



# Battle Town Council



**MINUTES of a meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE  
held on TUESDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2018 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm**

**Present:** Cllrs D Furness (Chairman), C Davies, G Favell, M Kiloh.

**In Attendance:** Carol Harris, Town Clerk

- 1. Apologies for absence** – Cllr J Gyngell
- 2. Disclosure of interest** – Cllr Furness disclosed an interest in item 7 as a Trustee of Battle Museum.
- 3. The minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2018** were agreed and duly signed by Cllr Furness.
- 4. Matters arising from minutes of previous meeting (not elsewhere on the agenda)**

The Clerk reported that:

- The external auditors had confirmed completion of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return with no comments;
- There is a damp patch in the kitchen that had not been rectified by the previous works. This has been examined by a local contractor and it was felt that remedial works to move pipe work is necessary at a cost of £466.50. As this is considered emergency repairs, this was approved;
- Minutes from a recent Beautiful Battle meeting had been received, as attached. The Clerk highlighted a proposal for the annual agreed budget (4180) of £3280 plus an additional 20%, in lieu of VAT, be made direct to BB. A letter to this effect is awaited and will be considered at the next meeting.

## **5. Wedding Venue Working Group**

Cllr Favell presented the notes from a meeting held on 7 September, as attached. Members considered the recommendations:

- folding chairs should be purchased for use in the Arbour and garden – **agreed from next year's budget;**
- a standard listing is included on the ESCC Ceremonies in Sussex Venue listing – **agreed;**
- adverts are placed in the BTC Newsletter and on Rother Alerts – **agreed;**
- advertising leaflets, articles for free magazines, Battle Observer etc. be prepared when photographs from the Wedding Fayre become available – **agreed;**
- install lighting in Arbour using battery or mains power – **due to the ease of removal, a battery operated light was agreed;**
- bookings to be accepted for weddings conducted by a celebrant – **agreed;**
- hold a joint wedding fayre with Battle Memorial Hall in 2019 – **agreed, subject to there being no cost implications;**
- approve Cllrs Gyngell and Favell as additional Responsible Persons – **agreed.**

## **6. Almonry Community Heritage Education Centre Working Group**

Cllr Kiloh confirmed that a responsible case officer had been allocated and had raised a few queries that had since been clarified. She reported that, if accepted, the application would be presented, under the banner "Beyond the Battle", to the Panel in early December.

Cllr Furness reported that meetings had been held to discuss the English Heritage plans for their bid to hold the Bayeux Tapestry which included mention of the proposals for the Almonry.

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*Cllr Furness repeated his interest in the next item and took no part in the discussions.*

## 7. Battle District Museum Lease

The Clerk reminded Members that the current lease runs for 25 years from 14 March 2003; just under 9 years remains. The Museum Trustees and Management Committee have requested that the lease:

- be extended by a further 25 years to 31 March 2027;
- add a clause at Section 4 stipulating one year's notice: there is currently no notice period;
- include a clause that the Town Council will use its best endeavours to find alternative appropriate premises should the existing premises become unusable long term.

Members confirmed that, whilst sympathetic, there is no desire to lose the Museum from the premises and that this should be considered after the lottery bid had been decided. **It was agreed that, subject to costs being met, an addendum to include a one year notice period should be added.**

## 8. Accommodation of Rother District Council advisor

Members were reminded that an informal meeting had been held with RDC to discuss possible sharing of office space and staff to ensure a constant presence of RDC in Battle. A proposal was expected from RDC however a request had now been received for confirmation of expectation and suggestion that a RDC Customer Services Officer join the office staff. Members confirmed that a multi-knowledge staff, to include tourist advisor, would be appropriate for Battle. It was agreed that a further meeting with RDC, Cllrs Furness, Favell and Kiloh and the Clerk should be arranged.

## 9. Policy Working Group

Members acknowledged that many of the Council's policies and procedures required review. It was agreed that Cllrs Furness, Davies and one additional Councillor, together with any appropriate external advisor necessary, should form a Policy Working Group to recommend any amendments, additions or deletions to F&GP.

## 10. To consider:

- i. The Clerk reported a quotation of £2,500 for the **purchase of Deputy Mayoral Chain** in a matching design to that of the Mayoral Chain. **Members agreed that a ribbon at a maximum cost of £200 (budget 4270) should be purchased.** The Clerk was asked to seek: advice from other Councils in relation to badges for ex-Mayors; and a quote for personalised badges, for the next meeting.
- ii. Further to the discussion at the previous meeting, the Clerk confirmed that the existing **Battle Town Flag** had been purchased in 2012 and fairly consistently flown during the 6 year period. **Members agreed to purchase a replacement Battle Town Flag at a cost of £303.28 (budget 4910).**
- iii. **Battle Guide advertisement**  
The Clerk reminded Members that a joint full page ad with the Museum is usually paid for by ER&TD. The cost has been increased for the first time in 4 years by £150 (to be shared equally with the Museum) and confirmation is required by Friday of this week. **Members agreed to the advertisement renewal subject to amendment of the words to include the wedding venue opportunity.**
- iv. **Employment Law and Health & Safety Consultancy Services**

The Clerk reported on a meeting held with Cllr Favell and a consultant organisation. The subsequent proposal had been circulated. Members felt that this was a relatively high cost and asked that the Clerk obtain fees for Model Risk Assessments to be produced.

## 11. Action Plan Objective 3

Members discussed various items and agreed Objective 3 as attached.

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## **12. Committee Action Plans**

Members noted that some Action Plans are work in progress and agreed to continue to monitor, particularly in relation to fundraising activity.

## **13. Financial matters**

- The **budget report to 31 August 2018** was noted, as attached. The Clerk highlighted: the relative increased cost for staff uniform (4020) due to change in staff; subscriptions (4060) currently include IT maintenance costs; electricity (4195) and gas (4200) are both over budget; Misc income (1900) and Misc Exp (4900) are mainly the Museum insurance claim; Member's training (4250) is overspent; Member's Parish Allowance (4265) is underspent – **Members agreed the Clerk's recommendation to transfer £800 from 4265 to 4250 to ensure no training opportunities are missed.**
  
- **Budget 2019-20**  
Members agreed that:
  - IT costs should be incorporated into 4045 Telephone and Broadband
  - The Community Infrastructure Levy Ear Marked Reserve 430 had been allocated to F&GP
  - Purchase of a banner and 2 table top display boards for exhibition/presentation use

## **14. Matters for information and future agenda items**

- Office staffing

## **15. Date of next meeting: 27 November 2018**

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

**CLLR D FURNESS  
CHAIRMAN**