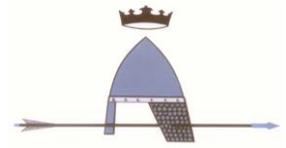




Battle Town Council



Minutes of the COUNCIL MEETING held on TUESDAY, 21st JANUARY 2020 at
The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs G Favell (Chairman), C Davies, V Cook, J Gyngell, M Kiloh, A Russell, L Samms, H Sharman, D Wheeler and C Would.

In Attendance: County Cllr K Field, District Cllr K Dixon and two members of the public.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME 7.30pm to 7.45pm

Mr Paul Redstone reported that, following a determined combined effort including the MP and Cllr Field, an ATM will be installed at the new Costa building in the High Street on Thursday. He reported that it may take a few days to be fully functioning. The Chairman thanked all those involved in this good news.

1. **Apologies for absence** – None.

2. **Disclosure of interest** – Cllrs Cook, Favell and Gyngell expressed an interest in matters relating to the Fit for Battle Working Group.

3. **Minutes of the Council meeting held on 17th December 2019** were agreed and duly signed by Cllr Favell.

4. **Clerk's Report**

- As we hold no contact details for the member of the public that raised questions in relation to the **recreation ground projects**, and he has not been into the office, the information had not been submitted to him personally. The responses to the queries are: expenditure to date £4,063.17; funds will come from grant funding and £60,000 over a 3 year period (£20,000pa) from the budget; the latter is therefore a cost to the tax payer.
- **Letters of thanks** from Battle Barks who held a Cancer research walk on 15th September from the Abbey Green and from the Royal British Legion for the contribution to the Poppy Appeal.
- Several emails and messages had been received in appreciation of allowing the **Boxing Day hunt meet** on the Abbey Green. Sussex Police had been made aware of contentious literature being circulated and there had been a presence to ensure the event was peaceful.
- Cllr Field has been actively seeking an on-site meeting with ESCC at **Battle Hill**, following the further tragic accident. This has now been agreed and the Council is invited to send a representative. Cllr Gyngell, as Planning & Transport Chairman, agreed to attend the meeting on Friday 24th January. Members noted that communication from Sussex Police indicated that they feel there is deficient lighting in the area. This is also ESCC responsibility.
- Quotes for the repairs to the **accessible toilet** have been slow in being issued due to the Christmas period. However, Sussex Police have confirmed that all five youth have been visited: one has admitted criminal damage; the others have denied the claim but parents appear supportive of Police intervention. It has been indicated that some of the youth will make a financial contribution towards the cost of repairs.
- A final quote for the **rebuild of the south boundary wall** from a specialist contractor is awaited.

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

County

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Cllr Field confirmed that the **budget** remains £12m short over 2 years. Following cuts there is £5m unallocated. Funds have been allocated to a **No Wrong Door** project for young people. The **Council Tax increase** has been agreed at the maximum 1.9% with an additional 2% adult social care levy. The **parking review** for Civil Parking Enforcement had been agreed with a one hour period for the High Street, despite Council requesting a half-hour limit. Implementation at the end of the year has been quoted although it is hoped for end of summer.

District

Cllr Dixon reported that the **Street Closure Policy** is due for a further review. He confirmed that Cabinet has agreed to ensure that **access to Battle Station from the Blackfriars** site was included in the relevant planning stages. Extra grant funding will be accepted to enable compulsory purchase orders(CPO) for land required for whole site development. Cllr Russell suggested that land for pedestrian access should also be subject to CPO.

Cllr Field highlighted the purchase of the freehold of the **Market Square**.

6. Correspondence and communications received post agenda publication – None.

7. Draft minutes and agree any recommendations from Committee meetings:

- Due to excess demands on the Clerk's time, the draft minutes for the **External Relations & Town Development** on 7th January 2020 had not been circulated. Cllr Would presented a verbal report. Members were reminded that the Heritage Charter Group had identified many buildings that had been neglected. Subsequently, a Conservation Group had been formed by volunteers to raise the profile and produce a plan to work towards a Battle UNESCO World Heritage status bid. The MP will be asked to action the application once all preparations have been undertaken. The list for consideration by UNESCO is reviewed every 10 years and is likely to be soon. As the process is extensive and can take in excess of 20 years, the Council must be the lead body. However, it would continue to be actioned by existing volunteers including Cllr Samms with Harpers & Holland as sponsors. It was confirmed that fundraising is being undertaken to facilitate the bid. **Members agreed unanimously to support the Battle UNESCO World Heritage status bid.**
- Minutes of the **Planning & Transport** meeting on 10th December 2019 were presented by Cllr Gyngell and noted. She gave a verbal report of the meeting held on 14th January 2020.

8. Battle & Villages Community Awards 2020

Cllr Samms highlighted the success of an award scheme in Eastbourne organised by Carrot Events. The Same group had agreed to organise a similar event for Battle. She confirmed that Bannatyne's had agreed to provide the venue and staff, with food at cost. All funds raised towards the UNESCO bid. It was emphasised that Carrot Events is responsible for the promotion and costs for the Awards event to be held on Thursday 18 June 2020. There are 21 community based awards that can be self-nominated. The judges will be community members and include the MP. The sponsorship is a one year only commitment. The Clerk highlighted that there is no budget for this and would need to be taken from general reserves. **Members agreed unanimously to an "early bird" sponsorship of £400.**

9. Almonry Development Project

- The notes of the **Almonry Development Working Group** meeting had been circulated. As all but two Councillors had attended the meeting, the Chairman asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none. **Members agreed unanimously to proceed to tender.**

