



Battle Town Council



MINUTES of an ADDITIONAL meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on TUESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2019 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 6pm

Present: Cllrs G Favell (Chairman), V Cook, M Kiloh, L Samms.

In Attendance: Cllr D Wheeler, 2 members of the public, C Harris (Town Clerk)

1. **Apologies for absence** – Cllrs J Gyngell, C Would.
2. **Disclosure of interest** – None.
3. **The minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2019** were agreed and duly signed by Cllr Favell.

4. **Almonry Project**

The notes from the **Almonry Development Working Group meetings** held on 23 August and 5 September 2019 had been circulated, as attached. For the benefit of members of the public, Cllr Favell highlighted the content which focussed on the survey results detailing the urgent building repairs required.

In relation to the notes from 23 August 2019, it was noted that item 9 had been carried out. Members agreed all actions as recommended by the Almonry Project Working Group.

It was noted that Stephen Gray, previous advisor to National Trust and member of the Battle Conservation Group as a specialist in conservation architecture had agreed to advise the Working Group.

The Working Group had met with J D Clarke Architects on 5 September and a proposed **timetable for action**, led by the aim to submit an application for the next round of Rother District Council Community Infrastructure Levy funds in March, had been requested. The preliminary detailed brief had been received together with the fee structure to take the project to tender stage. This was discussed in detail with principal comments:

1. The requirement for accessibility for all, including toilet facilities will be addressed by the reinstatement of the south wing.
2. Vision for flexible community areas; with or without kitchen facility, for small intimate meetings or larger groups including exhibitions. It was agreed that acoustic screens are necessary and that the areas must be self-sustainable.
3. To form accessible WC opening directly onto Community Area to provide level access, as 1 above.
4. Essential to replace the existing kitchen facility.
5. The second sliding / folding acoustic partition between kitchenette should be included.
6. Medium to high, one way vision, moveable glass panels required. It was suggested that quotes for etched glass should also be obtained with a view to separate funding being available.
7. Agreed that the 'modern' partitions forming Barber's Shop to provide open hallway.
8. Agreed to convert existing BTC office to Council Chamber.
9. Preference for shallow steps with a good, textured handrail to ensure access for all.
10. It was confirmed that the gallery from the Clerk's office is not required although a full window should be incorporated so that this could be considered in the future.
11. The ashlar wall to be removed to form a larger space with new window at first floor was agreed.

Battle Town Council

12. A separate cost for a ramp and covered way to rear, linked to museum, and a public entrance via the side passage should be obtained. There was no requirement for the repair and restoration of outbuilding for ticket office.
13. New conservation heating system with new efficient boilers and traditional-style radiators are required.
14. Agreed that electrical upgrade with low energy lighting, power and data are necessary.
15. A projector and screen for Council Chamber is appropriate.
16. A hearing loop necessary.
17. Fire alarm upgrade essential.
18. It was noted that at A (urgent), items 6-9 should be included; the other items will have been dealt with as agreed. All items at B (12-24 months) and C (within 5 year period) must be included. Items at D (beyond 5 years) and E (desirable) should be put on hold other than:
 - E 1 for security;
 - E 4 as considered a safety item;
 - E 5 important feature of the building.Items at M (routine maintenance) will be included on the Almonry Maintenance & Management Plan.

It was agreed that the Terms of Reference be amended to clarify the “reinstatement of the Almonry south wing”, as attached. The recommendations were agreed unanimously.

The Clerk confirmed that there is currently an Ear Marked Reserve (325) Almonry Repairs of £33,725. There is also a (4205) maintenance budget remaining of £12,090 that will assist with urgent repairs. The percentage costs indicated by JD Clarke confirm an expenditure of £47,500 to tender stage. It was highlighted that this work will be required regardless of CIL or loan application.

Members agreed to recommend to Full Council:

- That the Almonry Project Working Group take the action forward as above;
- That £15,000 from reserves be added to the EMR to pay the necessary fees to tender stage with the caveat that this be replaced if the project goes forward;
- The project be reassessed at: the stage of final planning drawings and cost forecast at the end of October; production of pre-tender cost plan, end December; and on receipt of final tender report, end February/beginning March 2020;
- Items at A, B, C and items at E specified above to be included within the specification.

5. Financial matters

- The report of financial position on Almonry budget codes at 31 August 2019 was noted.

6. Matters for information / future agenda items

- Review any Business Plans pertaining to the Environment, ER&TD and Planning & Transport Committees
- Review the first draft of the Strategic Plan for the Development of The Almonry
- Review the draft Maintenance & Management Plan for The Almonry

7. Date of next meeting: 24 September 2019

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.07pm.

**CLLR G FAVELL
CHAIRMAN**