



# Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
held ON TUESDAY, 7 AUGUST 2018 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm

**Present:** Cllrs G Favell (Chairman), J Boryer, M Dass, P Fisher and M Howell.

In attendance: Carol Harris (Town Clerk)

**1. Apologies for Absence** – Cllr J Gyngell.

**2. Disclosure of Interest** – Cllr Furness declared an interest in item 10d) as Chairman of Battle Festival.

**3. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 5 June 2018** were approved by Members and duly signed by Cllr Favell.

**4. Matters arising from previous meetings, not on this agenda**

The Clerk reported:

- Local residents had been photographed accessing the private land from Mansers Shaw through which cattle are known to escape. As a result, the Police had been involved and a newspaper article published. The agreed “private land” sign should be erected very soon;
- No contact has been received from English Heritage in relation to the Abbey Green Agreement, despite reminders that this is due for renewal in October;
- an order has been placed for the replacement tree (Acer Negunda) for the Natural Burial Area. This will be planted in September;
- the football pitch drains replacement has been completed; and
- the utility services search had been completed at the Telham Recreation Ground access path and the volunteers informed. The work to install a hard surface for pedestrians would commence shortly.

**5. Correspondence & Communications**

An email of gratitude, with photograph, had been received from Battle Ramblers for the installation of a handrail across the bridge at the access to Mansers Shaw.

**6. Allotments**

- a) The detailed **action plan** for **allotments** was noted. The inspection dates are to be confirmed with the (t)Deputy Town Clerk(DTC).
- b) Members agreed that the **fees and charges for 2019-20** should remain the same as the current year.
- c) The (t)DTC’s report had been circulated and was noted. **Current vacancies:** Cherry Gardens 3; Netherfield Hill 0; Virgins Croft 4 plus 2 taster plots; Watch Oak 6. A request to investigate a **boundary tree** causing shadow at **Virgins Croft** had been made. The Clerk confirmed that she is monitoring this and will advise further at the next meeting.
- d) The (t)DTC highlighted the inconsistencies at **Watch Oak** and **Members agreed that re-numbering and a re-measure of the allotments should be carried out prior to renewals on 1 October 2018.**
- e) The minutes of the **Senlac Allotment Association** meeting held on 5 July 2018 were noted.
- f) Members were reminded that it had been agreed that staff should carry out **coppicing of trees on Cherry Garden boundary to Little Park Farm land** in the autumn. In light of no current

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staff members having the relevant qualification, it was agreed that this will need to be postponed.

- g) Members agreed that a **Heritage Arts Trail stone marker may be installed close to the entrance of the Cherry Gardens allotment site.**
- h) The Clerk reported **requests for private access onto Virgins Croft allotment site** from two allotment tenants. **Members approved a peppercorn agreement for private access, subject to all maintenance, the removal of gate and replacement to secure fence is carried out by the tenant as necessary.**

## 7. Cemetery

- a) The detailed **action plan** for the **Cemetery** was noted. It was noted that the annual Service of Remembrance will be considered in another format at item 7g) and that the refurbishment of the mortuary remains outstanding.
- b) Members noted the (t)DTC's **annual memorial inspection report**, which had been circulated.
- c) As part of the above inspection, it had been recommended that some clarification of the **Cemetery Regulations** was required. **Members agreed to the following amendments:**
  - 4. Amendment to period from 50 to 100 years;
  - 4. Additional wording "Personal information will be retained for the period of the Deed of Grant";
  - 13. Addition of "Solar lights" are not permitted.....
  - 13. Amendment from "It is *recommended*" to "It is *required* that owners of memorials..."
  - 13. Addition of "...may be permanently placed.....". "For a period of 6 months following interment and for a period of one month following birthdays, anniversaries and Christmas, temporary appropriate items will be permitted.
  - 14. Addition of "or wood" is not permitted.....
  - 18. Deletion of "the width of the plot" to "0.40m in width"Funeral Directors will be reminded that all clients must be given a copy of the Regulations when signing the application for interment. The Clerk was asked to have copies of the Regulations placed on the notice board, Ceremonies Room and Chapel at the Cemetery. The revised Regulations are attached.
- d) A request to place a **vase** away from the headstone in the **children's section** was discussed. It was agreed that for a period of one year and one month the vase could be placed in front of the headstone. This will then be reviewed. The Clerk highlighted a request for a **pre-purchased gravespace** in the DC area to be marked with name and plot number. Members asked the Clerk to emphasise that this area of the cemetery is closed and there will be no further burials.
- e) Members agreed to the (t)DTC's offer to **clean the ceremonies room and chapel** on a weekly basis to ensure the facility is fit for use.
- f) A regular visitor to the cemetery has asked that her objection to the 'boxlike' **bins** be brought to the attention of the Committee. This was noted.
- g) Details of a kind **offer by a member of the Friends of Battle Cemetery to organise an autumn event** was circulated. It highlighted the value of companionship and suggested holding a Friends' event, with refreshments, on a Saturday, or even on two days, in October when the colours in the cemetery are impressive. It is hoped to coincide this with the bus timetable to encourage attendance. **Members agreed that this is an appropriate alternative to the Service of Remembrance included in the Action Plan, refreshments would be provided by the Council and the event should be promoted in the newsletter and local newspaper.**

