



# Battle Town Council



**MINUTES of a meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE  
held on TUESDAY, 1 MAY 2018 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm**

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

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

**1. Apologies for absence** – None.

**2. Disclosure of interest** – Cllr A Ratcliffe disclosed a personal interest in any discussions relating to the Almonry building as a tenant of an office space. Cllrs D Furness disclosed a pecuniary interest in item 8 as a potential hirer of the facilities. Cllrs D Furness and J Gyngell declared personal interests in item 6 as members of the Battle Festival Committee.

**3. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2018** were approved by Members duly signed by Cllr Furness.

#### **4. Matters arising from previous meetings**

The Clerk reported that:

- advice had been received from the Architectural Heritage Fund that our project does not satisfy criteria for their grants;
- the gas supply had been renewed with existing supplier, British Gas which includes a boiler service;
- the Battle Tapestry copy is a canvas and does not require a frame.

#### **5. Battle Pre-school**

Members noted the response from the Battle Pre-School suggesting that there should be no increase in rent. Following discussion, **Members agreed that notice should be given that a new lease will be required at a comparative rent to other Council land agreements.**

#### **6 Lettings policy - hire charges**

*Cllrs Furness and Gyngell repeated their interest in this item.*

It was agreed that Officers could consider reduced/free rates to Charitable and Community groups offering free services to the wider community. Any business associations must be charged at the commercial rate.

#### **7. Personnel sub Committee**

Cllr Favell reported on the earlier meeting at which:

- the advertisement for a grounds maintenance apprentice had been agreed and it is hoped that the position will be filled in July;
- notification of resignation of a member of staff, due to relocation had been received. **Members agreed to advertise immediately for a Grounds/Maintenance Person, preferably with arboreal experience at an appropriate salary between £17,391 and £19,446 with applications by 18 May;**
- in view of the high number of new Councillors, it was recommended that training be offered to all Councillors. **Members agreed that a personalised training session be arranged in Battle, to include other local Councillors at a cost of £600 for 20 people;**
- the NALC approved salary increase had been noted. **Members agreed to a 2% salary increase for staff with effect from 1 April 2018.**

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## 8. Wedding Venue Working Group

*Cllr Furness repeated his pecuniary interest in this item.*

The update on progress had been circulated, as attached. Cllr Favell highlighted the Registrar's suggestion that £500 for the hire of the Almonry could be appropriate. Members suggested that there should be a different rate for midweek and weekend bookings. It was noted that the maximum number of people permitted will be 50, although a lower number may be agreed. A Business Plan will be produced by the Group for consideration. Cllr Gyngell reported that the Memorial Hall are eager to work with the Council to encourage their newly decorated Wynne Room as a reception venue and may hold a Wedding Fair in the future. It was also noted that Celebrants and Wedding Planners are interested in promoting services available.

It was agreed that Cllr J Gyngell be welcomed as an additional member to the Group.

## 9. Almonry Community Heritage Centre Working Group

Cllr Kiloh reported that she had been in discussion with various groups to discuss partnership working for this project. She highlighted concerns raised by the Battle Museum Committee and these will be discussed at a forthcoming meeting. Cllr Furness agreed to contact English Heritage to encourage their agreement to be a partner. It was agreed that the Town Model/bandstand element is not in a position to be included at this stage and should be introduced at a later point or taken forward as an individual project. Cllr Furness agreed to contact Heringtons to enquire after pro-bono work for this to include the possible taking on of Market Square. Funds for this should be discussed at budget setting for next year.

Cllr Kiloh confirmed that:

- 3 quotes had been received for the services of a Quantity Surveyor at £1,040, £1,600 and £3,000. **Members agreed that, subject to any recommendation from JD Clarke Architects, the Clerk and Cllr Kiloh be delegated to instruct a Quantity Surveyor;**
- a workshop on interactive street furniture is premature;
- a relevant expenditure amount is required to progress to Heritage Lottery grant application. **Members agreed an expenditure budget of £10,000 from EMR Almonry (325) be delegated to the Clerk and ACHC WG to progress the HLF grant application;**
- the allocated officer at HLF is no longer in post. It was agreed that Joseph Minton be contacted to ascertain the best way forward for an August submission;
- decisions are required on the room use and it was suggested that the Council Chamber/meeting room should be moved to the existing office space. The first floor office would be utilised for Council staff with the reception area available as an enquiry point.

## 10. Heritage Arts Trail orb

Members agreed that the orb should be installed into the central area of the front garden. It was acknowledged that the Christmas tree would need a new position.

## 11. Electrical survey report

The Clerk was instructed to draw up a specification, obtain quotes and arrange for the urgent electrical work identified.

## 12. Committee and sub Committee membership 2018-19

A majority of Members had submitted their preferences for Committees, sub Committees and Representations. This would be circulated with the Agenda for the Annual Meeting. The usual term for

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Chairman/Mayor was discussed and it was suggested that succession planning should be considered.

## **13. Annual Return and year-end figures**

The Clerk reported that this is still on-going and would be circulated as soon as possible.

## **14. Meeting schedule for 2018-19**

Members agreed that the format for meetings had been successful and should be recommended to Full Council.

## **15. Financial matters**

- The **budget report** for March 2018 was noted, as attached.
- The Clerk reported that the annual membership to East Sussex Association of Local Councils and National Association of Local Councils is £1563.34. **Members agreed to the membership renewal of ESALC and NALC for 2018-19.**
- The Clerk reported that there are users of the **Multi-Use Games Area and Tennis Courts** charging for their services and that a new sign requesting permission is sought for this use has been erected. It was accepted that monitoring of this use is prohibitive and that charging would therefore be difficult. Members agreed that no fee would be applied but that insurance documents must be evidenced.

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

Cllr Furness reported that George Kiloh had catalogued names of war dead missing from the Battle War Memorial. He confirmed that Battle Memorial Hall Committee had agreed in principle to the erection of a Memorial Board, subject to the list being checked for appropriateness of wording and name inclusion. **Members agreed to recommend to Full Council that a War Memorial Board be purchased in time for the 11 November 2018 from Reserves.**

## **17. Date of next meeting: provisionally, 24 July 2018**

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

**CLLR D FURNESS  
CHAIRMAN**