



# Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the COUNCIL MEETING held at 7.30pm  
on Tuesday, 17 July 2012 at  
The Almonry, High Street, Battle

**PRESENT:** Cllr R Bye – Chairman

**ALSO:** Cllrs C Bishop, J Eldridge, Mrs P Fisher, R Harris, Mrs M Howell,  
R Jessop, Mrs M Kiloh, R McDonald, A Mitchell, Ms M-L Neill,  
M Palmer, Mrs S Pry and D Wilson.

## Public Question Time

Having previously circulated a copy of the proposals Sue Burton, on behalf of the 1066 Cycle Club and Battle Ramblers, spoke about a project to create a **shared traffic-free walk linking Battle Abbey and Claverham College**. In the main the route would follow the line of the existing rights of way network but with a major diversion through George Meadow and behind the Southern Water pumping station to rejoin the right of way near the Amenity Field entrance. The steps on the approach to Mansers Shaw would be overflowed by a new bridge. She acknowledged that the planning and financial challenges would be substantial and that the status of the rights of way would have to be changed to accommodate cyclists. In congratulating the group for bringing a detailed scheme forward, and commending it in principle, Members agreed that it should be referred to the Planning and Estates Committees for detailed consideration. Cllr Mrs Fisher was sure that it would be supported by BLAP. Though the proposal is still at consultation stage, Cllr Jessop suggested registering it with the WARR Partnership as a potential source of funding.

John Harmer was pleased to report that a replacement **tumbledown stile** had now been erected on FP 100 and his group were thanked for applying the necessary pressure on the County Rights of Way Team to achieve this. On another matter, he raised concern about the **obstruction of the footway** outside **Costa Coffee**. This will be discussed by the Planning Committee and it is already being investigated by the Highway's Enforcement Team.

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1. **Apologies for Absence** – Cllrs J Boryer, J Carter and Mrs T Farr.

2. **Disclosure of Interest** – None.

3. **Minutes of the Council Meeting** held on 19 June 2012. Cllr Wilson proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr Bishop. This was agreed and they were duly signed.

4. **Matters Arising from Previous Meetings** - None.

## 5. Police Matters

In the absence of any police representatives the usual weekly **Crime Updates** were simply noted.

## 6. Report from County Councillor

Cllr Field reported that the management of **children's centres** is being unified. She also spoke about the high rate of exclusions at schools in the County, particularly at primary level, and an initiative to persuade schools that issues can often be better dealt with by the schools themselves rather than just excluding children and expecting other agencies to deal with the problem. Unfortunately, the County's lack of involvement in the day to day running of the new academies means that it is unable to intervene at an early stage.

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## **7. Report from District Councillors**

Cllr Davies drew attention to an **NHS consultation paper** "Shaping our Future". It focuses on options for change in the way various services are delivered in the future, particularly acute stroke; emergency and high risk general surgery, and emergency and high risk orthopaedic surgery.

Cllr Dixon's report covered several items including noting that the Town Council is now aware of the recently introduced **charges for planning advice**. He mentioned that 2 Members had recently **changed allegiance from the Conservative** group. There had been a presentation of the arguments for and against reverting to the **previous committee system**. Of most interest, however, is a paper going to the Services, Overview and Scrutiny Committee setting out proposals for a consultation to help determine the **future location of travellers' sites**. The Town Council will be formally invited to contribute at consultation stage probably in September.

## **8. Correspondence & Communications**

The Chamber of Commerce is assuming that the Town Council will wish to take a stand at the **Business Exhibition on 10 November**. The general consensus was that the Council should be seen to support the event. **Cllr Bye therefore proposed, seconded by Cllr Ms Neill that the Council should participate. All were in favour** and agreed that the way in which the Council should be represented should be discussed by the Communications Committee.

**9. Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 20 June and 4 July** were reported by Cllr Jessop and noted. Cllr Jessop also presented his proposal for a **Building Design Award**. In doing so he acknowledged that, of necessity, decisions would be based on subjective criteria but nevertheless felt that the Award would encourage good design. Cllr Harris was doubtful about this and feared that decisions would be open to challenge and query. Unlike the Council's Community Award, a Building Design Award could be more sensitive in view of the potential commercial interest. Having heard the debate **Cllr Jessop proposed that his paper attached to the minutes be adopted. Subject to the Award being in the name of the Council and not the Planning Committee, Cllr Ms Neill seconded the proposal. 10 Members were in favour and the proposal was therefore carried.**

Referring to the item in the Committee minutes relating to the proposed rail franchise specification, District Cllr Dixon asked that the need for later trains from Hastings to Battle be highlighted.