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- h) All members had received a copy of the **war grave history document** gifted to the Council. It was agreed that a copy should be available in the ceremonies room, Chapel, website and Museum. The Clerk was asked to send a letter of thanks to the author.
- i) Details of a **flower holder for ashes in the scattering area** was circulated. It was noted that no requests have yet been made for this. Members asked that this information be kept on file for consideration in the future.
- j) The Clerk reported that Land Registry documents had been received. Most were not conclusive on the **Rights of Way across cemetery driveway**. However, Sexton Cottage have a legal obligation to contribute a “reasonable proportion ... of the expense of repairing and maintaining said access way”. The Clerk was asked to issue an invoice for £250 to all properties that have access across the driveway and one for £1000 to the owners of Pyke House.

## 8. Recreation Grounds

- a) The detailed **action plan** for the **Recreation Grounds** was noted. The Clerk confirmed that the play inspections, including the new activity area in Mansers Shaw, are now due in September. Particular attention should be made to the base of the see-saw at Telham
- b) Members considered the **location for petanque court** that required a level area of approx. 9m x15m and agreed that this should be sited to the north west of the recreation ground close to the gated area. This would enable ease of access, visibility from the North Trade Road and a pathway to the toilet/café once the Health Pathway has been installed.
- c) The notes from **Recreation Ground Working Group** meeting on 26 June were received. In relation to the notes of 24 July, Cllr Favell highlighted the request for formal Council support for football for a period of 21 years. This will be considered at the next meeting. She requested that suggestions for a ‘snappy’ group title be given to the Clerk for consideration. The Draft Licence to Battle Bonfire Boyes was considered and, subject to a revision to the dates of use, was agreed. The architect drawing for the Pavilion were reviewed and it was suggested that a baby change should not be incorporated into the disabled toilet facility. It was noted that the pre-bid for the National Lottery had been submitted. The recommendations from the meeting of 24 July were considered and **Members agreed to:**
  - **submit a planning application for the rebuilding of the Pavilion to Rother District Council**
  - **commission the Battle Health Pathway(BHP) landscape architect to supply the specification and tender documentation for BHP to a maximum cost of £6,000 (Budget 4800) to be supplemented by BHP funds if necessary.**
- d) **Battle Health Pathway:**
  - a. The **progress report** recorded at **Battle Local Action Group AGM** was noted;
  - b. The **draft minutes from the meeting on 25 July 2018** were noted;
  - c. The project team’s suggested **amendments to the pathway** were discussed. **Members agreed that:**
    - **the signage for shared paths to include “Priority to walkers”;**
    - **3 access points for vehicles be included on the pathway as agreed with the Town Clerk;**
    - **a suitable site for cycle parking be reassessed once the pathway is in place.**
- e) Subject to concerns raised by 2 Members at the removal of the old equipment, **Members agreed to the cost of £725 (budget 4205) to remove the redundant play equipment, the re-siting of whirly-bird and the storing of springers until a suitable location can be found.**
- f) 3 quotes had been received for the **felling of a diseased Ash tree**: 2 at £700 and one £800. This was discussed. Members were split between the removal of deadwood and the felling of

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the tree. By the casting of the Chairman's vote, **it was agreed that, subject to BMS Tree Surgeon's advice, the Clerk had delegated authority to arrange the felling of the tree at a cost of £700 (budget 4390).**

- g) Members noted the submission of **grant applications to RDC Community Fund** for levelling of junior football pitch and pod shelter.
- h) