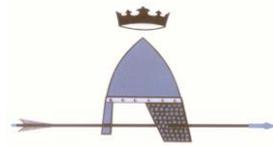




Battle Town Council



**MINUTES of a meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
held on TUESDAY, 22 JANUARY 2019 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm**

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

In Attendance: Carol Harris, Town Clerk

1. Apologies for absence – None.

2. Disclosure of interest – Cllrs Furness, Gyngell and Davies declared a personal interest in any matters relating to Battle Festival as Committee members.

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 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 following various means of communicating the consultation, including circulation by the Battle Museum to their members, there had been a few emails confirming support for the repair, renovation and redevelopment of the **Almonry building**. Some included concern at the provision of an education centre citing this is offered at the Museum and Battle Abbey. The Clerk was asked to highlight that written support for this facility had been received from the Museum and English Heritage;
- Receipt of the GDPR compliant **shredder and folding machine**;
- A test drive for the **proposed new works van** is arranged for next week;
- A model **accessibility audit** has been printed. This appeared to be fairly comprehensive and required completing.

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

6. Wedding Venue Working Group

Cllr Gyngell confirmed that at the previous evening's Memorial Hall Committee meeting (minutes attached) it was agreed not to go ahead with the large scale professional service for the wedding fair and that the aim for Sunday 17 February was not feasible. A proposal to share the cost of a photoshoot that would provide photographs for promotional purposes at a cost of £500 to be shared equally was considered. As there is no budget available for this, Members agreed not to commit to this. The Clerk was asked to confirm the decision to the Memorial Hall Committee. Cllr Favell agreed to advise those that had expressed an interest in the Wedding Fair of postponement.

7. Policy Working Group

Cllr Furness confirmed that progress is being made.

8. Recommendations from Personnel sub Committee

Cllr Favell reported:

- that the Clerk had been unable to take her leave allowance due to workload. It was noted that the budget for staff salaries (4000 and 4005) has sufficient funds due to the unsuccessful appointment of an apprentice. **Members agreed the recommendation that the Clerk is paid for 5 days leave at an approximate total cost of £800.** The Clerk agreed to manage her hours to prevent this occurrence in future;

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- the salary increase recommendation for 2019-20 from the National Association of Local Councils had been received. This allowed for a larger increase to lower salary scales to bring in line with National Living Wage. **Members agreed the recommendation that salaries are increased in accordance with NALC at approx. 2% for office staff and 6% for non-office staff for 2019-20.**

9. RDC office space

The Clerk reported on a meeting with Cllr Favell and RDC's Estates Surveyor and Customer Services Manager, to discuss proposals for sharing of office space and meeting room facilities. It was provisionally agreed that a 5yr licence would be appropriate with a Customer Service representative working Monday to Friday, 9am until 2pm, with the Council's current office hours. The aim is for the arrangement to commence in April 2019. All agreed that the aim for a "community hub" would be of benefit to residents. RDC request a regular meeting room slot for Citizens Advice Bureau and an occasional MP surgery. The initial rent offer had been increased in view of this use and to include a share of the rates. Members felt that their revised offer remained low and asked that the Clerk and Chairman contact Malcolm Johnston to reconsider. The issue of capital expenditure also needed to be raised.

10. Beautiful Battle

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2018 were noted, as attached.

11. 2019 SSEiB competition

The Clerk reported that BB do not recommend entry into this competition as the garden is maintained for the enjoyment of residents and visitors to Battle. Members felt that the gardens are beautiful and should be entered. It was also highlighted that advertisements promote the gardens as being "award winning". Cllrs Furness and Gyngell offered to start a working party to assist with any additional practical work required for the competition.

12. Action Plan

Members agreed that this document should be adapted into a **Detailed Action Plan** to include clear costs and time-scales. One objective to be discussed at each future meeting.

13. Financial matters

- The **budget report to 31 December 2018** was noted, as attached. Members agreed that unspent funds under staff training(4010) and member's training(4250) should be carried to EMRs to ensure all training may be undertaken as required.
- The Clerk reported that the **Imprest bank account** allows for petty cash cheques to be presented with an automatic transfer from the current account. This is an unnecessary function which the Bank is now making a charge for. **Members agreed to the Clerk's recommendation to close this account.**

14. Matters for information and future agenda items

Cllrs Furness, Gyngell and Davies repeated their personal interest in Battle Festival as Committee members.

Cllr Furness reported that the **Battle Festival** had made enquiries for a large scale opening event, similar to the successful Winter Giant event, for this current year. Funding from Awards for All is appropriate but applications are only permitted annually. Due to the time-scale involved the Festival are unable to apply this year. A request for the Town Council to formally sponsor the event and apply for the Fund was discussed. The Clerk confirmed that the event would be fully arranged and

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organised by the provider and the Awards for All funding application would be completed by a professional fundraiser. There would be no financial or significant office time requirement for this proposal. As there were only two Members with no prejudicial interest in this scheme, it was agreed that an email be sent to all Council Members for comment. This was agreed.

The Clerk confirmed that **Caroline Would** had now signed her Declaration of Interest and would therefore be attending the next ER&TD meeting.

- To consider change of Bank

15. Date of next meeting: 26 March 2019

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

**CLLR D FURNESS
CHAIRMAN**

DRAFT