Battle Town Council

Minutes of the COUNCIL MEETING held on
TUESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2026 at The Almonry, High Street Battle at 7.15pm

Present: Cllrs Sue Burton (Chairman), Vikki Cook, Margaret Howell, Nicola McLaren, Pete Morley, Christian Moskal, Marie-Louise Neill, David Russell and Dale Wheeler.
In Attendance: Carol Harris (Town Clerk).

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

None.

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1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Andrew Barton and Andrew Ratcliffe.

2. **Disclosure of Interest:** None.

3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2026 were agreed and duly signed by Cllr S Burton.**

4. **Town Clerk's Report**

- Members were reminded that training sessions are not refundable if unattended. If possible, notice should be given to allow an alternative Councillor to take advantage of the training.

5. **Reports from County Councillor and District Councillors**

County

Cllr Field had sent her apologies and submitted the following report:

- The administration agreed a Notice of Motion by one of its own councillors to ask Scrutiny to investigate a default 30mph wherever there is a village sign. An Opposition amendment to change 30 to 20 was lost.
- An Opposition Noice of Motion asked the Finance Department to provide the cost to date of LGR and then ask the Leader to ask the government for a refund in the light of this wasted work. This was carried
- A Notice of Motion asking to declare East Sussex a county of Harm Reduction was lost
- A Notice of Motion asking to declare the trackbed of the Lewes to Uckfield Railway line protected was carried. It was noted that the proposed new greenway would run alongside the trackbed and not impinge on it. It was further noted that the trackbed is already protected in the Lewes and Wealden Local Plans.
- People Scrutiny looked at the escalating cost of Home to School Transport. Contracts are being looked at and Independent Travel Training will be encouraged
- Place Scrutiny has reviewed Street Works and supports the lobbying of government and MPs to lower the time allowed for utility companies to complete permanent reinstatements. Utility companies should share plans for upcoming works. There should be more collaboration and targeted inspections by the County Council on known poor performers.

District

Cllr Cook reported that Overview and Scrutiny had resolved to cut the £9,000 grant to Battle Marketing. This has been appealed and will be discussed at Cabinet.

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Cllr McLaren reminded members that the Rother Local Plan final version is currently out at consultation until 24 November 2026. All comments will be submitted to the Inspector and it was important to highlight the positive items included within the Plan.
Cllr Burton reported that the Market Square toilets are at the top of the list for repairs. It was suggested that the damage is being carried out of school hours. These toilets were highlighted as one of the three worst in the district for criminal damage. Cllr Burton also reported that Biffa have 124 new vehicles for its waste contract.

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

a) Cllr Burton presented the draft Minutes for the **Finance & General Purposes Committee** meeting held on 22 September 2026 and highlighted the agreement for an additional staff member for the estate and extra office hours.

b) Cllr Silk presented the draft Minutes for the **Estates Committee** meeting held on 6 October 2026 and highlighted the extensive conversation on the replacement of the All Terrain Vehicle. It was agreed to carry out further investigations to consider a possible Expression of Interest to Rother District Council for a Climate Emergency Bonus Fund application for the difference between the cost of providing an electric and combustion engine vehicle.

c) Cllr Wheeler provided a verbal report on the **Planning & Transport Committee** meeting held on 13 October 2026 and highlighted that concern had been raised at the proposed land allocation at Coronation Gardens, which is partly on the only existing Battle Civil Parish Neighbourhood Plan Green Gap site. Councillors are invited to attend the next P&T meeting, or submit comments for submission to the Regulation 19 Consultation. Cllr Wheeler reported that there will be a Traffic Calming Task & Finish Group meeting on Tuesday, at which the proposal to purchase speed indicator devices will be considered.

