



Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the COUNCIL MEETING held at 7.30pm
on Tuesday, 17 January 2012 at
The Almonry, High Street, Battle

PRESENT: Cllr R Harris – Chairman

ALSO: Cllrs R Bye, J Carter, Mrs M Kiloh, Mrs M Howell, R Jessop,
R McDonald, A Mitchell, Ms M-L Neill, M Palmer, Mrs S Pry
and D Wilson.

Public Question Time

Cllr Harris welcomed **Rachel Tottman**, representing **Claverham Community College**. She said that the College is very keen to raise its profile and involve students in community issues, and that she had been asked to act as a focal point with the Town Council for this purpose. Cllr Harris welcomed this initiative and confirmed that it matches the Town Council's own aspirations to develop stronger links with young people. The formal point of ongoing contact might best be with the Communications Committee but it was agreed that an initial meeting with Cllr Mrs Pry and the Clerk would be a useful introductory step.

1. Apologies for Absence – Cllrs J Boryer, J Eldridge, Mrs T Farr and Mrs P Fisher.

2. Disclosure of Interest – Cllr Mitchell disclosed a personal and prejudicial interest in both items 11 and 13 as an existing member of the Battle Museum Committee. As recorded in the minutes of the F&GP Committee meeting held on 10 January:

- Cllr Harris – personal and prejudicial as a member of the Memorial Hall Management Committee;
- Cllr Mrs Pry – personal and prejudicial as a close relation of a member of the Netherfield Village Hall Committee;
- Cllr Bye – personal as the Council's representative on the Memorial Hall Management Committee;
- Cllr Jessop - personal as the Council's representative on the Scarecrow Festival Committee..

3. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 20 December 2011. Cllr Jessop proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr Wilson. This was agreed and they were duly signed.

4. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

Rother's Chief Executive had followed up 2 matters raised at the previous meeting. Firstly, he had advised that **Netherfield Village Hall** has been discounted as a **Polling Station** as it is difficult to access on foot. Secondly, he reported that although **large print timetables** can be obtained on request from the **bus companies** they are not available for bus stops.

Regarding the **East Sussex Superfast Broadband initiative** further information had been received from a number of sources. In particular Cllrs Jessop and Mrs Kiloh highlighted a briefing note which had been presented at a recent RALC meeting. This appeared to encourage both organisations to register a simple project message indicating a poor standard of broadband service and individuals to complete a survey form about their satisfaction with the current speed of broadband. The Clerk confirmed that he had

Battle Town Council

registered the Town Council's interest and it was agreed that the public consultation should be promoted via the forthcoming newsletter.

5. Police Matters

The Chairman welcomed **Ch Insp Katy Woolford to her first Council meeting** as well as **Sgt Paul Masterson**. Ch Insp Woolford acknowledged that there had been several recent changes in her post but hoped that she would be staying for some time. She underlined her strong belief in **neighbourhood policing** in which she has substantial background and experience. In addition to separate meetings with the Council Chairman she hopes to attend Council meetings at least on a quarterly basis but, in between times, would be happy to receive feedback on local issues of concern.

The various **PCSO reports and updates to 8 January** were noted. Sgt Masterson commented that in early December there had been a spate of **thefts from vehicles** which were probably committed by travelling criminals. In general terms there was good news that, year on year, **crime is down** by 11.6% including a 32% reduction in burglary. Of current concern is an increase in **internet crimes** relating to fraud. Apart from seeking the perpetrators there will be a public awareness campaign. Concluding his report Sgt Masterson said that he and his colleagues believe they are now getting on top of the **parking problems**, particularly in relation to the loading bay.

Cllr Bye mentioned that he understood that **forged £20 notes** are in circulation. Sgt Masterson said that he was aware of this and that the problem is essentially limited to the Bexhill area. The probable origin of the forged notes is being investigated.

6. Report from County Councillor

Cllr Field confirmed that the County is now working towards finally setting its **budget for 2012-13**. As has been well publicised, there is more delay in reaching a decision about the **link road** and until this is made the report of the Inspector into the compulsory purchase order remains on hold. Following the advertising of the **proposed new parking restrictions** she said that she had received numerous comments.

7. Report from District Councillors

Cllr Davies said that, as with the County, the District Council is now looking to **finalise its budget** for the forthcoming year. She encouraged the Council to carefully review the **District Council's asset list** prior to attending the Devolution Working Group on 24 February.

8. Correspondence & Communications – None.

9. Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 21 December and 4 January were reported by Cllr Jessop and noted.

10. Minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on 3 January were reported by Cllr Mrs Pry and noted. Regarding **the flag** Cllr Harris said that he is continuing to discuss with the preferred contractor various aspects of design and manufacture, not least the need to create a rectangular flag. Based on information now available **Cllr Harris proposed that 3 rectangular flags plus one shield shaped banner should be acquired at a cost not exceeding £700, seconded by Cllr Bye. This was approved unanimously.**

11. Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 10 January were reported by Cllr Harris and noted. The various recommendations were considered as follows:

Battle Town Council

Cllr Jessop proposed the investment of a further £20,000 in a Barclays Business Bond. This was seconded by Cllr Mitchell and all were in favour.

