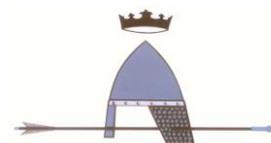




Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the COUNCIL MEETING held at 7.30pm
on Tuesday, 18 February 2014 at
The Almonry, High Street, Battle

PRESENT: Cllr S Pry – Chairman

ALSO: Cllrs J Boryer, J Eldridge, P Fisher, D Furness, J Gyngell,
M Howell, R Jessop, M Kiloh, J Ormonde-Butler, J Sydes
and D Wilson.

Public Question Time

Ron Harris reported his, and other residents', concerns to the Council in relation to a proposal by **Battle Abbey School** to build a sports facility at **George Meadow**. He suggested that the area is of great importance to Battle and that no decision to take this forward should be made prior to a public consultation. The Chairman confirmed that this will be discussed, for the first time, by Full Council later in the meeting and that no decision has been made. Tony Calloway urged to Council to retain the use of the land for the town and not allow it to be developed by a private sector organisation.

Clive York, representing the **Battle Fire & Rescue Service** made a short presentation on two proposals currently out to public consultation regarding the reorganisation of the local service provision. He highlighted the importance of retaining full time personnel particularly in light of the extended area that is covered by the specialist equipment that is held at Battle. He welcomed visitors to the Station to have answers to any queries and advised that details of the proposals can be found on the ES Fire & Rescue website. Members agreed that this is an important issue and **Cllr Kiloh proposed that it should be on the agenda for the next Council meeting to enable comments to be made prior to the end of the consultation period. This was seconded by Cllr Boryer and agreed unanimously.**

Bev Marks reported that due to Network Rail works to restore the railway embankment following a land slip some days ago, they have had to open up the footpath for vehicle movements along Battle **footpath 33** from the **Sewage Works to Little Park Farm**. This has resulted in deep mud and very large puddles making the footpath dangerous for pedestrians. A temporary Footpath Closure is being instituted until the footpath no longer has any vehicle movements and is, at least, restored to 'usable safely for pedestrians' condition. This may take some time until things dry out at this low spot under the railway embankment and through the tunnel.

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- 1. Apologies for Absence** – Cllrs R Bye and M Palmer.
 - 2. Disclosure of Interest** – Cllr Jessop declared a personal interest in an item of correspondence from the Battle Scarecrow Festival.
 - 3. Minutes of the Council Meeting** held on 21 January 2014. Cllr Jessop proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr Fisher. This was agreed and they were duly signed.
 - 4. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings** – None.

5. Police Matters

Rother's District Commander Warren Franklin gave a brief resume of his previous experience and confirmed that he would be utilising resources such as the PCSOs and volunteers to complement the existing workforce. He confirmed that he is aware of the local issues, particularly in relation to traffic, and reminded those present that Paul

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Masterson can be contacted with any policing matters. Members thanked Chief Insp Franklin for attending the meeting.

6. Report from County Councillor

Cllr Field reported that the County Council had agreed a **1.95% increase in Council Tax** for the forthcoming year. She highlighted the need to support the local **Fire & Rescue Service** with whom she was in communication.

7. Report from District Councillors

Cllr Dixon advised that the District Council are proposing a **Council Tax freeze** for the 4th consecutive year.

8. Correspondence & Communications

Members noted a letter of **resignation from Cllr Clive Bishop**. It was agreed that a letter of thanks, particularly in relation to his work on setting up the Council's Twitter account and the new office computers, should be sent.

An email from Cllr Glazier from Rye Town Council asking for an expression of interest in a **suggestion to share the cost of a Traffic Warden** was discussed. Cllr Glazier had indicated an annual provisional cost of £17k. Members agreed that this was a good idea in principle and more information should be requested.

An email had been received from **Cllr Jim Carter** informing of his **resignation after 27 years of service** due to prolonged and deteriorating ill health. Council agreed that suitable recognition of his long service to the town should be made.

Cllr Jessop repeated his personal interest in the following item.

A **request for sponsorship** had been received from the **Scarecrow Festival**. Any contribution would be towards publicity material, including additional banners for this year's event. If granted, the Council would be added to the list of sponsors on entry forms and publicity literature. This year's theme is 'Mythical Monsters' and the charity to be supported is Demelza. Cllr Jessop confirmed that £750 was raised for Autism Sussex last year and a small amount of money was retained towards stationery for this year's event. Members agreed that the Scarecrow Festival was much enjoyed by residents and visitors and should be supported. However, it was felt that the Festival should, in future, retain funds to enable it to be self supporting. On this basis, **Cllr Furness proposed a grant of £50. This was seconded by Cllr Eldridge and agreed unanimously.**

9. Minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on 28 January were reported by Cllr Eldridge and noted. Cllr Eldridge confirmed that Cllr Sydes had agreed to continue with the Council's Twitter account and that Battle Arts & Music Festival had accepted an invitation to make a presentation at the Parish Assembly. Cllr Sydes confirmed that the request for volunteers to deliver the next newsletter had been tweeted and asked that all future news or interest items be sent to him.

10. Minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 4 February were reported by Cllr Fisher and noted. A sketch plan of the Battle Schools Greenway/BTC's proposed 'health pathway' at the recreation ground was circulated to Members. Cllr Fisher suggested that this would give a pleasant alternative to walking along the busy North Trade Road pavement. Members were advised that the pathway would be a 3m wide shared use route between the gateway near to the parking area, past the beech shelters, behind the play area and down a gentle slope to the gate behind the play school. The Battle Schools Greenway group plan to instruct a full survey of the route if the Council agree the recommended plan. **Cllr Fisher proposed that this scheme be approved.**

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This was seconded by Cllr Jessop and agreed unanimously. Cllr Fisher reported that she had spoken with the tenant farmer regarding the outstanding rent for the period 2012-13 and he had promised to pay this upon the assurance that 3 signs to request dogs to be kept on leads are provided for George Meadow/Mansers Shaw. Members noted that this had previously been agreed and asked that the signs be ordered.

11. Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 29 January and 12 February and were reported by Cllr Jessop and noted. He highlighted the strong objection that the Committee had made to the proposal at The Chalet, Beeches Brook for a further mobile home.

12. Minutes of the Services Committee meeting held on 11 February and were reported by Cllr Kiloh and noted. She reported discussions with agencies that have used CDSL for similar projects and said that all have been willing to recommend this company. She reminded Members that tenders for the initial surveys had been sought and that a quote for the Tier 2 from the previous contractor was in the sum of £6865. It was also noted that CDSL quote 8-13 weeks rather than the 12months suggested by the previous company. **Cllr Kiloh proposed that:**

- a contract be let in the sum of £1955 for a Groundwater Audit for submission of the cemetery extension to the Environment Agency with the funds taken from Council reserves and repaid in due course by the future loan;
- a working group be formed to proceed the project further;
- a planning application be submitted, if EA approval granted;
- an application for a PWLB loan when additional costs are known.

These were seconded by Cllr Jessop and agreed unanimously.

13. Museum and Almonry Garden Signage Proposals

Drawings of suggested joint signage for the Museum and Almonry Garden had been submitted by Battle Museum. Members agreed that both the facilities would benefit from better signs. An indication of cost for an independent posted board had been quoted at £350. A sketch for removable signs for the gates had also been provided. It was felt that once the setting of the design with logos had been made additional costs would be significantly lower. **Cllr Jessop proposed £125 towards the cost of new signs as recommended. This was seconded by Cllr Boryer and agreed by a majority.**

14. Trustee to Battle Charities

Due to the recent resignation of Cllr Bishop, an additional Trustee was required. Members were reminded that this group meets twice a year. Cllr Eldridge volunteered to fill the vacancy and this was supported by Council.

15. Staff Recruitment

Groundsman/Maintenance Worker - Cllr Kiloh confirmed that 7 applicants had been selected for interview on 25 February by Cllrs Bye, Fisher and herself. The applicants had also been invited to meet the supervising workman and be shown around the main Town Council working areas. It was agreed that the Deputy Town Clerk should also be involved with the interview process. Cllr Fisher confirmed that general building maintenance is a requirement for the new position.

Town Clerk – Members were reminded that SALC is carrying out the advertising and timetable for interview in relation to this post. As the Chairmen of the larger two Committees are on holiday during the previously agreed interview period, SALC have suggested a revised timetable with interviews being set for either 24/27 March. **Cllr Sydes proposed agreement of the new timetable and an interview panel of Cllrs Bye,**

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Fisher, Jessop and Kiloh. This was seconded by Cllr Boryer and agreed unanimously.

16. Community Awards

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that there had been no recommendations received to date. It was agreed that this should be advertised on the website, via Twitter and the local press.

17. Councillor Vacancy

No applications have been received. Members agreed that the vacancies should be "Tweeted" and an article written for the Observer newspaper. Cllr Kiloh suggested that representatives on other organisations could also promote the vacancies.

18. List of Payments and Receipts was noted.

19. Reports from Representatives of the Council

Members had attended:

- Cllr Jessop
- a meeting of **Battle and District Chamber of Commerce** at which the Gala Night success was highlighted together with the plans to replace the Christmas suspended street lanterns;
 - a **Battle Partnership** meeting where grants had been awarded to Battle Arts & Music Festival and Battle for Tennis;
 - a meeting of the **Battle Scarecrow Festival**;
 - a **Rother Community Grants Panel** meeting which approved a grant of £3000 for the Battle Arts and Music Festival. It was noted that no applications for small awards of less than £500 had been made during the last 6 months. Cllr Jessop suggested that local groups may wish to consider if a suitable grant request could be made;
- Cllr Kiloh
- a meeting of **Battle in Bloom** at which it was agreed to enter the Cemetery and Almonry Garden into the South & South East in Bloom this year but not the town centre;
- Cllr Boryer
- a **Battle Local Action Plan (BLAP)** meeting. He asked that the minutes of this meeting be circulated to Council Members;
- Cllr Ormonde-Butler
- the award presentation evening for the **Battle Air Cadets** during which it had also been reported that it would soon be given the honour of becoming the 88th Squadron;
- Cllr Pry
- a **Battle in Bloom** meeting;
 - the AGM of **Battel Bonfire Boyes** which included the awarding of funds to various charities.

20. Mayor's Engagements

In the absence of the Mayor there was no report.

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Cllr Pry proposed that the following item be discussed under Standing Order 3a. This was seconded by Cllr Fisher and agreed unanimously.

21. Land Use

Overflow Car Park – Cllr Sydes proposed to retain the use of the car park as existing with no changes being made to the area or charge being made. This was seconded by Cllr Fisher and agreed by a majority.

George Meadow/Battle Abbey School – Cllr Fisher proposed that the land be retained as unavailable for development. This was seconded by Cllr Sydes and agreed on a majority of 9:2 with one abstention.

22. Matters for Information/Future Items for Agenda

Cllr Howell reported that the Town Council would be entering a ladies' team for this year's **Marbles Competition** on Good Friday.

Cllr Boryer asked that the Chairman of **BLAP** be invited to report on their quarterly meetings at the following Council meeting. This should be an item on the May agenda.

23. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 18 March 2014

The meeting closed at 9.40pm

CLLR S PRY
Chairman

