



# Battle Town Council



## MINUTES of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held on TUESDAY, 1<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2020 via Zoom at 7.30pm

**Present: Cllrs V Cook (Chairman), C Davies, G Favell, M Kiloh, H Sharman and C Would**

In attendance: Cllr M Howell, Carol Harris (Town Clerk)

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded those present that the meeting will be recorded to aid minute taking. She invited Members to switch off mobile phones.

### Public Question Time – None.

1. **Apologies for absence** – Cllr C Hartley.
2. **Disclosure of interest** – Cllr Favell declared an interest in item 8a as the Council's representative. Cllr Cook declared an interest in item 10c as a friend of one of the contractors.
3. **Minutes of previous Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020** were approved by members and duly electronically signed by Cllr Cook.
4. **Report from Town Clerk**
  - An appointment has been made to inspect the **St Mary's Churchyard pathway** and identify action. This was not included within the budget setting process.
  - East Sussex County Council had reported that responsibility for **benches and bus shelters** falls within the remit of the town & parish council but that they had been unable to find images of any bench at the bus stop in **Marley Lane opposite Norman Close** between 2009 and 2018. It was highlighted that the cost of a licence for placing an object on the highway is £58.28 plus an excavation licence at £387.22 provided use of an approved contractor.
  - Confirmation had now been received that ESCC will lease the land on which the **skate ramp** will be positioned, for **a term of 14 years at nil rental**, plus a contribution of £1,500 in consideration of the Council removing the existing ramp, constructing and installing a new one and being responsible for its maintenance repair and insurance during the term of the lease.
  - A disappointing response from ESCC that due to reduction in budgets no **warning sign of a recreation ground** at North Trade Road will be installed.
5. **Correspondence & Communications**
  - A resident of **Saxonwood Road** had highlighted the increase in activity and noise at the recreation ground following the installation of the health pathway project which is affecting the use of gardens. The resident had been reminded to notify Police of any antisocial and illegal behaviour and it was agreed to monitor the situation to further consider any appropriate action. Members noted that sapling hedging will be delivered shortly that will be suitable for planting close to the border of the recreation ground.
  - Following quotations for tree surgery, a request to **carve into the pine tree stump a 'gruffalo' figure** had been received. This would include a small memorial plaque. Subject to any copyright protection, this was agreed.
  - A request by a new business in the High Street for consideration of a **Food Fair** for local businesses on the **Abbey Green**. Members agreed that, subject to the approval of English Heritage and other protocols, support of local traders should be encouraged.

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- The **annual RoSPA play inspection** report had now been received and would be circulated for discussion at the next meeting. Any urgent work identified would be actioned immediately.

## 6. Allotments

- a) The **report from the Asst to Town Clerk** had been circulated and was noted, as attached.
- b) An allotment tenant at **Virgins Croft** had **requested path improvements**. It was agreed that grounds staff would attempt to undertake appropriate repairs.
- c) The **minutes from the Senlac Allotment Association AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020** had been circulated and was noted. Cllr Sharman reported that Council staff had been thanked for their work. It was noted that CCTV has been purchased to identify criminal activity at the sites. The hedge cutting at Virgins Croft was highlighted as being outstanding and staff are asked to monitor fencing gaps at Watch Oak for repair.
- d) The **detailed action plan for allotments** was noted, as attached.

## 7. Cemetery

- a) The Clerk confirmed that, following excessive water bills, a **leak in the cemetery pathway** had been repaired. There appears to be an additional leak in the area of the ceremonies room and this will be investigated by the contractor during the planned internal works. It had also been noted that the surface of the turning area in the new cemetery is not adequate and quotes are being sought for consideration at the next meeting.
- b) The Cemetery grounds staff member has been working hard to maintain the **Yew hedge** plants surrounding the **children's area**; many of which had shown signs of deteriorating. Members agreed that a 1m hedge height would be appropriate in this area.
- c) It was agreed that the Clerk clarify the **size of memorials in the cemetery extension** with the Asst to Town Clerk.
- d) Some concern at the prohibitive cost of upright **memorials in the new cemetery for ashes plots** was discussed. The difficulty in mowing around flat tablets and increase in maintenance of gravelled areas was highlighted. It was agreed that, as there are an adequate number of ashes plots in the **Garden of Remembrance** available in the original cemetery, this should be considered in spring.
- e) A request for a **memorial bench for the lower cemetery at the CB section** was agreed.
- f) Photographs of the existing **lighting scheme** in both the **Ceremonies room** and Chapel had been circulated. Members considered the possible use of the Ceremonies room for meetings and agreed 3 pendant lighting with LED bulbs should be purchased.
- g) The **detailed action plan for the Cemetery** was noted, as attached.

