



Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the COUNCIL MEETING held on TUESDAY, 4 APRIL 2017 in The Almonry, High Street, Battle, at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllrs R Jessop (Chairman), J Boryer, C Davies, G Favell, J Gyngell, P Fisher, M Howell, M Palmer and A Russell.

In attendance District Cllrs K Dixon and K Field, Carol Harris (Town Clerk)

1. **Apologies for absence** – Received from Cllrs D Furness, M Kiloh and A Ratcliffe and District Cllr G Curtis.

2. **Disclosure of interest** – None.

3. **Minutes of the Council meeting held on 21 February 2017**

Cllr Palmer proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr Howell and agreed unanimously. These were duly signed by Cllr Jessop.

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

Cllr Field reported that ESCC have not met since the last meeting. She confirmed that **Battle Library** is closing for a complete refurbishment at a cost of £100k on 19 April. A temporary library will be available at the Rother District Council's Community Help Point from 21 April; with the refurbished facility reopening towards the end of June with more space and more self-service options. Cllr Field highlighted the borrowing of online books via overdrive.

In relation to the District, Cllr Field confirmed that she and Cllr Dixon had submitted a joint map highlighting the areas experiencing **dangerous and illegal parking issues** in Battle.

5. **Correspondence and communications** – None.

6. **To receive minutes and agree any recommendations from Committee meetings:**

- Planning & Transport - 22 February, 8 and 22 March. These were presented by Cllr Jessop and noted.
- Environment - 7 March. These were presented by Cllr Favell and noted.
- External Relations & Town Development - 14 March. These were presented by Cllr Russell and noted. **Cllr Russell recommended an appropriate receiver of the Civic Award and the Council agreed unanimously to this recipient.**
- Finance & General Purposes – 21 March and to consider the recommendations:
 - **Cllr Jessop highlighted the formal process that had been completed at the end of Carol Harris' probation and proposed that she be offered the permanent position of Town Clerk. This was seconded by Cllr Favell and agreed unanimously.** Cllr Jessop reported that, whilst the Clerk is making progress on her CiLCA, the Personnel sub Committee had agreed to an extension to time of completion. The Council were delighted with how Carol Harris had managed the office during the previous 3 unsettling years.
 - a salary increase to one member of staff – it was agreed to take this confidential item at the end of the meeting.



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7. Action Plan for the Environment Committee

The report had been circulated, as attached. Cllr Boryer highlighted his concerns that the new cemetery will have burial plots facing alternate directions to the existing cemetery. The Clerk confirmed that enquiries had been made of local Funeral Directors and the Institute of Cemetery and Crematoria Management who had all confirmed that there is no such requirement for Christian burial areas. The Funeral Directors had also advised that they have not been asked if the cemetery area has been consecrated. Cllr Boryer confirmed that he had submitted concerns in relation to the route of the proposed Health Pathway. The Clerk confirmed that all comments had been passed to the Health Pathway Group for collation. These will then be considered at a meeting to be held on 18 April, to which all Councillors will be invited.

8. Almonry refurbishment project

The architect had submitted outline drawings for Council comment. Cllr Jessop suggested that whilst there are some good ideas: the open reception and heightened ceiling over the education area; he had concerns that the Council Chamber appears too small to accommodate the necessary furniture and could not foresee how members of the public could participate during meetings with the existing design. The architect has been asked to produce further information on these issues to the Town Clerk by 12 April together with a timescale to planning application once the project has been agreed. Cllr Russell suggested that the inclusion of a Tourist Information Point should be considered within the reception area.

9. Lottery Scheme proposal

Cllr Furness had circulated a report from Eastbourne Borough Council on their plans to launch an online community lottery to benefit good causes. Members agreed that more information should be brought to the next meeting for consideration.

10. List of payments and receipts

Member's noted payments (including internal transfers) totalling £94,726.45 and receipts (including internal transfers) totalling £47,976.42 for the period 1 to 31 January inclusive. The Clerk reported that, excluding internal transfers, the receipts were £9,371.94 and expenditure £78,363.61. Cllr Russell suggested that the reading of the financial reports could be a future training session.

11. Recommendations that unspent budget be moved to earmarked reserves for 2017/18:

- Planning & Transport: **Neighbourhood Plan £3,400**
- Environment: **up to £10,000 to enhance recreation facilities**
- Finance & General Purposes: **Electricity supply £2,000; Training £650**

The Council resolved to transfer these sums as proposed.

12. To receive reports from representatives of the Council

- Cllr Reeves - Writing Competition Working Group: the details of this year's competition had been agreed;
- Cllr Russell - Museum Open Evening: a new cabinet encasing medical theme items had been installed;
- the ESALC Conference (covered in Cllr Jessop's note);
 - Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meetings: a community bus had been agreed to transport residents from Netherfield and Telham to the Memorial Halls exhibit; community assets had been identified for retaining;



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- Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan: 40 call for sites had been and request for help from adjoining parishes to retain the Strategic Gap had been identified;
- the ESALC Conference;
- meetings on the Wildflower Meadows project: several sites had been identified;
- Health Pathway: a plan had been circulated and comments requested. Consultation meeting on 19 April for final plans to be agreed; funding will then be sought;
- the ESALC Conference;
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- meeting on the Wildflower Meadows project;
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- the opening of BLAP's Twitten Art project;
- Museum Open Evening;
- circulated as attached;
- circulated as attached.

Cllr Jessop, on behalf of the Council, thanked Cllr Fisher for her tenacity in completing the twitten art project.

13. Meeting dates for the next Council year

The Clerk had circulated a suggested meeting schedule for Full Council and Committees, excluding P&T. These involve the Full Council meetings returning to every 3rd Tuesday to ensure ease of diarising. Environment and Finance & General Purposes would be on the 1st Tuesday with External Relations & Town Development on the 4th Tuesday. All on a bi-month basis. She confirmed that, as a result of a conversation with Richard Wilson at Rother's Planning Office, she would like to suggest that, initially on a trial period of 3 months, that Planning & Transport Committee meetings take place on the 2nd Tuesday of every month. This would enable reporting at Full Council the following week. **Council resolved to accept the meeting schedule as attached.**

14. Matters for information / future items for agenda

Cllr Russell reported that there is a Councillor vacancy on the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. An interested Councillor is invited to join.

The Clerk confirmed that the Community continue to be very generous in relation to the Masters' family support fund.

- Lottery Scheme Proposal
- Civic Links between Battle and St Valery sur Somme

Cllr Jessop proposed the following item be discussed under Standing Order 3a as a confidential matter. This was agreed.

District Cllrs Dixon and Field left the meeting.

Cllr Jessop proposed a discretionary salary increase to a member of staff. This was agreed unanimously.



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Members were reminded that NALC and SSALC had recommended a 2 stage **salary increase of 1%** per year and Council had agreed this last year. The second of these is due to take effect 1 April 2017.

15. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 16 May 2017 – Annual Meeting

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.50pm