In relation to **Grants:**

Cllr Harris repeated his personal and prejudicial interest in the following item and left the room. Cllr Bye repeated his personal interest. Cllr Bye took the Chair for this item.

- **Cllr Bye proposed that a grant of £500 be paid to the Memorial Hall. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Kiloh and agreed unanimously.**

Cllr Harris then resumed the Chair.

Cllr Mrs Pry repeated her personal and prejudicial interest in the following item and left the room.

- **Cllr Harris proposed that a grant of £250 be paid to the Netherfield Village Hall. This was seconded by Cllr Ms Neill and agreed unanimously.**

Cllr Mitchell expressed his personal and prejudicial interest in the following item and left the room.

- **Cllr Jessop proposed that a grant of £550 be paid to the Museum. This was seconded by Cllr Bye and agreed unanimously.**

- **Cllr Carter proposed that a grant of £750 be paid to Battle Area Community Transport. This was seconded by Cllr Bye and agreed unanimously.**

Cllr Jessop declared his personal interest in the following item.

- **Cllr Ms Neill proposed that a grant of £100 be paid to support the Scarecrow Festival. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Kiloh and agreed unanimously.**

- **Cllr Ms Neill proposed that a grant of £250 be paid to Netherfield Church. This was seconded by Cllr Palmer and agreed unanimously.**

The requests from Battle for Tennis and the Town Band were then discussed. For the reasons set out in the F&GP minutes **Cllr Ms Neill proposed that the request from Battle for Tennis be declined. This was seconded by Cllr Wilson and agreed unanimously.** Regarding the Town Band, subject to their agreeing to discuss with the Council future arrangements for playing in the town, **Cllr Ms Neill proposed that a payment of £500 be offered. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Pry and agreed unanimously.**

Regarding the option of **purchasing the car parks** Cllr Harris felt that on the basis of the information so far available it would be appropriate to approach the District Council with a view to further discussions taking place. In accepting that there are still some potential unknown factors **Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Jessop, proposed that Rother be further approached with a positive indication of a desire on the Town Council's part to purchase the car parks. This was agreed unanimously.**

12. Devolution Issues

Cllr Harris said that there was little to add to what had been discussed at F&GP. The next important event will be the **Localism Workshop** being organised by the District Council to take place on **30 January**. This should provide useful background to the meeting with Rother's **Devolution Working Group on 24 February**. In passing, Cllr Harris said that he had recently met with the local MP who had expressed his enthusiasm and support for the initiatives being taken by the Town Council.

Battle Town Council

13. Battle Museum Committee

Cllr Mitchell repeated his personal and prejudicial interest in this item and left the room. However, before doing so, he mentioned that the Museum is currently reviewing its constitution and that, in future, meetings of the Committee are likely to be limited to 4 each year. Members welcomed and agreed Cllr McDonald's offer to represent the Council on the Committee, with Cllr Harris acting as a stand-in if necessary.

14. **List of Payments and Receipts** was noted.

15. Reports from Representatives of the Council

- Cllr Wilson - had attended a **Scouts Executive** meeting;
- Cllr Palmer - updated the meeting on **Battle Marketing** issues including the completion and publication of the 2012 Battle Guide, copies of which are available in the office. In addition to this a simple tear-off map will be available for those who simply want to find their way around town. Every opportunity is being taken to maximise the tourist potential arising from the Olympics and an appropriate brochure is in production;
- Cllr Mrs Kiloh - had attended a recent **Beautiful Battle** meeting and highlighted plans to involve schools when the Olympic torch visits Battle;
- had attended the latest **RALC** meeting;
- Cllr Jessop - will be circulating notes of the various meetings which he has attended as soon as possible;
- regarding the **Big Lunch** proposals some concern had been expressed about its potential impact on attendance at the Mediaeval Fayre. In addition, making financial commitments on items such as a marquee without any indication of a grant from the District Council would place the Council at financial risk. **He therefore recommended that the original plans for the Big Lunch be abandoned but that the Council should make every effort to encourage local residents to get together. This was seconded by Cllr Wilson and agreed unanimously;**
- Cllr Mitchell - said that the **Museum** will be producing a special Diamond Jubilee exhibition which will hopefully incorporate photographs provided by young people as events unfold throughout the summer;
- Cllr Ms Neill - had attended the latest meeting of the **Big Event Committee;**
- Cllr McDonald - had also attended the **Big Event Committee** as well as a meeting of the **Big Lunch Group;**

Battle Town Council

- Cllr Bye - said that, at the invitation of their Chairman, he had attended a meeting of the **Salehurst & Robertsbridge Parish Council**;
- Cllr Harris - repeated that he had recently met, together with the Clerk, with the **local MP**.

16. Matters for Information/Future Items for Agenda

In the absence of any current information the Clerk was asked to make enquiries about progress with the creation of a **satellite TIC**.

17. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 21 February 2012

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

CLLR R HARRIS
Chairman