## 8. Recreation Grounds

*Cllr Favell repeated her interest in the following item.*

- a) The Clerk confirmed that, subject to a few minor snagging items, the **Battle Health Pathway** is now complete. A bollard to prevent vehicular access and additional cycle markings are to be installed. These will be paid from contingency funds. Following concerns from a neighbouring property, the contractor, CJ Thornes has agreed to install aco drains at the Asten Fields entrance as a goodwill gesture. These will not be installed until the Cycle Skills Area has been completed; probably not until after Christmas. Members noted the increased use of the BHP and many positive comments received. Several requests for a café on the rec were highlighted.
- b) The Battle Health Pathway Group had recommended two recycled plastic material **information boards** be purchased with wording as attached. The Health Pathway sign to replace the existing out-of-date sign at the western entrance (Petanque court end) and the Cycle Skills board to replace the small 'dogs on lead/litter' sign at the Asten Fields entrance. These were agreed.

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- c) The Clerk reported that three tenders had been received for the **Pavilion re-build project**. These had been opened and considered in accordance with the Council's policy. Two tenderers had been invited to interview and a recommendation of preferred contractor, subject to successful grant funding would be presented to Full Council.
- d) The results of the **gym equipment consultation** had been circulated prior to the meeting. Following discussion, Members agreed unanimously that designs for street (static) equipment to a value of £10,000 be sought.
- e) A local resident had grown an **Oak tree** from an acorn collected from the cemetery and would now like to **donate it to the town**. The Clerk was asked to circulate a request for appropriate locations to all Councillors.
- f) A request from a local resident to provide **play facilities for younger toddlers**. The Clerk was asked to respond highlighting the plans to provide new toddler and mobility limited swings closer to the Castle play equipment.
- g) The **Lawn Tennis Association** had offered free marketing support, registration and implementation of a **tennis court booking system**. This was to encourage use of the facility. Members agreed to support this initiative.
- h) Due to budget constraints, it was agreed to postpone discussions on the **flood lighting for the Multi-Use Games Area**.
- j) The **detailed action plan for the Recreation Grounds** was noted, as attached.

*The Chairman suspended the meeting for a 5 minute comfort break.*

## 9. Street Furniture & Lighting

- a) Although not an Environment Committee matter directly, the Chairman wished to highlight the concerns raised by Cllr Field at the recent Full Council meeting of, now postponed, proposals by East Sussex County Council for **black top footway repairs**. It was noted that the issue is pertinent to the Planning & Transport Committee.
- b) The **detailed action plan for Street Lighting and Furniture** was noted, as attached. The Clerk reported that quotes for the street lighting contract is in progress. Cllr Cook reported that the faulty County lights at Upper Lake are currently being attended to.

## 10. Remainder of BTC's Estate

- a) The **request from Battel Bonfire Boyes for a memorial bench on Abbey Green** was agreed in principle. An appropriate space is to be identified.
- b) Members were advised that the Grounds Staff had raised concerns that the 2 new **dual purpose bins** purchased for the Abbey Green will not be large enough for this location. Members agreed to purchase 2 of the larger style and move the existing to the recreation ground.

*Cllr Cook repeated her personal interest in the following item and took no part in the discussion.*

- c) It was noted that urgent work to one **tree** close to **Mansers Shaw** had been completed. Three quotes for the remaining 'amber' works identified by the **tree survey** and advice with costs on an Oak tree at Virgins Croft had been circulated: £4,200; £4,260; and £4,900. It was agreed to contract **Bruce Lawson at a cost of £4,200 to carry out the 'amber' tree works and recommended reduction to the Oak at Virgins Croft; the cost of the latter to be shared with the owner of the adjoining property.**
- d) The **detailed action plan for the Remainder of BTC's Estate** was noted, as attached.

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## 11. Financial Matters

- a) The **budget report to 31 October 2020** was noted, as attached. The Clerk highlighted the receipt of some grant funding for the Battle Health Pathway.
- b) Members noted the **revised proposed Budget 2021/22** recommended by Finance & General Purposes Committee for consideration by Full Council:

Item	Proposed by Environment Committee	Revised by F&GP	Comments
Battle Skate Ramp	5000	5000	No change
Outdoor gym equipment	5000	0	Install smaller area - £10k in EMR
Street light maintenance/ replacement	15000	15000	No change
Pavilion rebuild	10000	5000	reduce
Litter bin replacement	2500	2000	reduce
Boundary wall George Meadow	10000	0	use General Reserves as unexpected cost
Swings inc for disabled	5000	4500	reduce, top up from EMR
Abbey Green resurfacing	500	500	No change
Floodlighting MUGA	10000	0	commit to 2022/23, install May 2022
Tennis court maintenance	500	0	delay adding to EMR for 1yr
	<b>63500</b>	<b>32000</b>	

## 12. Matters for information / future agenda items

## 13. Date of next meeting: 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021

The meeting closed at 9.14pm.

CLLR V COOK  
CHAIRMAN