Battle Town Council

Minutes of the COUNCIL MEETING held on
TUESDAY, 21 JULY 2026 at The Almonry, High Street Battle at 7.15pm

Present: Cllrs Sue Burton (Chairman), Andrew Barton, Vikki Cook, Jenny Exley, Margaret Howell, Nicola McLaren, Christian Moskal, Marie-Louise Neill, Andy Ratcliffe, David Russell and Dale Wheeler.
In Attendance: One member of the public, Beata Rieu (Deputy Town Clerk).

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public, raised a question regarding the power supply for the monthly first Sunday event in Market Square. He explained that event organisers currently relied on electricity supplied by neighbouring businesses and asked whether a more permanent and independent power source could be provided to improve the efficiency and operation of the event. It was reported that the electricity supply to the square had been disconnected for a number of years and enquiries were continuing to establish whether it could be reinstated.

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1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr D Silk.
   Cllr P Morley was absent.

2. **Disclosure of Interest:** Cllrs S Burton, V Cook and N McLaren declared an interest in Agenda Item 7(b) as members of Rother District Council.

3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2026 were agreed and duly signed by Cllr S Burton.** Cllr M-L Neill, not having been present, abstained.

4. **Town Clerk's Report**
   The Deputy Town Clerk presented the Town Clerk's report.
   Members noted that:
   - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), together with the supporting documents, had been submitted to the External Auditors and published on the Council's website and noticeboards, as required.
   - confidential insurance reports relating to the play areas at Coronation Gardens and Darvel Down have been received and circulated. Initial cost information has also been received; however, further clarification has been requested before the matter can be considered formally. Tree condition reports are still awaited.
   - no expressions of interest have been received to join the Marketing Sub Committee.

5. **Reports from County Councillor and District Councillors**
   County:
   Cllr K Field reported on the outcome of the recent East Sussex County Council meeting including; the possible changes to the Household Waste Recycling Site booking system, proposals relating to concessionary bus travel for veterans and developments regarding Local Government Reorganisation and changes to local authority boundaries. Members noted the significant implications for East Sussex staffing, governance and the transition to the new unitary authority. Questions were raised regarding the boundary review process and the possibility of a judicial review.
   District:
   Cllr S Burton reported that a revised policy for the licensing of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles had been approved by Rother District Council.

6. Draft minutes and consider any recommendations from Standing & Sub Committee meetings:

a) Cllr S Burton presented the draft minutes for the **Finance & General Purposes Committee (F&GP) meeting held on 30 June May 2026. Members approved** the recommendation to renew the contract with Mulberry & Co. for a further three years at a cost of £80 per hour. The minutes were noted.

b) Cllr C Moskal presented the draft minutes for the Town **Development and External Relations Committee held on 07 July 2026.** Members were reminded of the reception to celebrate the life of Mary Joy Langdon on 22 August 2026. The minutes were noted.

c) Cllr D Wheeler presented the draft minutes for the **Planning & Transport Committee meeting held on 14 July 2026.** The minutes were noted.

7. Updates and recommendations from Task and Finish Groups (T&FG)

a) **Civic Actions:** Members received a report and considered the proposals presented. **Members agreed** that separate badges be introduced for the *'Past Mayor Award'* and *'Freedom of the Town Award'*, with both produced in gold colouring at 30 mm diameter, with just the helmet in the centre and the title of the award around the diameter. Certificates would be produced in-house or professionally printed. Revised badge costings are to be obtained and contact made with Past Mayors. **It was agreed** that the draft Civic Awards and the Community Awards Policy be revised and brought back to a future meeting for consideration. The T&FG will continue until its remaining work has been completed. Members are requested to feed back further comments regarding differentiation of the awards to Cllr A Barton. Members received an update from Councillor Neill on progress with the Battle heraldic flag. It was noted that a further report would be brought to a future meeting.

b) **Devolution:** Members received the notes of the last meeting**. Members agreed** that Expressions of Interest be submitted to Rother District Council for the transfer of the Mount Street Public Toilets and Kingsmead Open Space. **Members agreed** to disband the existing T&FG and establish a new Task and Finish Group to take forward the 'Devolution of Assets'. **It was agreed** that Cllr ML Neill would convene the first meeting.