7. Task & Finish Groups and consider any recommendations

a) Cllr Cook reported on the **Civic Actions** meeting held on 13 October, notes attached. There were no recommendations.

b) There had been no **Devolution meeting held**. The Clerk reported that the Terms of Reference for Darvel Down and Coronation Gardens play areas had been agreed, and Anthony Collins Solicitors had been appointed by both Council and Rother District Council (RDC), at an agreed cost of £1,500 for the two assets. It was noted that RDC are waiting on an ecology report on reptile relocation activity at Coronation Gardens. Cllr Cook had produced a report of a discussion on play facilities with Netherfield CP primary school.
Following the previous report that RDC had put on hold all devolvement of assets, the Clerk had received confirmation that the Mount Street car park toilets could be devolved on a freehold basis and Heads of Terms had now been received. The Clerk had requested some amendment to the draft Heads of Terms. Both these items will be considered by the T&FG at its next meeting on 28 October 2026 for recommendation to Full Council.

8. Battle Christmas Lights

The Chairman highlighted the disappointment that, after all the effort made, the preferred Contractor had advised that there is insufficient time to carry out the works for this year's festive season. The Clerk confirmed that Gala Lights, Chamber of Commerce and the Christmas Committee have been notified and there is a statement on the Council's website.

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There has been a request from Folk & Fable for the lighting scheme at Market Square to be installed with an additional Christmas tree. It had been indicated that Jempsons had agreed an external socket could be used for this purpose and a local resident has offered a large Christmas tree for use in the town. Following discussion, the Clerk was asked to identify the collection and safe installation of the proposed donated tree for Market Square and, subject to **health and safety matters being clarified, and the cost not exceeding £1,500 for the provision of a Christmas tree with lights, was agreed by a majority.**
Additionally, **Members agreed that reimbursement for the cost of electricity to a maximum of £25 per provider should be offered via the Chamber of Commerce, up to a total of £250 for locations usually included in the Council's Christmas lighting scheme.**
The Clerk was asked to approach Gala Lights to request a goodwill donation towards the cost of the Market Square and Christmas tree lights for this festive season.

9. Battle for Change

a) Cllr Cook's notes on the **meeting with Councillors** had been circulated, as attached.

b) The request for **free use of Almonry Chamber** was carefully considered, and it was **agreed by a majority that standard fees would apply, consistent with other community groups.**

10. Parish Independent Renumeration Panel

An invitation to make comment to the Panel had been received and circulated. It was noted that there is no obligation for Councils to accept any recommendation made. **Members agreed to highlight the discrepancy in legislation for a dependents' allowance for Town and Parish Councils**.

11. Weymouth Town Council's resubmission of Sustainable Communities Act 2007 – Dependents Carers' Allowance

Members noted that previous advice from East Sussex Association of Local Councils that Council has the power to provide a Dependents Carers' Allowance had been refuted by Society of Local Council Clerks' legal advisor and **Members agreed to support this initiative**.

12. Finance matters

a) The list of **income of £2,285.39 and expenditure at £43,896.31 for August 2026**; net of account transfers, was noted, as attached. The Clerk highlighted that expenditure includes a new defib at £799 for the Memorial Hall, £578.81 for fire extinguishers at the Pavilion, £1,147.50 for the Museum Lease renewal, £2,170 grant payments and a further £3,425.58 CIL payment to the Memorial Hall.

b) Members agreed the free use of Almonry for Mayor's charity talks.

13. Forthcoming events from Council Year document for November & December

- 7 November Battle Bonfire Night
- 8 November Remembrance Sunday
- 11 November Remembrance Day
- 29 – 5 Dec National Tree Week
- 28 November Battle Christmas Lights Switch On
- 21 -29 November St Marys Christmas Tree Festival
- 3 and 11 December Late night shopping
- 7 – 10 December Santa tours

- 26 December Boxing Day Hounds meet

14. Correspondence and communications received post Agenda circulation

- The Hastings 1966 embroidery is on show at Hastings Town Hall until the end of October.
- The Clerk had agreed to provide a letter of support for Initinere Collectif to make an external grant application.

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

a) Six monthly reports from Standing Committees were noted, as attached.

b) Reports from Councillors were noted, as attached.

16. Future agenda items / matters to note – None.

17. Date of next meeting: 17 November 2026

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20.48

Cllr S Burton
Chairman

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