



Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the COUNCIL MEETING held on TUESDAY, 19 APRIL 2016 in
The Almonry, High Street, Battle, at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllrs M Kiloh (Chairman), C Davies, G Favell, P Fisher, D Furness, J Gyngell, M Howell,
R Jessop, A Ratcliffe, J Reeves and A Russell.

Cllr Gary Curtis, Cllr Kevin Dixon, Cllr Kathryn Field, 1 member of the press, 13 members of the public, Andy Beams (Town Clerk)

Public Question Time – Members of the public present raised questions about the Town Council's apparent support for a recent outline planning application for Lillybank Farm, asking on what basis the Council had supported the proposal. Cllr Jessop, in his capacity as Chairman of the Planning & Transport Committee, was asked by the Council Chairman to respond. Cllr Jessop began by explaining his personal and prejudicial interest in the application, and made it clear he would comment on the facts of the decision making process only. He explained that the Town Council were a consultee only, and that the decision lay with the planning authority which was Rother District Council. The Town Council decision was based on planning law and took into account any material reasons in relation to the proposal. Cllr Jessop confirmed that the Town Council had actually stated they had 'no objection' to the outline proposal, rather than supported it. He encouraged those present to make representations to the planning authority expressing their concerns over the proposal. The members of the public stated that insufficient notices had been posted on the site to inform residents of the proposals. Cllr Jessop recommended taking this issue up with Rother District Council as the authority responsible for publishing the notices. The members of the public left the meeting at the end of public question time.

1. Apologies for absence – Received from Cllr J Boryer.

2. Disclosure of interest – Cllr Jessop confirmed his personal and prejudicial interest in the planning application relating to Lillybank Farm (as previously disclosed at the planning meeting). Cllrs Kiloh and Reeves declared an interest in item 11 as members of the Battle Visual Arts Development Committee. Cllr Ratcliffe declared an interest in item 12 as a tenant of the Almonry.

3. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 22 March 2016. Cllr Jessop proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr Gyngell and agreed unanimously. These were duly signed by Cllr Kiloh.

4. To receive a report from the County Councillor and District Councillors

Cllr Field reported that ESCC were consulting on the closure of two schools in the Lewes area due to falling numbers. If Government plans to turn all schools into academies went through, the projected cost in East Sussex was £2.34 million. ESCC would continue to be accountable for standards in academies, despite having no control. There were also no rights for either LEA or parental representation on Governing bodies of academies.

Cllr Curtis stated there was nothing to report from RDC.

5. Correspondence and communications

The Town Clerk reminded Members of the PCC hustings event being held in Battle on 25 April. Cllrs Davies, Favell, Furness, Howell and Ratcliffe agreed to attend to represent Battle Town Council. Members put forward suggestions for questions at the event, including:

- Reaction to cuts to PCSO's
- Accessibility of the PCC to local councils
- Definition of how the candidates envisage the role.

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The Town Clerk also reminded Members of the police roadshow event in Battle in June, and agreed to recirculate the information for Members to book their own places if they wished to attend.

Cllr Kiloh reported on the latest correspondence with English Heritage regarding Abbey Green, stating that EH would not allow hanging baskets, flagpoles or additional trees on the area. They also requested reduction in height of the existing trees, but did give permission for the new planters to go on the Green. Members expressed their disappointment with the approach taken by EH, although there was an acknowledgement of their right to protect the open view towards the Abbey.

Cllr Kiloh confirmed dialogue would continue towards a resolution, and that it was now the intention to enter the town centre into the South & South East in Bloom competition.

6. Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 29 March 2016 and committee report to Full Council

These were presented by Cllr Favell, with no questions from Members. Cllr Kiloh congratulated the committee on its diligence and the amount of work undertaken.

Cllr Dixon arrived at 8.25pm.

7. Minutes of the External Relations and Town Development Committee meeting held on 5 April 2016 and consideration of recommendations regarding Civic Awards

These were presented by Cllr Russell with no questions from Members. The Town Clerk reminded Members of the process for the Civic Awards, and that the committee had considered both nominations worthy of an award for service to the community over a sustained period of time.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to make Civic Awards to both nominations.

8. Minutes of the Planning & Transport Committee meetings held on 23 March and 6 April 2016

These were presented by Cllrs Jessop and Gyngell, with no questions from Members. Cllr Kiloh thanked Cllr Jessop for responding to the questions raised during the public question time earlier in the evening.

9. Loyal greeting to HM The Queen on her 90th Birthday

Cllr Jessop proposed a motion to send a loyal greeting to HM The Queen on her 90th birthday. This was seconded by Cllr Fisher and put to a vote.

RESOLVED: Members agreed by majority to send a greeting in the correct format.

10. Air quality in the High Street

This agenda item had been proposed by Cllr Boryer following a recent study in Newhaven. A copy of the report was circulated to Members in advance of the meeting. Members discussed the merits of requesting a detailed study in Battle, while acknowledging that little could be done regarding through traffic until the trunk road link was completed. Cllr Field pointed out the requirement for local authorities to consult on their draft Air Quality Action Plan and suggested requesting feedback from ESCC and RDC on the matter in relation to Battle.

