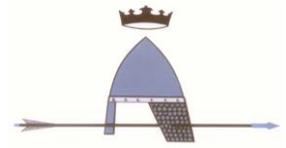




Battle Town Council



Minutes of the COUNCIL MEETING held on TUESDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2019 at
The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 6.45pm

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

In Attendance: C Harris (Town Clerk). From 730pm: County Cllr K Field, District Cllr K Dixon and nine members of the public.

6.45pm

1. **Apologies for absence** – None.

2. **Disclosure of interest** – Cllrs A Russell and D Wheeler declared an interest in item 3 as Council representatives on the Battle Civil Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

3. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

- **Response to complaint** Following a full discussion of each point raised by the complainant, Members agreed that: although there was there was the potential for the perception of bias, the Council is satisfied that the draft Plan had not been subject to bias; the Council is satisfied that the group had been consistent when considering the expressions of interest from potential additional members; the Strategic Gap and reserve site priority will form part of Regulation 14 consultation which will then be considered by Rother District Council prior to a Referendum, if approved.
- **Assets of Community Value listing as part of draft Neighbourhood Plan for Regulation 14 submission** Members noted that this is to protect the use of the building and not the property structure. The list recommended by the Battle Civil Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was considered individually and agreed.

County and District Councillors and members of the public were invited to join the meeting.

Standing Orders were suspended to allow for the following item.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME 7.30pm to 7.45pm

A member of the public asked for confirmation of the expenditure to date, where funds will come from and the cost to the tax payer of the **proposed developments at the recreation ground**. The Chairman confirmed that a response will be made personally and published on the website. The resident was also reminded that proposals may be viewed in the Council office.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

4. **Minutes of the Council meeting held on 19 November 2019** were agreed and duly signed by Cllr Favell.

5. Report from the Clerk

- A quote for **urban grass cutting** had been received from the County Council's contractor at £6,390. The cost for the additional cuts to be provided by East Sussex County Council for 2020/21 is £2,707, as reported previously. The Clerk was asked to confirm to ESCC that the additional cuts should be undertaken.
- Two satisfactory references had been received and **the new member of staff** will therefore start on 6 January 2020. Her initial office hours will be on Monday, Tuesday and Fridays.

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- The **accessible toilet at the recreation ground** had been extensively vandalised the previous weekend. This is the second time within a short period. Police have been notified and given good CCTV images. Youth have been identified and are being spoken to by Sussex Police. The insurance company has been advised and quotes for repair are being obtained. The closure of the facility and cost to residents has been published on the website, social media and local newspaper.

6. Reports from County Councillor and District Councillors

County

Cllr Field reported that a **large pothole** by the Ten Sixty Six roundabout had been reported and appeared to be repaired promptly. She advised that an extra Cabinet meeting is to take place to discuss **partnership working with West Sussex County Council**. The Chief Executive would also be shared.

District

Cllr Dixon reported that: consideration is being given to formation of a **housing company to build houses; recordings of meetings** are to be published on the website for transparency.

Cllr Field confirmed that the **planning application for Isherwood** had been passed on the Chairman's vote.

7. Correspondence and communications received post agenda publication

- A request from the **East Sussex Hunt** to hold their traditional **meet on the Abbey Green**, prior to the Trail Hunt, was discussed. It was highlighted that there would be no obstruction to the Abbey or car park. Subject to satisfactory Risk Assessments and insurances, this was agreed.
- The **Battle Community Singers** had submitted an application to **Rother District Council for a Community Grant** and requested Council's support. Members noted that an application for Council grant towards initiatives for 2020 will be considered by F&GP Committee on 28 January 2020. The Clerk was asked to confirm support for the application to RDC.
- A local company had offered **£400 sponsorship towards this year's Christmas trees** and had asked to be considered again next year. This will be considered by ER&TD at its next meeting.

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

- Minutes of the **Planning & Transport** meeting on 12 November 2019 were presented by Cllr Gynge and noted. She gave a verbal report of the meeting held on 10 December.
- Minutes of the **Finance & General Purposes** meetings held on 19 and 26 November 2019 were presented by Cllr Favell and noted. **Members considered the recommendations to adopt the revised Code of Conduct and Financial Regulations. These were agreed as attached.**
- Minutes of the **Environment** meeting held on 3 December 2019 were presented by Cllr Cook and noted. Members considered the **recommendation that "Battle Town Council acknowledges the climate and ecological emergency and pledges to work towards being carbon neutral by 2030". This was agreed.**

8pm. Following confirmation that there was no further discussion on the F&GP meetings, Cllr Brown handed his signed resignation to the Chairman with immediate effect and left the meeting.

