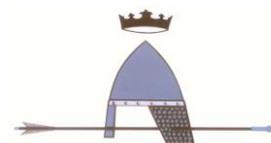




Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the COUNCIL MEETING held at 7.30pm
on Tuesday, 19 June 2012 at
The Almonry, High Street, Battle

PRESENT: Cllr R Bye – Chairman

ALSO: Cllrs C Bishop, J Boryer, Mrs T Farr, R Harris, Mrs M Kiloh,
A Mitchell, Ms M-L Neill, Mrs S Pry and D Wilson.

Public Question Time

No Member of the public was present.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Cllrs J Carter, J Eldridge, Mrs P Fisher, Mrs M Howell R Jessop, R McDonald and M Palmer.

2. **Disclosure of Interest** – None.

3. **Minutes of the Council Meeting** held on 15 May 2012. Cllr Wilson proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr Mrs Farr. This was agreed and they were duly signed.

4. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

All present joined Cllr Bye in thanking Cllr Palmer and his wife for organising the splendid display in **St Mary's Church "Celebration of Flowers"**.

Cllr Bye reminded the meeting of the agreement to participate in the **Battle carnival procession** on 30 June. He will lead the procession with Cllr Mrs Pry, carrying the recently adopted banner. He encouraged as many other Council Members as possible to participate in the procession.

5. Police Matters

Sgt Paul Masterson was welcomed to the meeting. He confirmed that **parking and speeding** remain priorities for the police though he reiterated what had been said at the previous meeting regarding the problems in monitoring abuse of the 20 minute limit in the High Street. Staff resources are simply inadequate for this purpose. Regarding speeding he had received the latest figures from those operating SID in Netherfield and will be meeting them in the near future to discuss their findings. On 29 June the police will be holding an open day in front of the Fire Station.

In response to a question from Cllr Harris Sgt Masterson said that **anti-social behaviour** is currently under control.

The weekly **Crime Updates** had been circulated to all Members and they confirmed that they are now receiving direct the various police reports.

6. Report from County Councillor

Cllr Field was pleased to confirm a recent outstanding Ofsted report regarding the Council's **adoption services**.

Following a review the Council has decided to continue to provide **discretionary transport support** for over 16 year olds attending education if financial need can be demonstrated.

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Cllr Boryer thanked Cllr Field and the Highway Steward for meeting him recently to discuss various **highways issues in Netherfield**.

7. Report from District Councillors

Cllr Davies had sent her apologies.

Cllr Dixon reported the proposal to introduce a **charge for collecting green waste**. In parallel, a **free collection of glass and food waste** would be provided. The green waste charge prompted comments about why particular individual services should be charged for which appeared to breach the concept of all services being financed through the rating system. The fear is that charging for green waste could be the thin end of the wedge leading to selective charges for other services.

Cllr Dixon confirmed that he had been appointed as the District Council's representative on the **Battle Abbey Advisory Committee**.

There had been a thorough review by the Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the **Bexhill seafront New Wave project**. A number of lessons had been learned about the running of major projects particularly in terms of communication and consultation. Doubt had also been cast on the wisdom of making a single Councillor responsible as the project sponsor.

In response to a question from Cllr Mrs Farr, Cllr Dixon will research the precise arrangements being introduced for **charging for planning advice**.

8. Correspondence & Communications

Information received from the **1066 Cycle Club** regarding a **Local Sustainable Transport Fund** was noted.

The Club's initiative to introduce **cycle stands at the recreation ground** is progressing. An order has been placed for the stands themselves and provisional arrangements made with a contractor to install them. The Club will be making a financial contribution and it is unlikely that the Council's commitment will be any more than £500. Cllr Harris suggested that it would be interesting to monitor future use of the stands.

9. Planning Committee

It was noted that the **meetings planned for 23 May and 6 June** had been cancelled in the absence of a quorum. However, those Members able to attend on 6 June had discussed the outstanding planning applications and, having agreed the procedure with all Council Members by email, the Clerk had forwarded those comments to the District Council. For the record it was confirmed that these should be formally noted as the Council's comments. They will be attached to the minutes of the next Planning Committee meeting.