8. Project Proposals and Council Priorities: Members considered the submitted project proposals and agreed a process for prioritising future projects. Following consideration of the proposals, **Members agreed that Town Model Repairs and St Mary's Churchyard Wall** should be progressed, with officers progressing the projects as appropriate and reporting back to Council. **Members also agreed** that further investigation of the Mount Street Public Toilets and Netherfield Recreation Ground Improvements should continue through the work of the Devolution of Assets T&FG as the devolution process progressed.

Cllr K Field and N Mclaren left the meeting.

9. Christmas Light Infrastructure Tenders

a) **Update:** members noted that the tender is now advertised, as required by Legislation, on the Government Contracts Finder portal. Three tenders have been received to date. Members noted the published timetable:

TIMETABLE

Date	**Activity**
11 June 2026	Issue of Tender Invitation and TQQ
30 July 2026	Tender and TQQ return date
11 August 2026	Provider pre-contract interviews

19 August 2026	Contract preferred provider award
1 September 2026	Start works process

Members noted that letters have been hand delivered to every affected property along the High Street, seeking permission in principle to replacement or addition of Christmas light electrical infrastructure. The closing date for initial responses is Friday 17 July.

b) **Process for Tender consideration**: **Members agreed** that Cllrs D Russell and M-L Neill will work with the Town Clerk on the tender interview process and that Cllr P Morley be invited to join the interview panel if available.

10. Public Consultation Framework – Members accepted the framework as guidance rather than policy; and agreed that it would remain a dynamic document, to be reviewed and amended in light of experience; a T&FG would not be established at this stage.

11. Use of Abbey Green for Year of the Normans
Cllrs V Cook and M-L Neill declared an interest and abstained from voting.
Members approved the request from Year of the Normans for use of Abbey Green on 17–18 July 2027 for a Normandy Food Fair, subject to the provision of a satisfactory risk assessment. No charge would be made for the event, with a deposit to be required if considered necessary to cover any damage to the Abbey Green.

12. Financial Regulations, items 5.6 and 5.7 – members agreed to postpone this item to the next meeting.

13. Amendments to Committee Membership and Representatives to Other Bodies – members agreed to remove Cllr P Morley from the Civic Actions T&FG and to appoint Cllr J Exley as Deputy Representative to the Senlac Allotment Association.

14. Finance matters

a) Members received and noted the list of income and expenditure for May 2026 as attached.

b) **Legionella risk assessments of all Council buildings**: Members considered the report regarding Legionella risk assessments and **agreed that officers obtain alternative quotations** from a more local specialist and report back to Council. **It was further agreed** that wider health and safety risk assessment arrangements be referred to F&GP for consideration.

15. Rother Association of Local Councils (RALC) modified proposal for Unitary Authority and completion of consultation by Town Council - Members noted that the consultation response had been submitted.

16. Forthcoming events from Council Year document for August and September were noted:

13 August	International Youth Day (UN)
19 & 20 August	Folk & Fable Festival
22 August	Mary Joy Langdon – celebration of First Woman in Fire Service
15 September	SLR meeting (Strengthening Local Relationships)

17. Correspondence and communications received post Agenda circulation – none.

18. To receive reports from representatives of the Council and other reports

a) The report from Councillors was noted, as attached.
b) RALC notes from meeting on 8 July 2026 were noted.
c) Rother District Council liaison meeting notes from 9 June 2026 were noted.

19. Future agenda items / matters to note

- To consider grant requests.

20. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 18 August 2026

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21:13.

Cllr S Burton
Chairman