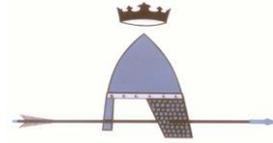




Battle Town Council



MINUTES of a COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING held on TUESDAY, 29 JANUARY 2013 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs C Bishop, R Harris, Ms M-L Neill, Ms J Ormonde-Butler, M Palmer and Mrs S Pry.

Cllrs Jessop and Wilson were also in attendance.

Tracey Johnson and Adrian Parker from East Sussex County Council were also present for item 5.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Cllrs J Boryer, R Bye and J Eldridge.
2. **Disclosure of Interest** – None.
3. **To Sign the Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 25 September 2012.** Cllr Mrs Pry proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr Ms Neill. This was agreed and they were duly signed.

4. **Matters Arising from the Previous Meetings**

As previously reported to Council Mike Dawes had agreed to act as unofficial **Town Crier** on appropriate occasions and due to unfortunate circumstances the Council was unable to be represented at the **Battle Business Fair**. It is understood that the Business Fair will not take place next year.

Regarding the public meeting relating to proposed revisions to the **Street Lighting regime** this has now been fixed for 25 February at 6.30pm at the Almonry. This will be a joint meeting with the County Council who will provide the same supporting materials as they have used for similar events elsewhere. The arrangements have been publicised in the latest Newsletter and a press release will be issued nearer the time. The Committee felt that it would be helpful for this press release to make clear which roads the Town Council are responsible for and those which fall to the County Council.

5. **Engagement with Young People**

The Committee welcomed Tracey Johnson and Adrian Parker from the County Youth Service. Whilst Adrian Parker is the lead coordinator for the Rother and Wealden areas Tracey Johnson has countywide responsibilities for encouraging youth participation. Notwithstanding the lead role of the County Council, Tracey Johnson emphasised that involving young people will have a greater chance of success if driven at community level and she gave various examples of how this is being done elsewhere. Most often this is through inviting participation in something with a specific end product, commonly creating an asset in respect of which young people have a stake and therefore a sense of ownership. She mentioned a forthcoming Strictly Youth event to be held in Bexhill in which groups of young people will be given the opportunity to present their ideas for projects to a peer group audience. Not only will this result in awards being made for the best ideas voted for, it will also develop such things as presentation skills and leadership. Up to £2000 will be given to take individual ideas forward. Wadhurst Parish Council has similarly earmarked funds to allocate to innovative projects with bids being assessed by a panel of young people.

In response to a question from Cllr Harris, Tracey Johnson acknowledged that such

Battle Town Council

initiatives tend to get the greatest response from young people who already form part of a recognised group. Gaining the interest of others could only be achieved by having someone from the community who could be seen as a keen leader, committed to supporting and encouraging young people. The initiatives mentioned above also benefit from having such a person who is able to manage expectations.

Concluding the discussion Tracey Johnson offered the suggestion that via the Youth Club, the concept of creating a Youth Council might be pursued. She would be happy to get in touch again in a couple of months to discuss any ideas or progress but underlined, once again, the need to have a committed leader/youth worker to take matters forward.

6. Website

Cllr Bishop said that a brief for the website improvement project had been submitted to **Claverham Community College**. Cllr Mrs Pry said that it had not been able to consider this in the way she had hoped but that, with the help of 4 members of the School Council some useful suggestions for improvement had been made. The fact that the website, as currently designed, is not user friendly was the main issue and that, for example, text is bland and unimaginative. A specific suggestion was the addition of a young people's section with information that might be of interest and relevance to them. In order to obtain more focussed comments Cllr Mrs Pry offered to devise a questionnaire with prizes as an incentive to submit ideas. One possibility would be to invite the children to consult other similar websites to highlight potential areas of improvement. In parallel the Clerk was asked to similarly research other websites and take advice on professional input into redesign work enabling the Council to manage the site independent of the District Council.

7. Newsletter

The postponement of the Committee meeting from the originally planned date of 22 January had meant that the Newsletter had now been printed and was in the course of distribution. The Clerk tabled a copy which was noted. Looking ahead it was agreed that the next Newsletter should be issued at the end of May so that it can cover both matters arising at the Parish Assembly and the Council's AGM.

8. Parish Assembly and Annual Report

It was understood that Cllr Bye had been in touch with Cllr Dixon who has agreed to coordinate a single, factual report from the District Councillors for the Parish Assembly. It was further agreed that both County and District Councillors should make an oral report to the Assembly. Regarding the Annual Report the consensus was that, in its recent form, it is unlikely to be read by many residents. The Committee therefore suggested that it should be both reduced in terms of its content and that the font size should be significantly increased. Wherever possible, reports should be brief and in bullet point form. The reports for the Assembly by County and District Councillors should be omitted with separate arrangements being made for their distribution at the Assembly.

9. Terms of Reference

The Clerk had updated and circulated the Committee's Terms of Reference. Several amendments were suggested and the finally agreed document is attached.

10. Risk Assessment

The Clerk had circulated the Risk Assessment document previously approved in March 2010. No amendments were suggested and the endorsed document is attached.

Battle Town Council

11. Budget Report 2012-13

In circulating the latest budget report the Clerk highlighted a slight change to the previous forecast figures relating to the spend on the Olympics. In response to a query about the miscellaneous expenditure of £270 he said that this relates to various items promoting the Parish Assembly including the framing of the Community Award certificates and the change of the date on the banners.

12. Budget 2013-14 and 3 Year Plan

The 2013-14 budget as now approved by Council was noted. Looking beyond this the Committee felt that the main items to include in the 3 year plan would be the cost of the redesign of the website during 2014-15 and the allocation of funds to support any youth initiative. The Clerk was asked to research costs for the former and an allocation of £2000 in each year of the 3 year plan should be made for the latter which may be used either for project work or to support the cost of a youth worker.

13. Marketing Issues

Cllr Palmer drew attention to the latest set of marketing materials produced by 1066 Country and the Battle Marketing Group, including the 2013 Battle Guide. At the 1066 Country Board meeting some doubts were expressed about the level of funding to be provided by Hastings and Rother Councils but this information is expected to be available shortly with a view to an overall marketing plan for the area being in place by 26 March. The Battle Marketing Group hoped to finalise a promotional film shortly. This will highlight "Battle through the seasons" focussing on the main activities and events throughout the year.

14. Matters for Information and Future Agenda Items – None.

15. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 12 March 2013

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

CLLR C BISHOP
Chairman

