



Battle Town Council



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

Present: Cllrs M Kiloh (Chairman), G Favell, D Furness, R Jessop and A Ratcliffe

In Attendance: Andy Beams (Town Clerk)

- 1. Apologies for absence** – Cllr J Gyngell.
- 2. Disclosure of interest** – None.
- 3. Minutes of the meetings held on 8 September 2015** – These were proposed by Cllr Jessop, seconded by Cllr Favell, and duly signed by Cllr Kiloh as a true record of the meeting.
- 4. Matters arising from previous meetings** – The Clerk confirmed the change of bank accounts was almost complete. Confirmation was being sought regarding ID requirements for signatories, and these would be confirmed in the next few days. Once opened, a separate account for the Mayor's Charity would also be opened.

5. Financial Matters

Members noted the budget report to date.

Members analysed the draft F & GP budget, which the Clerk had been asked to prepare by the Chairman based on the previous year's information. Cllr Kiloh explained that in anticipation of changing accounting software packages, the opportunity had been taken to rationalise a number of the budget headings. Members were also reminded of the previously agreed decision that all staff salaries would be taken from a single staffing budget line under F & GP.

Members agreed that an annual maintenance budget for the Almonry was needed, and debated the need to build up reserves for costlier repairs anticipated over the coming years.

Cllr Kiloh informed Members that English Heritage had offered free of charge the kitchen units being removed from the Abbey next week, and it was agreed the Council would accept them in anticipation of using them either in the Almonry or the Cemetery building.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to amend the original draft budget by adding £1,500 to staff training (by reducing the tree work budget under Environment by the same figure), including an additional £3,000 in staff salaries to cover the anticipated cleaning costs of the toilet at the recreation ground, adding the staff clothing budget of £750 (previously under Environment), adding an annual maintenance budget of £500 to the Almonry and doubling the grants budget for next year to £6,000. This resulted in a net budget of £146,650. The Clerk was asked to draw up a schedule of anticipated major maintenance works for the Almonry to allow a discussion on a suitable reserve level for this purpose.

Members reviewed the budget proposals from each of the other committees and discussed the overall precept requirement. In addition to the changes noted above, the P & T budget was increased by £600 for additional car park maintenance.

RESOLVED: Members agreed a provisional net budget of £247,220. This was subject to agreeing a figure to transfer into the Almonry maintenance reserve, confirmation of the Council tax base and information on the level of Council Tax Support Grant, details of which will be available in early December.

6. Review of F & GP action plan

This item was deferred to a future meeting. Cllr Kiloh will prepare a written review and circulate to Members for consideration in advance of the meeting.

Battle Town Council

7. Grant request

Members reviewed the request from Battle Sports Centre for funding of £600 towards providing members of the local community over the age of 60 with a range of exercise activities. The application looked at two blocks of activities, one commencing in October 2105 and the second in January 2016.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to provide £300 towards the cost of the second block of activities, to be paid in January when the course begins.

8. PWLB options

Members were reminded of the choices with regards to the loan. The Clerk confirmed that having spoken to the DCLG, the loan offer could be extended by 12 months by confirming the request in writing. This would allow the money to be drawn down when the majority of the work began, anticipated to be Spring 2016 dependant on ground conditions.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to defer the drawdown until the funds were needed. The Clerk was asked to confirm the 12 month extension in writing to the DCLG.

9. Future staff roles and responsibilities

This item was deferred to a later meeting, subject to a fuller proposal being prepared by Cllr Kiloh. Members were invited to send written comments on the Clerks initial ideas to Cllr Kiloh.

10. Sussex Police investment proposals

RESOLVED: Members agreed to provide no Council response, although Members could decide to respond individually if they chose to.

11. Matters for information and future agenda items

The Clerk asked committee chairmen to review their sections of the website, and provide any additional information to the Clerk for inclusion.

A full discussion on the general and earmarked reserve will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

12. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 12 January 2015

The meeting closed at 9.35pm.

**CLLR M KILOH
CHAIRMAN**