RESOLVED: Members asked the Town Clerk to contact ESCC and RDC for their comments on the draft Air Quality Action Plan in relation to Battle.

11. Battle Visual Arts Development Committee (BVADC)

Cllr Kiloh reminded Members of the background to the item, explaining that the final decision on any art installation would be made by Full Council. Members had been circulated a copy of the remit and mission statement for the committee in advance of the meeting.

RESOLVED: Members agreed the remit and mission statement but asked the Town Clerk to question the need for the 'degree of difficulty' criteria as they felt a simple piece of art can be equally as good as a complicated one.

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12. Almonry Plans

Cllr Kiloh informed Members that following a meeting with the architect the previous week, a number of minor amendments had been made to the original drawn plans. The revised plans were due to the office by the end of the week, and these would be circulated to all Members once received.

13. Councillor vacancies

Cllr Kiloh reminded Members of the existing number of elected and co-opted Members, and explained that the Council did not meet the criteria for the General Power of Competence (GPC). The Town Clerk explained what GPC allowed and highlighted the restrictions on the Council without GPC. The only way to meet the qualifying criteria was to ensure elections were held for the existing vacancies to enable two thirds of the Members to be elected. Members acknowledged the potential cost of elections but felt that GPC would be needed in the near future in relation to possible devolved services.

RESOLVED: The Town Clerk was asked to advertise the vacancies and follow the procedures for arranging elections if sufficient residents request them.

14. AGM procedures for appointing roles

The Town Clerk requested Members decide how appointment to roles at the AGM will be determined. A number of options were discussed, with Members reaching agreement on the process.

RESOLVED: The Town Clerk agreed to circulate in advance of the meeting a form asking Members to express their preferences for committee membership and interest in the roles of committee chairman and vice-chairman. For the roles of Council chairman and vice-chairman, a nomination and seconder will be required as in previous years.

15. Provisional year-end figures

Members noted the report of the Town Clerk, with provisional income and expenditure and balance sheets for the financial year end. These were subject to internal audit on 29 April, and final figures would be presented to F&GP on 10 May, before Full Council on 17 May where the Annual Return will need to be signed.

16. Payment listing for March

Member's noted the payments totalling £40,559.60 for 1 to 31 March inclusive.

17. Reports from Council representatives

- Battle Abbey Explanatory Board – Cllr Kiloh reported there had been no recent meeting
- Battle Area Sports Centre Management Committee – Cllr Favell reported there had been no meeting since the AGM in July.
- Battle Chamber of Commerce – Cllr Jessop reported on the latest meeting where three new members were welcomed and decisions were made as to the frequency of future business and social meetings.
- Battle Charities Trustees – Cllrs Jessop and Kiloh reported there had been no recent meeting.
- Battle Cricket Club – Cllr Furness reported that the club continued to thrive and was one of the oldest in the county. They have invested time and money in their junior section and were happy with the support of the Town Council.
- Battle Health Pathway – Cllr Boryer was not present, so no report was given.
- BLAP – Cllr Jessop reported that there had been an extraordinary AGM at which a new constitution was agreed and new officers appointed to the roles of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.
- Battle Marketing Group (and 1066 Country) – Cllr Ratcliffe reported there had been no meeting of the Battle group since the last he reported on at March Full Council. The events card was now available and the new map would be issued in about 6 weeks' time. Following the last 1066

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meeting, Cllr Ratcliffe had circulated a report on the finances of the organisation as had been requested by Members.

- Battle Museum – Cllr Kiloh reported she had attended the opening of the tapestry at the station, which had been very well attended, with the Managing Director of Southeastern Rail very keen to support promoting Battle. The museum's main concerns were with a reduced number of volunteers and trustees. They needed to re-apply for Arts Council accreditation, which had demanding standards to be met. The museum remained thankful for the Council's support and looked forward to hearing of progress on the Almonry plans.
- Battle Partnership – Cllr Jessop reported that once confirmation of the final grants being spent had been received, it was planned to call an extraordinary meeting to close the partnership, as there were no future funding arrangements.
- Beautiful Battle – Cllr Boryer was not present, so no report was given.
- Concorde 1066 – Cllr Jessop had attended the last meeting and reported that everything appeared to be progressing in an organised way. The commemorative booklet was now available at a cost of £5.
- ESALC – Cllrs Jessop and Kiloh reported that they attend the AGM only as BTC representatives. Cllr Jessop attended additional meetings as the RALC chairman.
- Netherfield Village Hall – Cllr Boryer was not present, so no report was given.
- RALC – Cllr Jessop reported that at the most recent meeting there had been presentations from the new police inspector for the local area, who explained the proposed numbers of officers and PCSO's for Hastings & Rother. A presentation was also received from Costain, the new highways contractor, where they outlined their intention to work hard on pothole filling and devising a planned maintenance programme. The local office would be based at Sidley.
- RVA – Cllr Howell reported that she continued to receive emails from RVA which included funding opportunities which she had circulated for information.

Members agreed for future meetings to include reports from the BTC representatives on the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and the Battle Visual Arts Development Committee.

18. Matters for information / future agenda items

Cllr Kiloh asked for Members to join the Council quiz team for the Mayor's charity on 13 May.

19. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 17 May 2016

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.55pm

Cllr M Kiloh, Chairman