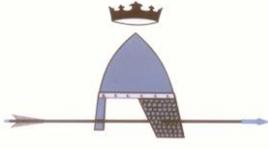




Battle Town Council



**MINUTES of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
held on Tuesday, 26 January 2016
at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm**

Present: Cllr G Favell – Chairman
Cllrs J Boryer C Davies, D Furness, J Gyngell, M Howell, M Kiloh
and J Reeves.

1 Member of the public

In attendance: Deputy Town Clerk (DTC)

- 1. Apologies for Absence** – None.
- 2. Disclosure of Interest** - None.
- 3. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 24 November** were approved and signed by Cllr Favell.

4. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

The Committee noted the DTC report:

- **Alder hedge** at recreation ground has been planted;
- Cllr Boryer and Adrian Blunden have successfully completed the **chainsaw maintenance and cross cutting training**;
- the **volunteer Tree Warden** has been put in contact with the East Sussex Tree Officer;
- **steps and a gate** to form an entrance to the **car park at the recreation ground** have been completed;
- a section of **hedge** that was felt to be dead has been **replaced and a temporary protective fence erected**.

5. Correspondence & Communications

A request from the Chamber of Commerce for formal **permission to use the Abbey Green on Good Friday**, 25 March for the marbles competition. They have also provided **entry forms for both the men's and ladies' entry to the competition**. Cllr Howell agreed to coordinate the ladies' entry.

6. Allotments

Cllr Davies reported that allotment rents are expected by 31 January and that **inspections will be arranged** with the site coordinator and Senlac Allotment Association representatives for **February**. Anne Gavin agreed to attend both Cherry Gardens and Watch Oak as the SAA coordinator for the latter is on leave.

The DTC confirmed the **current vacancies** are: Chery Gardens 10; Virgins Croft 1; Netherfield Hill 0 and Watch Oak 3.

The Chairman recommended that the Committee **delegate operational decisions** to the office with any matters of contention being communicated for comment via email. The DTC highlighted an example of this was a **request by a tenant to keep bees on the allotment**. She confirmed that SAA had been consulted and advice received from The National Allotment Society. The requirement for a Bee Keeping Policy was acknowledged and the DTC agreed to provide a draft Policy to the next meeting. **Members agreed unanimously to procedural decisions being delegated to the office staff**

Battle Town Council

1 member of the public left the meeting at this point.

7. Cemetery

The DTC confirmed that comparable quotes are currently awaited for the work to the existing deteriorated **pathways** and that the **slope has been cleared of debris** and awaiting further work in spring. The Chairman reminded Members that part of this area has been designated for the scattering of ashes and a wooden carved post for remembrance will be required. Cllr Favell agreed to obtain costs for this.

Cllr Favell reported that **Cemetery Working Group** are meeting in early February to discuss the business plan which would include suggested fees and charges.

Cllr Favell confirmed that a meeting had been held with the **fundraiser** who advised that 2 possible funding sources had been approached for the **Chapel** although this is proving complicated due to the criteria being different for religious and community buildings. It was agreed to put the **Chapel repairs on the next agenda** for decision on how to take this forward.

The DTC was asked to make contact with **CDSL** to clarify the situation with the contract for the **cemetery extension** and the chain of responsibility.

8. Recreation Ground, Play and Games Facilities

The DTC confirmed that the hedge at the top of the bank by the **football pitch** has been planted and that water appears to be flowing into the exposed pipes. The moling of the wettest area of the pitch will be undertaken as soon as practical. The area is being regularly monitored.

The Committee noted the exchange of **communications** between the office and **Battle Baptist Football Club** relating to the football pitch and that an apology from BBFC had been received at the previous week's Full Council meeting in respect of the Observer article. Members agreed that a private message highlighting that the biased and emotive article had been written by a BBFC player should be sent to the Observer Editor.

Members agreed that a **Working Group** with 2 members of both BBFC and BTC should be formed. Cllr Favell agreed to represent the Council and to ask Cllr Ratcliffe if he would be happy to join the group.

The **proposed plan of the recreation ground** (as attached) was circulated together with the superimposed Health Pathway. Members agreed the plans with an amendment to the site of the picnic area being moved to the area behind the buildings, near to the football pitch.

Battle & Langton School children had kindly completed a **questionnaire on the existing play equipment and requirements**. Cllr Favell had produced and circulated a report on the results. It was noted that a **zip wire** was a popular choice and it was agreed to add this to the next Action Plan. **Members agreed that a new play structure be provided close to the Pavilion**. The DTC was asked to send a letter of thanks to B&L School.

