



Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held on Tuesday, 25 October 2016 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr G Favell – Chairman
Cllrs C Davies, P Fisher, J Gyngell, M Howell, R Jessop and M Kiloh.
In attendance: Deputy Town Clerk (DTC)
Bev Marks, Battle Local Action Plan Group(BLAPG) Chairman

The Chairman invited Bev Marks to address the meeting. Mr Marks reported that at the previous BLAPG meeting there had been a general lack of understanding of issues relating to the Battle Health Pathway(BHP) project. He confirmed that this would be rectified for future discussions.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Cllr J Boryer, D Furness and J Reeves.
2. **Disclosure of Interest** – None.
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 13 September 2016.** Cllr Jessop proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr Fisher and agreed unanimously. These were duly signed by Cllr Favell.

4. **Matters arising from previous meetings, not on this agenda**

The DTC reported:

- the **cemetery commemorative posts** had been delivered and are awaiting installation;
- communication with **Southern Water** seeking compensation for the extended period taken to resolve the **waste water leak at Watch Oak allotments**.

Cllr Jessop thanked the DTC for arranging for the **re-siting of the bench** from outside the Crafty Norman premises to the Abbey Green.

5. **Correspondence & communications**

A request from the **Battel Bonfire Boyes(BBB)** to approve the **removal the bollards and seats** at the narrow end of the **Abbey Green** to enable the procession access to the bonfire on 5 November. These would all be replaced at the end of the event. This was agreed.

6. **Allotments**

Cllr Davies reported that there were no amendments to be made on **Action Plan for Allotments**, as attached.

The **allotment inspections** had all taken place and reports passed to the DTC for letters advising of poor cultivation to appropriate tenants. Cllr Kiloh expressed concern that none of the 'taster' plots had been taken. Members agreed that the term may imply temporary and perhaps another terminology should be used. Discussion about the need for a January/February inspection resulted in the agreement that this would take place as an informal inspection by only the council's co-ordinator and work staff member.

Communication from the tenants of plot **23 at Watch Oak** had been circulated. Members were advised that the allotment had been inspected on several occasions and that letters had been sent appropriately. Members agreed that the tenancy be extended for the forthcoming

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year, on the understanding that if the Council continues to find that the Agreement is not being adhered to, then the rent will be forfeited and the plot advertised as vacant. Members agreed that photographic evidence will be produced in future.

The DTC confirmed **current vacancies** as: Cherry Gardens – 6; Netherfield Hill – 1; Virgins Croft – 5 and Watch Oak – 9.

In light of the increases for the last 2 years and the nominal charge at 3%, **Cllr Favell proposed no increase in allotment rents for 2017/18. This was seconded by Cllr Fisher and agreed unanimously.**

The Committee discussed any particular requirements regarding the 2017/18 budget for allotments. Cllr Davies requested that the possibility of a steadying rail be investigated. Members agreed that the **budget for allotments 2017/18**, as attached, be submitted to F&GP for consideration.

7. Cemetery

The report from Cllr Favell on the progress of the **Action Plan for the Cemetery**, as attached, had been circulated and was noted.

In relation to the **Action Plan for the Chapel**, Cllr Kiloh reported that works are well underway with the accessible toilet and drainage in place.

Members discussed the options for **flooring and decoration in the ceremonies/meeting room**. It was agreed that this should be left until works are completed. In the meantime, the DTC should seek advice from the Building Inspector. In relation to the wall covering, the Committee agreed to the Contractor's recommendation of breathable emulsion.

The updated **Cemetery Regulations and Fees for 2016/17** were agreed as attached.

It was agreed to increase the **Cemetery Fees for 2017/18** by approximately 3%, as attached.

Members agreed that the **budget for the cemetery 2017/18**, as attached, be submitted to F&GP for consideration.

8. Recreation Ground, Play and Games Facilities

The report from Cllr Gyngell on the progress of the **Action Plan for the Recreation Grounds**, as attached, had been circulated and was noted. She highlighted the need for an additional litter bin at the bottom of the recreation ground and Members agreed that this should be purchased.

The report from Cllr Reeves on the progress of the **Action Plan for the Pavilion** had been circulated and, subject to the revision of dates, was agreed as attached. She had also circulated a proposal to form a Working Group to take the café project forward. It was agreed to ask Cllr Reeves to lead and involve members that she felt could offer value to the scheme. Cllrs Gyngell and Favell confirmed they were available if needed. It was agreed that advice should be sought from Ian Davidson (SSALC lawyer) on the draft 'Memorandum of Association'.

A request from **Battle Baptist Football Club (BBFC)** to install a storage unit in the recreation ground had been received. It was suggested that this would be approximately 6.5m x 2.5m

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and could be sited beside the existing BBB storage shed. Members were reminded that other organisations had previously sought permission to place structures on the Council's land and it had been agreed that no further buildings would be permitted. The DTC was asked to contact BBB to ascertain the possibility of sharing facilities with BBFC. It was also suggested that an extension to the rear of the Pavilion, to provide an additional changing room with storage under could be investigated. The DTC was asked to advise BBFC that no additional storage facility would be permitted at present but that alternative options are being explored. They were also to be requested to remove their property from the changing room to enable other hirers to use the area.