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- The **tender documents** had been circulated and any comments invited. It was noted that value engineering had been invited. The contractors were asked to recommend an alternative to gas boilers, although this may need to be confirmed post tender due to the need for amendments authorised by Conservation Officer and Building Control. With the improved fire alert system proposed, Architects had suggested that a sprinkler system was not necessary. Members suggested that emergency escape ladders may be provided on the first floor. Details on lighting can be discussed at a later date. **Members approved the documents unanimously.**

10. Council representatives

Following the resignation of three Councillors, representation was agreed as:

Battle Area Sports

Management Committee

- Cllr C Would

Battle Museum

- Cllr C Davies

Cllr L Samms:

Deputy

Rother Association of Local Councils

- Cllr J Gyngell

Senlac Allotment Association

- Cllr H Sharman

Deputy representatives:

Battle Chamber of Commerce

- Cllr V Cook

Battle Wildlife Group

- Cllr A Russell

Rother Voluntary Action

- Cllr M Kiloh

Strengthening Local Relationships

- Cllr J Gyngell

Additional representation

UNESCO bid

- Cllr L Samms

Cllrs Cook, Favell and Gyngell repeated their interest in the following item.

11. Proposed new Pavilion

Following the Council's pledge to acknowledge the climate and ecological emergency and at the suggestion of members of Fit for Battle, **Members agreed to ask RDC to hold the decision on amendments to the Pavilion – RR/2019/2686/P to allow research of appropriate renewable energy sourcing and saving measures.**

12. Battle Civil Parish Neighbourhood Plan

- Members had received the changes to priority order of the Reg 14 pre-submission plan and no comments had been received. Cllr Russell confirmed the reason for the changes and **Members retrospectively approved the changes to Reg 14 pre-submission plan.** It was highlighted that there could be an issue if the housing allocation target is not met by the Battle Plan. Leaflets had been distributed to every household in the Battle area by Royal Mail. Cllr Russell will circulate an email to request additional volunteers to assist with the drop-in session in Netherfield and Battle on:

Saturday 1st February 2020

10am to 12pm at The Almonry – Cllr J Gyngell

1pm to 3pm at Netherfield Village Store – Cllr H Sharman

Thursday 13th February 2020

3pm to 5pm at Netherfield Village Store

6pm to 8pm The Almonry

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- The **draft minutes of 8 January 2020** were noted, as attached.

13. Rother District Council's consultation on [Budget 2020-21](#)

Members reported individual submissions and had no further comment for Council to submit.

14. Finance matters

The Clerk reported that, due to excessive demands on her time, the reconciliation had not been completed and the **list of payments and receipts for December 2019** will be circulated shortly and formally received at next months meeting.

15. Reports from representatives of the Council and other reports

- Cllr Wheeler
- Wildlife Meadow Group AGM. A new Chairman, Audrey Koop had been elected. The Group had agreed to drop smaller areas of insignificance and concentrate on the gateways to the town. They are also undertaking a small project with Battle & Langton School;
 - Various meetings of Battle Civil Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.
- Cllr Gyngell
- Battle Memorial Hall Committee at which a discussion on the promotion of controversial literature resulted in the removal of the document circulated promoting a biased view of the Parish Meeting to be held the following evening. It was agreed that future publicity should be provided only by the hirer of the facility and any items of concern would be discussed by Members of the Committee. The addition of the Hall as an Asset of Community Value was agreed. The consultation documents for the Battle Neighbourhood Plan were in the foyer.
- Cllr Davies
- Battle Twinning Association had agreed the year's social events.
- Cllr Russell
- Aspens Carol Service which was a well attended and very pleasant event;
 - Various working group meetings of the BCPNPSG and formal meeting, draft minutes circulated. A very busy period to organise Reg 14 consultation.
- Cllr Favell
- Aspens Carol Service, as Mayor;
 - Visited Saxonwood Care Home on Christmas Day, as Mayor;
 - Friends of Battle Cemetery where two long-distance visitors were grateful for refreshments and toilet facilities;
 - Met with H Merriman MP, B Hook (Acquisitions, Transformation and Regeneration Officer, RDC), M Johnston (Executive Director of Resources, RDC) to discuss the Almonry Development Project Strategic Plan;
 - Rother Voluntary Action AGM. Minutes to be circulated;
 - Chamber of Commerce. Minutes to be circulated. M Dawes had presented a proposal for a pathway over the railway line, with a cage on railway side.
- Cllr Would
- Boxing Day Hunt. The Abbey had been open which encouraged more visitors. There was no blocking of the entrance and the Police were welcomed;
 - Friends of Battle Skate-ramp where teenagers and volunteers are moving the project forward. Some advice will be sought from the Clerk;

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- A local resident is researching the possibility for a Youth Club and is speaking with CCC and Battle Abbey School; both are supportive;
- Speaking with T Wheeler in relation to a podcast service to showcase events and organisations;
- Shortly to attend an Air Cadets dance;
- The Youth Forum arranged for Monday 27th January.

Cllr Kiloh

- Attended two of the meetings with RDC and the Chairman;

Cllr Cook

- Aspens Carol Service which had been beneficial for networking;
- Chamber of Commerce meeting. M Dawes had requested a display of the Town Model at the Parish Assembly.

Cllr Sharman

- Two meetings of Beautiful Battle, minutes circulated;
- Rother Association of Local Councils. Minutes to be circulated.

16. Future agenda items / matters to note

17. Date of next meeting: Tuesday, 18 February 2020

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

For the consideration of sensitive information, Members agreed that the press and public be excluded in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 (1)(2) for the following item.

Cllrs Field and Dixon and members of the public left the meeting.

18. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

Members discussed and agreed **arrangements for Operation Bridge.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm

CLLR G FAVELL
CHAIRMAN