



Battle Town Council

VC



MINUTES of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held on TUESDAY, 4th AUGUST 2020 via Zoom at 7.30pm

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

In attendance: Two members of the public, 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.

Standing orders were suspended.

Public Question Time

Mrs Burton (SB), Battle Health Pathway Project Manager confirmed that she is happy to respond to any questions in relation to item 8b. She reported that discussions to provide a drinking fountain close to the proposed cycle skills area are ongoing. SB suggested this would be an easy item to raise funds for and would be in accordance with the Council's Statement to the Environment.

The Chairman expressed the Council's appreciation for her hard work on an amazing project.

Standing orders were reinstated.

1. Apologies for absence – None.

Cllr Hartley was absent.

2. **Disclosure of interest** – Cllrs Favell and Cook declared an interest in item 8b. Cllr Cook also declared an interest in item 12b. Cllr Would declared an interest in item 8d.

3. **Minutes of previous Meeting held on 2nd June 2020** were approved by members and duly electronically signed by Cllr Cook.

4. Report from Town Clerk

- Just prior to the decision date of 2nd July, the Planning Officer requested further detail on protection of the tree within the proposed **Cycle Skills area**. The preferred contractor has now provided this information which has been submitted to RDC. We are still awaiting a decision on the application. The **Health Pathway (BHP)** is currently being installed and, subject to the planning permission, Clark & Kent hope to complete the cycle skills area at the same time as the BHP.
- Due to restrictions that remain in place, it has not been possible to hold a meeting in the **Ceremonies Room** and the discussion on appropriate **lighting** will therefore be deferred until it is possible to meet at the site.
- The **bench to the Betty Shelter** has been added to the ground maintenance worker's task list.
- Finance & General Purposes Committee agreed a grant of £500 to the Battle for Tennis proposal for a **rebound wall at the Tennis Courts**. £3,000 has now been raised for this facility.
- The **tree survey** had been circulated to Members. It was highlighted that two items require action and ground staff have been asked to investigate whether a contractor will be required.
- Due to the time period since the original quotation had been provided for repairs to the Ceremonies Room, a further site meeting had been undertaken with the preferred contractor, Limeworks Building Preservations Ltd. **Members agreed to the increase to £2,950 for the internal repair works and replacement of external downpipes and hopper**. It was noted that further works to the tuck pointing to the South West wall is recommended at a cost of £9,800. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

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5. Correspondence & Communications

The Chairman reported: concerns of traffic and parking putting pedestrians in danger in the Shirlea View area. It was suggested that safer routes should be identified to young people.

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions a local **Pickleball group** had requested a court on the Multi-Use-Games-Area. Markings had been installed for this game. A request to reserve a time had been made. Members discussed this and agreed that, whilst all sport should be encouraged, it was not appropriate to restrict use, particularly by youth that frequently make use of the facility.

An allotment tenant at **Watch Oak** had suggested that a communal group of tenants be permitted to maintain and grow items on vacant plots until rented. Members agreed to this, subject to the quick availability to new tenants.

A request for **signage to warn motorists of the recreation ground** on the North Trade Road. Members agreed to pursue this with East Sussex County Council.

6. Allotments

- a) The **report from Assistant to Town Clerk(AtTC)** including current allotment vacancies was noted and Members agreed to the recommendations, as attached.
- b) The AtTC and groundstaff member for allotments had produced proposals to **improve the Cherry Gardens**; to include an additional seat. These were agreed and staff thanked for their efforts.
- c) The **data on allotment tenancy** activity were noted.
- d) Members agreed that the usual May hire of **allotment skips** should be ordered for the August Bank Holiday weekend.
- e) The changes to **Senlac Allotment Association officers** were noted. Cllr Sharman agreed to remain as Council representative.
- f) The detailed **action plan for allotments** was noted as attached. It was agreed that **allotment rents** will remain the same for 2020/21. Members were reminded that there had been no interest from the Allotment Association for **plots for less mobile people** and that all sites would prove prohibitive for access to wheelchair users. **It was agreed that this item should be moved for long term action.**

7. Cemetery

- a) Members were reminded that Council had previously agreed small **species for memorial trees in lower cemetery**. **Members agreed that 5 trees in a clump should comprise: Rowan; hawthorn, one red, one white; winter flowering cherry; and spindle.**
- b) It was agreed that Cllr Favell would undertake the **annual memorial inspection** with the AtTC and groundstaff. She will arrange a convenient date with staff.
- c) The detailed **action plan for the Cemetery** was noted as attached. **Members agreed an increase of 2% for all cemetery fees.** Cllr Favell agreed to remind **funeral directors** of the facilities at the Cemetery.

8. Recreation Grounds

- a) Cllr Favell confirmed that there had been no meetings of the **Fit for Battle** group.
Cllrs Cook and Favell repeated their interest in this item.
Standing Orders were suspended.
- b) SB had provided a written update on the funding position and installation of the **Battle Health Pathway Group**. Suggested designs for **signage for the pathway and cycle skills** areas had been

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circulated. SB highlighted that these have been budgeted for and both would be in the same style as Council's existing signs but with logos and cycle helmet in a colourful design. **Subject to the addition of the postcode to the location, Members agreed the signs for the Health Pathway and Cycle Skills area unanimously.**

Standing Orders were reinstated.