The **Recreation Ground Policy and Fee Structure** was agreed as attached.

The Town Clerk had spoken with the owner of **1 Asten Fields** regarding the **access from Asten Fields to the recreation ground**. He had confirmed that this section of the road is unadopted and owned jointly with his neighbour. He advised that there is a provision which prevents the access ever being formalised although he was happy for the Council's workstaff to use the access when needed. Southern Water also use this access. The resident also reported that there would be no permanent access right for the BHP. The DTC was asked to thank the owner for the permission for BTC staff to have access and to request a copy of the relevant clause on the Deed for our records.

Cllr Favell reported on a meeting to discuss the **Battle Health Pathway** development plan. She emphasised the value of employing the landscape architect who had already highlighted possible issues relating to the gradient of the recreation ground. To minimise the slopes, the architect had suggested more meandering pathways than straight lines. The option of reducing the circular route to the top part of the recreation was also made in light of the steepness by the Asten Fields side near to the football pitch. Cllr Favell confirmed that the topographical survey has been instructed by the DTC, as agreed by Council previously. The Committee asked that the planned design be brought back to the Committee for approval, although if, as suggested, no land identified for other use was included, it could see no issues being raised.

Members discussed requirements in relation to the 2017/18 budget for recreation, play and games facilities. The Committee agreed the following items should be added to the attached **budget for recreation, play and games facilities 2017/18** and submitted to F&GP for consideration:

- setting up of café £5,000 and initial staffing costs £15,000
- play equipment £15,000

9. Street Furniture & Lighting

The report from Cllr Howell on the progress of the **Action Plan for Street Furniture & Lighting** had been circulated, as attached. She confirmed that there is one finger requiring installation on the post by Mrs Burton's and a remaining finger post to be fixed by 1066 Butchers, once scaffolding has been removed.

Members agreed that the budget for the street furniture and lighting 2017-18, as attached, be submitted to F&GP for consideration.

10. Remainder of BTC's Estate

A report from Cllr Boryer on the progress of the **Action Plan for the Trees and Shaws** had been circulated and noted.

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The DTC reported that she had the pleasure of representing the Council at a recent reception for all recipients of a **Sussex Lund grant**. She reminded Members that the grant application had been to form a new path at **Mansers Shaw** and to facilitate the removal of coppiced trees. The latter involved hiring of a Mule which had also been included in the grant. As Council was committed to the continual development of the Shaw, and for other purposes, a Mule had been purchased. The DTC suggested that the grant donor be asked to allow the remaining funds to be offset against purchase. This was agreed.

Members agreed that the **budget for the trees and shaws 2017/18**, as attached, be submitted to F&GP for consideration.

The report from Cllr Fisher on the progress of the **Action Plan for the Abbey Green, Churchyard and other areas** had been circulated, as attached. She suggested that a regular removal of posters from the bus shelters should be undertaken by staff. Cllr Fisher also highlighted the lack of attention through the twittens leading to the High Street and Western Avenue.

Cllr Fisher had identified the poor condition of the remaining bollards on the Abbey Green. **Cllr Kiloh proposed that up to 10 bollards be replaced subject to reasonable costs to repair any damage caused by removal up to a cost of £100 each including removable fixing. Cllr Fisher seconded this and it was agreed unanimously.** Cllr Jessop agreed to meet with the DTC and Concorde 1066 to agree the **patch resurfacing of the Abbey Green**.

Members agreed that it would be appropriate to request that the **ER&TD's Events sub-Committee organise the In Bloom competition and awards event** next year.

The Committee agreed that the **roundabout planting scheme** should contain ornamental grasses and poppies; with the existing heather border and central gravel area to remain.

Members discussed the formation of a **Planting Scheme Sub-committee** to advise on the planted areas of the town for which the Environment Committee is responsible. It was agreed that this was not necessary as Beautiful Battle(BB) undertake this function. It was acknowledged that communication should be improved and the DTC was asked to request a regular report from BB for the Committee to consider.

Members discussed requirements regarding the 2017/18 budget for Abbey Green etc and agreed the following items should be added to the attached **budget for the Abbey Green etc 2017/18** and submitted to F&GP for consideration:

- Ride-on mower (existing is over 20yrs old and constantly requiring repair) - £6,500
- Wood shredder - £15,000

The DTC confirmed that the **churchyard memorial inspection** had been completed and that there is an item on the web-site and sent to the Observer advising of the recent inspections and asking any persons concerned to contact the office.

The report from Cllr Favell on the progress of the **Action Plan for the administration actions** had been circulated, as attached and noted.

It was agreed to await recommendation from the Asset Valuer prior to any decision on an increase in **rent for George Meadow** for 2017/18.

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11. To Prioritise Work for Community Payback Team

The previous list of suggested works had been circulated and Members agreed to delegate the priority of work to the DTC.

12. Budget report

The list of income and expenditure to date was noted.

13. Matters for information / future agenda items

To agree the discharge of the Town Improvement Work Group

14. Date of next meeting: 06 December 2016

Cllr Favell
Chairman