Battle District GirlGuiding had sent in a request for permission to install a safer fire exit. Subject to any planning permission, the Committee supported this proposal.

Cllr Gyngell reported that **much had been achieved** since the last meeting and asked that thanks be expressed to all concerned. She highlighted the need for the: bark to be redistributed at the woodland area; beech hedging to be cut back and brambles removed; bench near the Pavilion to be given attention and area by the swings to be cleared of weeds.

Battle Town Council

Cllr Reeves agreed to be the **Special Projects Coordinator**. She agreed to investigate options for opening a part-time café in the Pavilion.

The DTC reported that advice had been received to reconsider the suitability of a **net over the MUGA**. She had therefore arranged for a barrier to be made with tree branches to prevent balls from falling into the wet/muddy ditch. Members approved this course of action.

It was noted that a further **meeting with the fundraiser** will take place in 4-6 weeks.

9. Street Furniture & Lighting

Cllr Howell confirmed that she and the DTC had met with 2 contractors to discuss the way forward with the **fingerposts**. A revised quotation had been received from a third supplier in the sum of £8847.51. Cllr Howell confirmed that 5 sets of posts are being sought with one now being positioned by Mrs Burtons Restaurant in place of that at the far end of Abbey Walk. **The Committee authorised Cllr Howell and the DTC to place the order up to a cost of £6,000.** The Planning Committee should be asked to consider writing to Network Rail about the **poor condition of the fingerpost at Station Approach**.

Cllr Boryer referred to the advice received from the lighting contractor regarding the **orange lights in Netherfield** and requested that the **3 lights** between Darvel Down and the 'triangle' by the Church be changed to white as agreed by Council some time ago.

10. Remainder of BTC's Estate

Cllr Boryer confirmed that he and Adrian Blunden had successfully completed the **Chainsaw maintenance and cross cutting course**; at which emphasis had been placed on Health and Safety issues. He agreed to work with the DTC to produce a pack of **Risk Assessments** to bring to the next meeting. He reported that work at **Mansers Shaw** is ongoing with much achieved and good feedback being received. He also reported that he had identified work outstanding on the **Tree Survey** and the DTC is compiling a schedule of work to obtain estimates for the work that cannot be safely undertaken in-house. Members thanked Cllr Boryer for his work. The Committee agreed that the costs saved should be reported to the Annual Meeting.

Cllr Kiloh circulated the **Town Improvement Group's (TIG) proposed improvements to the Abbey Green**. She advised that English Heritage (EH) had indicated that no items to be fixed into the surface would be considered and that sponsorship had been obtained for the new planters and trees. She highlighted the main differences as: oak posts to be removed in favour of evenly spaced benches, replacement high quality design planters, the removal of permanent flagpoles for temporary ones, appropriately designed poles and the addition of a memorial stone. **The Committee agreed this scheme should now be presented to EH for approval.** Cllr Kiloh reported that TIG also proposed new troughs be installed along the High Street. It was hoped that these would be sponsored. This proposal will also be referred to the External Relations and Town Development (ER&TD) Committee to discuss the proposed clean up and repairs. Members discussed the funding of the project and **agreed that an application to Rother's Community Grant for match-funding should be submitted (Beautiful Battle are applying to the 950th Anniversary Fund) and that a recommendation to Full Council be made that £5000 be taken from the Asset Replacement Reserve.** It was felt that without grant funding the project could be carried out in an incremental way.

11. Budget report

The **income and expenditure** to date was noted.

The DTC confirmed that some **grass cutting and strimming** could be carried out in-house although a review of equipment would be required. She would put out to tender the remaining

Battle Town Council

works and bring this to the next meeting.

12. Matters for information / future agenda items

Cllr Favell asked Members to consider additions/updates to the **Detailed Action Plan** for the Environment Committee for discussion at the next meeting to enable an updated draft be in place for discussion by the new Committee in May 2016.

Written reports from Coordinators are required for the next meeting.

Cllr Kiloh suggested that **a report from each Committee** highlighting the actions taken during the year should be presented and displayed at the **Parish Assembly**. Cllr Gyngell raised concern at the **shabby appearance of some properties in the High Street**. It was agreed that these items should be passed to ER&TD for consideration.

Cllr Gyngell highlighted the issue of **litter being blown out of the bins in the High Street**. The DTC was asked to write to Malcolm Johnston at RDC requesting bins with lids to prevent this.

13. Date of next meeting: Tuesday, 29 March 2016

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Cllr Favell
Chairman

