



Battle Town Council



**MINUTES of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
held on TUESDAY, 25th MAY 2021 at
The Emmanuel Centre, Harrier Lane, Battle at 7.30pm**

Present: Cllrs G Favell (Chairman), V Cook, M Howell, M Kiloh and H Sharman.

In Attendance: Cllr A Russell, one member of the public, C Harris (Town Clerk)

Public Question Time –None.

- 1. Apologies for absence – None.**
- 2. Disclosure of interest – None.**
- 3. The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd March 2021** were agreed and duly signed by Cllr Favell.
- 4. Clerk's report – None.**
- 5. Correspondence and communications received post agenda publication**
 - An email copied from Rother District Council to **Martins Oak surgery** following a request for assistance to extend the surgery with **Community Infrastructure Levy** funds. The Clerk was asked to arrange a virtual meeting with the Chairman to discuss this with the representative of the surgery.
 - Members were reminded that a **replacement plinth** for the **Battle Twinning Association sundial** had previously been agreed. Unfortunately, the artist due to make the plinth, Roy Calthorpe, had passed away. The BTA would like to purchase a replacement stone plinth. This was agreed unanimously.
- 6. Almonry Project**
 - Cllr Kiloh reported the final meeting to confirm outstanding items to the architect with a request for regular reports for Council.
 - The Clerk confirmed that the loan for £500k had been received, a formal contract was signed and works had started. A site meeting had been held with the Architect and contractor and a more formal meeting will take place on Thursday. It is hoped that more information will be available in relation to the erection of scaffolding and the period that this will be in place. It was noted that embossed wallpaper had been removed from the ground floor as it was felt inappropriate to retain. The removal of radiators had resulted in gaps in carpets and it was likely that these would need to be replaced. However, the sale of the old style radiators could help recoup some of this cost. The Clerk reported that there had been a few telephone calls and some social media activity against the closure, in accordance with East Sussex Highway's advice, of the footway adjacent to the building. The contractor had produced a newsletter advising of why and apologising for the inconvenience and signs to that effect had been erected. The main concern was the access to Martins Oak surgery from the north. An alternative route from Market Road, to Abbey Way and Western Avenue was possible for mobile pedestrians although it was accepted that no solution would be appropriate for all. The Clerk confirmed that research for additional bank accounts had not produced a definite solution but that this is ongoing.

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7. Almonry Development Working Group

Members agreed that the objectives within the Terms of Reference had been completed and it was appropriate to disband the Working Group.

The Working Group were congratulated on their commitment to complete such an important and challenging scheme on behalf of the town. The Chairman was asked to write to Stephen Gray to thank him for his invaluable professional assistance.

8. Terms of Reference

There were no amendments to the ToRs for F&GP or the Personnel sub Committee.

9. Sub Committee & Working Group membership

- **Personnel** Sub Committee: Cllrs Favell (as Chairman of F&GP); Cook and Sharman. Cllr Cook was appointed as Chairman.
- **Wedding Venue** Working Group: it was agreed that this WG should be disbanded. Further discussion on the reinstatement will take place when appropriate.
- **Britain in Bloom** Working Group: Cllrs Favell and Sharman; and other non-Councillor members.
- **Community Infrastructure Policy** Working Group: Cllrs Favell; Cook; Gyngell; Howell; Kiloh; Sharman; and District Cllr Dixon. This will be disbanded upon Full Council adoption of the Policy.

10. Drinking water fountain

Members agreed the principle of providing a drinking water source and the Clerk was asked to research options and costs.

11. Almonry Garden

Work to the front garden includes replanting the hyacinths from the High Street window boxes to the garden borders. Groups of cosmos, heliotrope and euphorbia will be planted and the thyme line will be repaired following the damage caused by extreme weather conditions.

Cllr Sharman asked that Full Council consider an appropriate colour scheme for next year.

The Chairman was asked to thank Beautiful Battle for the particularly attractive planting in the town this spring.

12. Battle Museum of Local History Lease

Members were reminded that the future development of the Museum, and subsequent grant funding to enable this, is totally dependent on the secure future of the museum and agreement for the renewal of the lease had been requested as soon as possible. **Members agreed a further 25 year lease, with a one year termination clause, from 31st March 2027.**

13. Action Plans

The 2021-22 Plans were agreed as attached.

It was agreed to form an **Almonry Working Group** with the remit to develop a strategic plan for the use of The Almonry with Cllrs Kiloh, convener, Favell and Sharman. Draft Terms of Reference will be presented to the next meeting.

14. Policies:

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- **Community Infrastructure Levy** The Policy was agreed for recommendation to Full Council, as attached, but the WG agreed to revise the Assessment Form to be more explicit for ease of public scrutiny.
- The updated **Document Retention Policy** was agreed subject to clarification of electronic records and the adequacy of a period of 3years for accident books.

15. Financial matters

- The provisional **budget report for F&GP to 31st March 2021** was noted as attached.
- The provisional **budget report for all Council Committees to 31st March 2021** was noted as attached.
- There were no applications for Post Covid-19 Recovery Grant.

16. Matters for information and future agenda items

The Clerk reported that the **bus shelter at Battle Gates** had been destroyed by the recent high winds. This had caused damage to two vehicles but, to her knowledge, there had been no personal injuries. This had been reported to the insurance company and formal details from the vehicle owners were awaited.

17. Date of next meeting: 27th July 2021

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.41pm.

CLLR G FAVELL
CHAIRMAN