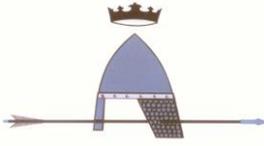


Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND TOWN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
held on TUESDAY, 6th SEPTEMBER 2022 at 7.30pm
in The Almonry, High Street, Battle, TN33 0EA

Present: Cllrs H Sharman (Chairman), S Burton, V Cook, J Gyngell, M Kiloh and G Favell.

In attendance: One member of the public, C Harris (Town Clerk).

Public Question Time

A member of the public raised concerns at the lack of information on events in the town. He acknowledged the existing notice boards but felt that they were not visible enough or out of date. He suggested that more needs to be done to promote events and suggested a notice board on the Abbey Green would be of benefit to the town.

1. **Apologies for absence** – Cllr A Barton.
2. **Disclosure of interest** – None.
3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 5th July 2022** were agreed and duly signed by Cllr H Sharman.
4. **To receive the Clerk's report**
 - The **newsletter** was finally published early August and has been well received.
 - Working is progressing on transferring over to Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) in anticipation of an improved internet service prior to confirming a date for the **webinar on Modern Day Slavery**.
 - The **website** has been updated with most items identified. Work is ongoing.
 - There has been no response from the owner of the **Costa building** from communications from the MP or Officers. Mr Merriman has agreed to write a firmer letter. Legal advice will be sought on whether we have a 'right' to remove **the clock for repair**, without formal permission. Contact will also be made with the original clock provider to ascertain how much disturbance its removal would cause to the building.
5. **Finance**
 - a) The **Budget Report at 30th June 2022** was noted, as attached.
 - b) Following a brief discussion on the inflation rate and potential expenditure, Members agreed to arrange a separate meeting to consider the **budget for 2023/24** for recommendation to the Finance & General Purposes Committee, once more information is available.

6. Correspondence and Communications received post Agenda publication

An email of concern from a local retailer at the out-of-date **1066 Country Information Boards** in the Rother District Council car parks. The Clerk confirmed that Hastings Borough Council had reported that a new scheme across the 1066 Country which should be implemented in the New Year. It was indicated that use of the boards until that time would be possible. The Clerk was asked to research the provision of footpaths walk information into these boards.

The poor **signage for the all-day parking at Market Road** had been raised by a local retailer. Members agreed that this should be taken to the forthcoming Strengthening Local Relationships

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meeting. Cllr Cook agreed to emphasise this matter to Rother District Council's Car Parking Review Group.

7. Working Groups

- a) **Resilience Plan** – Cllr Sharman confirmed that an invitation to all volunteers to attend a social event had received few positive responses. It was agreed that this should be postponed to allow further volunteers to be sought. Cllrs Favell and Sharman will approach groups and organisations to promote the need for volunteers.
- b) **South & South East in Bloom** – Cllr Favell confirmed that the judge had been to Battle and results will be announced next week. **It was agreed that this Group had completed its task and should be disbanded.**
- c) **Tourist Information** – Cllr Kiloh presented the notes with recommendations, which had been circulated to Members, as attached. **All recommendations were discussed and agreed:**

The role of the Tourist Information Point:

- i. *It should display leaflets, maps and books providing information about Battle and the surrounding area.*
- ii. *It may sell books and other appropriate items on its own behalf and on behalf of others.*
It was highlighted that there would be no stock of literature.
- iii. *It should provide a facility for local businesses to promote their services for visitors.*
- iv. *It should provide a venue for viewings of the Almonry film, self-guided tours of the Almonry and the town, guided walks and other activities.*
- v. *Dedicated BTC staff should be trained and be available to answer queries and signpost visitors to other sources of information*

Setting up

- i. *An advertising A-Board and Information sign should be bought, and planning permission applied for if necessary.* It was agreed that an A-board should be placed at the double-gated entry point.
- ii. *Appropriate display units and visitor chairs should be bought, and a hanging system installed as previously agreed.* Members agreed that the rooms should not be cluttered and furniture should be sourced from recycling facilities, if possible.
- iii. *Books, maps, guides and other materials for sale should be acquired.*
- iv. *Production of the Almonry Guide, Room Information Sheets, and signage for the globe, mortar and courtyard should be expedited.*

Operation

- i. *The TIP should be open from 10am – 3pm on weekdays and Saturdays*
- ii. *The Town Clerk should be requested to produce a proposal on the role of BTC staff in the operation of the TIP.*
- iii. *The Town Clerk, Mayor and Deputy Mayor should discuss with RDC the possible involvement of RDC staff in the TIP*
- iv. *Finance and General Purposes should be requested to consider the recruitment of a TIP assistant to work Saturdays.*
- v. *BTC should initiate a volunteer recruitment campaign (starting with councillors) to help with the TIP.* Cllrs Cook, Gyngell, Kiloh and Sharman agreed to volunteer on a Saturday.

A 'soft opening' on 14th October was agreed and invitations would be made to include Mrs Beckett, the last occupant of the Almonry as a house.

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Members agreed that the Group had completed its task and should now be disbanded.

- d) **Writing Competition** – Cllr Favell reported that poster had been circulated and flyers will be available for the Council Awareness campaign.

