



Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the TOWN DEVELOPMENT & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE held on TUESDAY, 5 March 2024 at 7.30pm, at The Almonry, High Street, Battle, TN33 0EA

Present: Cllrs A Barton, S Burton, (Chairman), D Buss, V Cook, M-L Neill, C Sprong
In attendance: M Dawes, B Rieu (Deputy Clerk)

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

1. **Apologies for absence** – Cllr B Brown.
2. **Disclosure of Interest** – Cllrs D Buss and M-L Neill disclosed a personal interest in item 6.
3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 2 January 2024** were agreed and duly signed by Cllr Burton.
4. **Deputy Town Clerk's report**
 - The **Annual Report** will be distributed shortly by Royal Mail. Volunteer Councillors will distribute to addresses in Netherfield.
 - A new **Tourist Information Point (T.I.P.) volunteer** has started and visitor numbers to the T.I.P. are increasing. **The museum will re-open** for the season on 29 March, and thereafter from Monday to Saturday 10am - 4:30pm.
 - **25 news items** have been published to the website (e-bulletin and Facebook) since the last meeting and there are **47 New Subscribers** to the e-bulletin since the last meeting.
 - **'1066 Country Welcome'** presentation is being held in the Almonry on Thursday 25 April an invitation is extended to all Councillors, T.I.P. and Museum volunteers.
 - Information regarding the **Twinning Trip to Valery Sur Somme** from 12 to 15 July 2024 has been received for Councillors to consider.
5. **Finance**
 - a) The **Budget Report** at 30 January 2024 was noted.
 - b) **Expenditure and Ear Marked Reserves for 24/25** were noted. An update on the signage for the **Cauldron and Settling Tank** was requested for the next meeting. A review of the **Kings Coronation Tree** will be undertaken after the summer's flowering.
 - c) **Virements of unspent funds** – none.
6. **Recommendation to Full Council of a recipient for the Community Award** – as this was a confidential item it was postponed until later in the meeting.

9. Town Model Update – Councillors agreed to bring this item forward.

Standing orders were suspended

M Dawes, a member of the public responsible for the renovation of the Town Model stated that he would like to reinstate the light and sound element and would wait to seek funding to cover expenses until such time that it is agreed as to where it will be located.

Standing orders were reinstated

Members acknowledged that the town model could offer tourism benefits. However, they agreed that additional deliberation was necessary regarding its placement. Although it fits well in the



Battle Town Council



Buttery, there are financial concerns related to potential loss of rental income. Members agreed to recommend that it stays where it is until a suitable alternative location is found.

M Dawes left the meeting

7. Updates received from Task & Finish Groups

- a) **Parish Assembly**, Wednesday 17 April 2024: members agreed that comments, not votes, would be sought on presentations. This will provide feedback to help inform Council of resident viewpoints. Timings were adjusted slightly to enable facilitation of community feedback, and speakers were confirmed.
- b) **Resilience Plan** – no meeting.
- c) **South and South East in Bloom** – Members agreed that Council will not enter in 2024 and to disband the Task and Finish Group (T&FG).
- d) **Youth Forum** – two meetings have been held. The forum is engaged with the Big Easter Event for fundraising activities and with the Great British Spring Clean Community Litter Pick on 16 March. Name badges to be provided.
- e) **80th anniversary of D-Day** – members agreed to the lighting of the Beacon at Kingsmead. No road closures or flags required. The Battle Community Singers, Battel Bonfire Boyes and the Bell Ringers will be invited to participate. An amateur drone operator will be invited to volunteer to film the lighting of the Beacon.
- f) **Writing Competition** – members agreed to disband the T&FG. Cllr B Brown, the convenor, is asked to prepare a new proposal for 2025 outlining the benefits and a new timeline.

8. **Six-month Committee Report** – members agreed the report for presentation at Full Council.

6. **Community Award Committee** – members considered the nominations received and agreed a recommendation to Full Council. It was agreed to recommend to Full Council that everybody nominated would receive a letter of thanks from Battle Town Council.

10. **Website review and addition of a pro forma page** – thanks were expressed for the website reviews and suggested amendments which have been received from councillors. A significant amount of work is still outstanding on several website pages and this work is ongoing. The placement of pro forma documents was discussed and it was agreed for these documents to be integrated into the relevant sections of the website to maintain a smooth user experience. The importance of accessibility and ease of navigation for website visitors was emphasised.

11. **Battle Festival application to Rother District Council** – members unanimously agreed to support Battle Festival's application to RDC for the funding of a new website.

12. **High Street and urban areas including town signage and notice boards** - Plans were suggested to review signage and urban areas using the involvement of the Youth Forum to help identify areas needing attention, possibly during the summer school holidays. Councillor Burton volunteered to assist in mapping out the areas for review. It was noted that the notice boards are within the remit of the Estates Committee.

13. 2024 Events

- a) **Community Litter Pick, 16 March** – Volunteers expected are Cllrs: B Brown, S Burton, V Cook, M-L Neill and C Sprong.



Battle Town Council



- b) **Sussex Day, 16 June** – it was noted that Battle Chamber of Commerce were coordinating activities and Council had agreed to the use of the flag poles along the High Street and will support efforts via promotion on e-bulletin and social media posts.
- c) **Battle in Bloom** – it was agreed to merge the patio and container garden categories. Consideration was given to potential judges and sponsorship of the awards evening. How to monitor the best year-round display category and the possibility of expanding the competition was also discussed with attention given to ensuring fairness and community participation. Further discussion is planned between Cllrs M-L Neill, S Burton and D Buss. Cllr Buss also offered to liaise with Beautiful Battle.

14. Walks and Talks 2024 – Members agreed to propose that £20 per walk to be offered to walk leaders and to suggest a donation-based fee for attendees. Throughout the year, a diverse range of walks, spanning historical and nature themes would be supported alongside collaborative efforts with various groups to ensure coordination and prevent duplication. Cllr Burton will feedback from meetings held with potential walk organisers.

15. Media & Communications Policy – Cllr D Buss highlighted areas for potential amendment regarding the accessibility of information on social media platforms and the inclusion of sustainability considerations. Members agreed to recommend to Finance & General Planning (F&GP) to make the proposed adjustments – see attached.

16. New Resident's Pack – members agreed to the incorporation of the comprehensive listing of local groups and societies within the pack. Suggestions for refining the wording of the welcome letter were agreed. It was also agreed that the pack be made available on the website.

17. Resident Engagement & Communications

- a) **Observer Articles:** ideas were noted for March and April articles including coverage of the Community Litter Pick, the Big Easter Weekend fundraising event for the Pavilion and Battle in Bloom announcement.
- b) The dates for the **Tom Marsh Exhibition** in the Hall & Butter were noted.
- c) **No Mow May** - discussion regarding the initiative being extended to June and July.

18. Action Plan 2023-27 – was noted.

- a) Audio recordings of the annual report – sections and readers were suggested.
- b) Summer Newsletter – a number of Community requests for announcements have been received and space will be allocated where possible.

19. Members noted

- a) Rural Market Town Group Tourism Survey.
- b) Battle Christmas Festivities feedback and word of thanks.
- c) Cessation of 1066 Town City Card from August 2024.
- d) Marbles Competition, 29 March 2024.
- e) Battle Big Easter Event, 3 April 2024.

20. Correspondence and Communications received post Agenda publication – none.

21. Matters for information / future agenda items

Battle Town Council Low-carbon, low-waste events – Cllrs to prepare a proposal.



Battle Town Council



22. Date of next meeting: 7 May 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21:37.

Cllr S Burton
Chairman

DRAFT