant savings RDC would be making by moving into the Almonry, particularly through the potential reduction in staff numbers and working hours to align with the existing public opening hours of the Town Council.

Members explored a number of figures and agreed on a minimum acceptable figure. The Town Clerk was asked to begin negotiations with RDC based on this decision.

Battle Town Council

10. Councillor training and information pack

Members agreed to defer this item to the next committee meeting.

11. Policy review

Members agreed to defer this item to the next committee meeting.

12. Financial matters

Members noted the bank reconciliation and income and expenditure reports. The Town Clerk explained that the reports could be produced in different formats which may provide more relevant information for Members. A copy of the different versions of the reports would be sent out with the minutes for information.

13. Staff matters

Members agreed unanimously to pay the course fees for the Town Clerk's Leadership training, including travel expenses for attendance.

Members agreed the draft contract for services for Trevor Houghton-Berry and the Town Clerk was asked to provide a copy to Mr Houghton-Berry and arrange subsequent signing.

14. Matters for information and future agenda items – Cllr Bye asked for formal thanks to be recorded for the work the Town Clerk had completed with regard to updating the governance procedures for the Town Council, which all Members agreed with.

15. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 5 May 2015

The meeting closed at 10.15pm.

**CLLR M KILOH
CHAIRMAN**