8. Forums:

- a) **Town** – Cllr Favell reported that, due to a miscommunication, the previous meeting had been cancelled. This will be held in the Almonry on 28th September at 6.30pm.
- b) **Youth** – Nothing to report at this time.

9. Remembrance event:

- a) **wreath donation** Members agreed to purchase from S137 and include a donation to the value of £50.
- b) **responsibility for Abbey Green event** As the Clerk will be unavailable, Cllrs Cook, Kiloh and Sharman will coordinate the event. Another Councillor will be sought to assist with the refreshments at the Almonry.
- c) **dignitary and other invitations** The High Sheriff and MP had accepted an invitation to attend. The Marsh had again agreed to assist. Responses are awaited from the Bugler player and Flag Bearer. Contact will be made with schools now that they had returned from the holiday period.
- d) **Programme** Members agreed to continue with the format for last year. The Clerk was asked to invite all those assisting with the event to enjoy refreshments at the Almonry.

10. Christmas items:

- a) **tree quotes** These had not been received and **the Clerk was delegated authority to place the order as appropriate.**
- b) **proposal for new lighting for Abbey Green tree** It was noted that the existing lights are no longer fit for purpose. A quote of £700 to supply 200m of new LV lights had been received from the current supplier, based on a 2-year contract to tie in with the original contract. **Members agreed to add the Christmas tree lights to the contract for the final two years from the Ear Marked Reserve 425.**
- c) **pull testing for High Street lighting** Following advise that the brackets for the two large crossings should be tested this year with the other crossings, due to significantly less weight bearing, deferred for a year, **Members agreed to have the 2 large crossings test at a cost of £840.**
- d) **entry to St Mary's Church Christmas Tree Festival – "Christmas is....."** Members agreed that this should be presented to Full Council for volunteers.

11. Notice board at Abbey Green area

A report from Cllr Burton had been circulated, as attached. Members discussed the use and appropriate location for a board and asked the Clerk to obtain a quote for two sized notice boards: for the bus shelter opposite Abbey Green; and to approach English Heritage for comment on the siting of a board on the Abbey Green for discussion at the next meeting.

12. Physical disability audit

This had been circulated prior to the meeting, as attached. Cllr Cook was asked to remind Rother District Council that re-marking of the disabled parking spaces is required. The Clerk was asked to put on the Strengthening Local Relationships the inadequate pavements by the Senlac

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Vets. The Chamber of Commerce would be asked to remind retailers to ensure bells are working.

It was agreed to discuss the audit for the visually impaired at the next meeting.

13. Battle in Bloom trophy

It was noted that due to the Covid and a transfer of tenancy, the Thorpe Trophy had been misplaced. The donor has been informed. A local retailer has indicated the cost of a similar replacement would be £70. Subject to confirmation of similar size, **Members agreed to the purchase of a replacement.**

14. Change to the Committee's name

A report had been circulated, as attached. Following some discussion, **Members agreed not to change the name at this time.**

15. Six-monthly report to October Full Council meeting

Cllr Favell agreed to produce the report for Full Council.

16. Rother District Council litter bins

Cllr Cook was asked to request the provision of a dog waste/litter bin close to the Lillybank development and the bus stop by the library.

17. Detailed Action Plan 2022-2023

- a) **Review floral displays and make recommendations for 2023** Members agreed to request red, oranges and gold for the summer. Cllr Sharman confirmed that deep pinks were being used for spring.
- b) **Review Rother District Council services – footpath sweeping; litter collection; dog fouling etc** It was noted that the barrow operator had been moved to other services. The Clerk was asked to clarify if this service would be reinstated.
- c) **Agree display format and obtain supplier quotes for gunpower Mortars** A quote and comments from the designer of the previous designer of the statue and Caldbec Hill boards had been received. As the cost was felt to be prohibitive, Cllr Kiloh will provide information and the Clerk will research alternatives.
- d) **Undertake audit for people with hearing difficulties** - The Clerk reported that the RNID was unable to provide personnel to undertake this audit, although a very helpful advice leaflet had been provided, as attached. Suggestions of local volunteers to undertake this audit would be contacted.
- e) **Consult with carers of young children for accessibility** Members agreed to discuss this with residents at the forthcoming Council Awareness Campaign.
- f) **Discuss ways to further improve communications with all residents** This will be discussed with the new Deputy Town Clerk.
- g) **Consider content for autumn newsletter** It was agreed that this should be published at the end of November. The Cycling and Walking Working Group wish to have an article; Cllr Favell requested the two centre pages for promotion of the Cemetery facilities; an article on trees from Cllrs Burton and Favell; the 'soft opening' event are to be included.
Due to the popularity of the current edition, **Members agreed to purchase a further 100 copies.**
- h) **Investigate methods to post sound recordings of newsletter on website** This had not yet been actioned.

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- i) **Review information on Council website and update as necessary** This is ongoing.
- j) **Agree what to provide within Tourist Information Point** Discussed at item 7c.

18. Matters for information / future agenda items

- Mayor's Charity events

The Chairman of Council and Clerk will issue Christmas card on behalf of Council.

19. Date of next meeting: 1st November 2022

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.45.

CLLR H SHARMAN
Chairman

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