Members then considered ways of overcoming the **quorum problem** which arise partly because of Cllr Carter's enforced absence but also because the Council Chairman and Vice Chairman are unable to attend in view of work commitments. A reduction in the number required for a quorum seemed the only option though there were various ways of achieving this. Cllr Mrs Pry expressed concern that there could be a public perception that applications were not being given sufficient importance if the quorum figure was reduced. Dealing firstly with Cllr Carter's situation and, in the knowledge that he would be willing to stand down from the Committee for the time-being, **Cllr Mrs Kiloh, seconded by Cllr Bye proposed that he no longer be a Member of the Committee. This was agreed**

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unanimously. Cllr Harris then drew attention to the Standing Order relating to Membership of sub-Committees which gave the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council the option not to serve. He proposed that the same arrangement be applied to the Standing Committees. **He therefore proposed that Standing Order 38b be amended to add after the reference to "...Members of every Standing Committee" the words "unless he/she signifies in writing to the Proper Officer that he/she does not wish to serve". This was seconded by Cllr Mitchell and agreed unanimously.** In the light of this decision Cllrs Bye and Mrs Pry recorded their wish not to serve on the Planning Committee. Finally, it was agreed to review these arrangements again in 6 months time.

10. Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 6 June were reported by Cllr Bye and noted. He then drew attention to the various recommendations which were proposed as follows:

- **Cllr Bye proposed that the Clerk be reappointed as Responsible Finance Officer. This was seconded by Cllr Ms Neill and agreed unanimously;**
- **Cllr Ms Neill proposed the retrospective approval to the letting of the tennis court resurfacing contract. This was seconded by Cllr Wilson and agreed unanimously;**
- **Cllr Bye proposed the approval of the 2011-12 accounts. This was seconded by Cllr Mitchell and agreed unanimously;**
- **Cllr Bye reminded all present of the importance of the Governance questions in the Annual Return. He then proposed that the Accounting Statement in Section 1, the explanation of variances between 2010-11 and 2011-12 and the proposed positive answers to the questions in Section 2 be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Wilson and agreed unanimously;**
- **Cllr Bye proposed the re-appointment of the internal auditors. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Kiloh and agreed unanimously;**
- **Cllr Bye proposed the gifting of assets to Beautiful Battle and the Chamber of Commerce. This was seconded by Cllr Wilson and agreed unanimously.**

Cllr Bye then drew attention to the discussion which had taken place about the risk assessment relating to the work of the Council's grounds maintenance staff. In the light of the discussion at F&GP this had been redrafted and expanded. **Cllr Harris proposed acceptance of the revised document. This was seconded by Cllr Ms Neill and agreed unanimously.**

11. Minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on 12 June In the absence of both the Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman the minutes were simply noted. Cllr Bishop will follow up with the Clerk the options for improving the Council's website.

12. Councillor Training

Following on from the discussions at the Council meeting on 17 April Cllr Bye proposed that 3 separate evening sessions should be arranged. As a way of beginning the process he suggested that a study of the various criteria relating to the Quality Council reaccreditation would be useful and provide indicators of possible future, and more formal, training needs. For example, issues such as the law, procedures and finance might be useful topics for further training. **He therefore proposed to progress on this basis. This was seconded by Cllr Mitchell and agreed unanimously.** The first meeting will be on 24 July at 7pm followed up by further sessions on 14 August and 13 November.

13. List of Payments and Receipts was noted.

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14. Reports from Representatives of the Council

- Cllr Harris
- had attended the opening of the **Diamond Jubilee bed**;
 - had chaired the latest **Battle in Bloom Group** meeting which had mainly covered the South & South East in Bloom competition judging route and portfolio as well as arrangements for meeting the judges who will inspect the Almonry and cemetery;
- Cllr Mitchell
- reported that the head teacher at **Battle & Langton** will soon be retiring and that, in the absence of a permanent replacement, the current deputy will fill the post;
- Cllr Boryer
- updated the meeting to the improvements to the **Netherfeld Village Hall**;
- Cllr Mrs Kiloh
- had attended the opening of the **Diamond Jubilee bed** and was also present at the **Battle in Bloom Group** meeting chaired by Cllr Harris;
 - had represented the Council at the latest **Beautiful Battle Committee** meeting;
- Cllr Mrs Pry
- had attended the **Diamond Jubilee garden** opening and also the **Battle in Bloom Group** meeting;
- Cllr Bye had attended
- **Battle Scouts AGM**;
 - a **Battle Abbey School** centenary event;
 - **Bexhill Mayor making**;
 - the opening of the **Diamond Jubilee garden**;
 - a **Yesterday's World charity fete**;
 - the **Mediaeval Fayre** at which he had presented a Chamber of Commerce trophy for the best dressed shop window;
 - the **Chairman's Civic Service** at St Peter's Church Hall;
 - a **Service of Thanksgiving** to celebrate Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee at **Chichester Cathedral**.

15. Matters for Information/Future Items for Agenda

Cllr Ms Neill took the opportunity to remind the meeting of the expected visit of the **Olympic torch** at 18 July at 7.45am and congratulated those organising the **Battle's Big Event** programme.

16. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 17 July 2012

The meeting closed at 8.32pm.

CLLR R BYE
Chairman