9. Budget and Precept 2020-21

Following Standing Committee discussions and consideration of all budget requests by the F&GP Committee, Members were asked to consider the **recommendation for a zero budget increase for 2020-21**. The Clerk highlighted that there is no budget allowance for a change in amount of PWLB

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loan repayment or possible income adjustments in relation to the Almonry project as, at this time, it is not known when or if the project will proceed. She reported that, should a loan be drawn and the project commence within the next financial year, there is an Ear Marked Reserve available to absorb any potential additional expenditure or loss of income for this year; adjustment would then be considered at next year's budget setting. **Members agreed to request a precept of £374,644**, as attached.

10. Battle Civil Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

The minutes of meetings held on 20 November and 4 December were noted, as attached.

11. Almonry wall

Members noted that architects had identified an issue with the southern boundary wall. Advice had been sought from a Structural Engineer and an Arboriculturalist. Quotes are being obtained for a like for like replacement of the 4m section of wall. There is no recommendation to remove the tree. Insurers had indicated that this is not a covered risk. **Members agreed that the Clerk obtain three quotes and circulate a recommendation for approval of up to £10,000 via email.** In the meantime, hazard tape should be fixed to the wall.

12. Reports from Standing Committees

These had been circulated and were noted, as attached.

13. Finance matters

The **list of payments and receipts for November 2019**, as attached, had been circulated. Members noted income £8,410.33 and expenditure £39,325.91; both net of account transfers.

14. To receive reports from representatives of the Council and other reports

- Cllr Wheeler - BCPNPSG meetings;
- Cllr Samms - Battle Marketing meeting where a community activity breakfast had been suggested. This will be discussed further with the Dean.
- Heritage meeting: arrangements to undertake a survey of medieval graffiti in historic buildings was discussed;
- Cllr Cook - had attended Cranmer Awards with children from local schools;
- Received an award for 40yrs service to Girl Guiding;
- A meeting at RDC to discuss recycling;
- Cllr Gyngell - the Council Awareness Campaign on 3 December which, although limited numbers, provided useful responses;
- Memorial Halls Committee: reported that an application for RDC Community Grant towards cinema equipment has been submitted; the roof has been repaired; the use of the halls has increased;
- Battle Area Community Transport AGM where they were pleased to have a Council representative present;
- Cllr Russell - BCPNPSG – minutes circulated;
- Heritage Charter Working Group: notes will be presented to ER&TD January;
- Cllr Favell - Council Awareness Campaign;

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- Decorated the Almonry for Gala Night with Cllr Sharman and assisted Santa with Cllr Davies. Cllr Favell thanked Santa;
 - a meeting with the complainant as discussed earlier;
 - switched on the Lights of Love in St Mary's Church;
- Cllr Kiloh
- Council Awareness Campaign: suggested a review of frequency and times;
 - Battle Museum meeting;
- Cllr Davis
- Battle Museum AGM: visitor numbers down which is a common theme in the town; reported that the short lease period is presenting problems for funding applications;
 - Battle Twinning Association;
 - Santa's Helper on Gala Night;
- Cllr Sharman
- Battle Museum;
 - Decorated the Almonry for Gala Night
 - Decorated, erected and took away the Council's Christmas Tree. Members thanked Cllr Sharman for undertaking this activity;
- Cllr Would
- Friends of Battle Skate-ramp group where two youth are taking ownership of the project;
 - the Christmas Lights Switch-on where the lights had received amazing comments;
 - Air Cadets enrolment that had seen an increase of 15 from seven different schools. Efforts to find suitable accommodation is ongoing and the Council were thanked for its support;
 - Youth Forum is being finalised and will be reported to ER&TD.

The next **Council Awareness Campaign** was agreed for 30 January. Cllrs Cook, Sharman, and Wheeler agreed to attend at Market Road between 2.45pm and 3.30pm.

15. Future agenda items / matters to note

- To consider response to Rother District Council's consultation on [Budget 2020-21](#)

A dedicated meeting for Councillors to discuss the **Almonry project** to be arranged.

16. Date of next meeting: Tuesday, 21 January 2020

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm

CLLR G FAVELL
CHAIRMAN