**10. Minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 26 June** were reported by Cllr Ms Neill and noted. In relation to the various projects at the recreation ground the Clerk said that:

- although the contractor was now in a position to carry out the **re-fencing of the children's play area**, its closure during the school holidays would be undesirable so the work will be carried out at the beginning of September;
- the wet weather has seriously delayed the **resurfacing of the tennis courts** putting at risk the proposed event on 28 July to celebrate the reopening of the courts (post meeting note: this has now been cancelled);
- the **cycle stands** will be installed on 20 July.

Regarding the **mystery water leak in George Meadow** the Clerk reassured Members that South East and Southern Water are working closely to identify the cause of the problem. The next step is to carry out dye tests.

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**11. Minutes of the Services Committee meeting held on 10 July** were reported by Cllr Mrs Kiloh and noted. Regarding the **street lighting review** she confirmed that a meeting with the Council's contractor has been fixed for 2 August and that a joint meeting with the County Council will follow.

## **12. Code of Conduct**

Having previously circulated a copy of the Code of Conduct adopted by the District Council, the Clerk advised that a model more suitable for the needs of Town and Parish Councils has been produced by NALC. It was agreed that this should be circulated with a view to its adoption at the next meeting and to give Members a chance to consider what should be included in a revised Register of Interests form. Despite the different wording the Clerk emphasised that both documents enshrined the same principles and reflect the changes to the statutory framework relating to the conduct of local authority members set out in the Localism Act 2011, in particular the need to declare a "disclosable pecuniary interest" not just by Members but also their spouse or partner. Failure to register and disclose such interests would be a criminal offence. Rother's Monitoring Officer and Standards Committee will continue to investigate other claimed breaches of the Code.

**13. List of Payments and Receipts** was noted.

## **14. Reports from Representatives of the Council**

Cllr Bye encouraged Members to restrict their reports to matters of interest to the Council and expand on these rather than simply reporting attendance at meetings. Accordingly:

- Cllr Palmer
- reported on the latest **Battle Marketing Group** meeting, the main discussion being about the development of a Battle promotional film. This is being made professionally and will cover a whole year in the cycle of Battle events up to and including Christmas;
- Cllr Jessop
- had circulated a full list of his activities during the month. Of particular interest were meetings to finalise the opening arrangements of **Battle's Big Event**; the identification of priorities for the **BLAP Steering Group**; a meeting of the **RALC Executive** where discussions had taken place on the expected content of the Strategic Partnership AGM and a meeting with the **1066 Cycle Club** about funding possibilities for their schemes. At the RALC AGM he had been elected Chairman for the coming year.
- Cllr Wilson
- reported that the **Scout groups** are going well but are in need of a new Leader/Co-ordinator;
- Cllr Mrs Kiloh
- had attended the latest **Battle in Bloom Group** meeting which had focussed on the forthcoming judging of both the Almonry garden and cemetery as well as the town;
- Cllr Harris
- had Chaired the **Battle in Bloom Group** meeting and thanked Cllr Mrs Kiloh and others who had helped to carry out last minute weeding at both the cemetery and in the Almonry garden. He reminded colleagues that the judging of the town would take place on 20 July but that the outcome would not be known until 13 September. Regarding the

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Battle in Bloom competition he was disappointed that the number of private garden entries remained poor. The presentation evening on 26 July will include the Scarecrow Awards. Concluding his report he paid tribute to the effort and commitment of the Council's groundstaff who had worked tirelessly in recent weeks to make the town look its best despite the awful weather;

- Cllr Mrs Pry
- had joined with the Mayor in a question and answer session at **Claverham Community College**. She had also attended the **Battle in Bloom Group** meeting reported on by Cllrs Harris and Mrs Kiloh;
- Cllr Bye
- as reported by Cllr Mrs Pry had met students at **Claverham Community College** to explain the work of the Council and the role of the Mayor.

In addition to these business reports Members recorded their attendance at various events including the Carnival and Parade associated with the opening of Battle's Big Event.

## 15. Matters for Information/Future Items for Agenda

Cllr Jessop said that he had recently been at a Chamber meeting at which the new site manager for **Battle Abbey**, Jo Stewart had been present. It is clear that she intends to liaise with the town whenever possible.

Cllr Ms Neill wished to record how well the **Battle Big Event Carnival** had gone and reassured colleagues that the financial contribution being made by the Council to the overall event is money well spent.

Cllr Mrs Fisher felt that the state of the **twitten between the High Street and Mount Street car park** is such that the Council should take the initiative to carry out the necessary repair and redecoration work. Whilst Members supported this it was felt that, in the first instance, there should be further liaison with the owners.

Concluding the meeting Cllr Bye reminded all present that the **Olympic lantern** would be arriving on the Abbey Green at about 8am on the 18 July.

## 16. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 21 August 2012

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

CLLR R BYE  
Chairman