- c) Members were reminded that Step Up Sports Consultancy had successfully raised grant funds for the Battle Health Pathway project and had submitted a **fee proposal to seek and apply for funding for the pavilion rebuild. Members agreed the approximate cost of £900 to be taken from the Recreation Ground project budget (4800).**

Cllr Would repeated her interest in the following item.

- d) A local youth football club had requested use of the **junior football pitch** for two sessions per week. In lieu of one of the fees the Club was prepared to provide and leave on site for community use appropriately sized goals. It was accepted by the Club that these would be left at their risk. **Members agreed unanimously the reduction in pitch hire fees in lieu of use of goals.**
- e) Concern had been raised at the safety of the existing post and rail fencing close to the Castle Play equipment. **Members agreed that stock fencing should be fixed to agreed lengths of the fence on both sides of the entrance gates and that the gates should be fitted with spring-returns.**
- f) Following queries in relation to the petanque court, **Members agreed to purchase an information sign to include details of the Battle Muffins sponsorship.**
- g) The detailed **action plan for the Recreation Grounds** was noted as attached. As there is minimal hire expected from the facilities, it was agreed that there should be **no increase in fees** for 2020/21. It was noted that quotes for the **zip wire** are in progress and will be brought to the next meeting. It was highlighted that new swings including one for physically disabled people are proposed for near to the castle play equipment. **Members agreed that the newsletter, website and social media should seek views on the type of gym equipment required.** Cllr Favell agreed to research the availability of mobile com posters.

9. Street Furniture & Lighting

- a) Members were reminded that there is a memorial seat close to the entrance of Mountjoy, under licence to the Council. A request for additional **memorial bench** for a long-term Battle resident was considered. Subject to clarification of space availability, **Members agreed this unanimously.**
- b) The detailed **action plan for Street Lighting and Furniture** was noted as attached. The Clerk was asked to request that East Sussex County Council replace the **seat at the bus stop on Marley Lane**, opposite Norman Close. Cllr Cook agreed to undertake a review of the **Council's signage**. The Clerk confirmed that the **bench for Dallington Road** has been repaired and is awaiting refixing.

10. Remainder of BTC's Estate

- a) Members considered **use of the Abbey Green:**
- Subject to compliance with Government restrictions and further details, Members agreed to **Battel Bonfire Boyes' request for 5th November 2020;**
 - **Members agreed for the This is Our Battle exhibition** for 3 weeks (21 days) from the 12th September 2020.
- b) The detailed **action plan for the Remainder of BTC's Estate** was noted as attached. Due to the Covid-19 situation, the **species survey of the Amenity Field** would be carried out next year.

11. Environmental matters

- a) Cllr Favell had produced a document to highlight the benefits of **battery operated power tools**, as attached. The Clerk was asked to source a demonstration of the tools to address the concerns

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raised by groundstaff. **Members agreed unanimously that battery operated power tools should be considered when existing equipment required replacement.**

- b) The **Interim Briefing–Covid-19, Recovery and the Path to Net Zero** from Climate Assembly UK, as attached, had been circulated to all Members. All comments should be forwarded to Cllr Cook for collation.
- c) Details of a **weed control system** using heat generation had been circulated to Members. The Clerk was asked to arrange for a demonstration of this equipment for possible inclusion on the long-term plan.

12. Financial Matters

- a) The **budget reports to 31 March 2020 and 30 June 2020** were noted as attached.

Cllr Cook repeated her interest and left the meeting for the discussion on the Guide Hall.

- b) Members were reminded that the **Guide Hall** is subject to a 5yearly rent review. **Members agreed unanimously that the equivalent of an annual 2% increase should be applied.** The rent will be increased from £375 to £400 per year for the current five year period.

Cllr Cook returned to the meeting.

The review for **Mansers Shaw and George Meadow** is three yearly and the tenant farmer had been advised last September of the review due from September 2020. **Members agreed that a consistent annual 2% increase should be applied for George Meadow/Mansers Shaw.** The rent will be increased from £1250 to £1325 per year for the forthcoming three year period.

13. Matters for information / future agenda items

Groundstaff were asked to monitor the frequency of dog walkers allowing **dogs off leads in the recreation ground**, against the Public Spaces Protection Order.

The Clerk reported that the installation of a **bench and act of disrespect** had occurred on Father's Day at the cemetery. The owner of the plot has been written to and a solution to the bench position agreed.

The tenant farmer has reported **cutting of fencing and removal of batteries to electric fencing by walkers.** This has resulted in calves escaping from the fields. Members felt that additional signage should not be the Council's responsibility. The Clerk confirmed that action is being sought from ESCC Footpaths Officer and a publicity campaign will be undertaken to highlight the criminal damage that results in inconvenience, cost and potential danger.

It was noted that there have been several **positive comments** in relation to the condition of **the cemetery.**

- To consider lighting scheme for the Ceremonies room
- To agree designs for gym equipment
- To consider flood lighting options for Multi Use Games Area

14. Date of next meeting: 6th October 2020

The meeting closed at 9.52pm.

CLLR V COOK
CHAIRMAN

Minutes agreed and signed electronically 6th October 2020 – *V Cook*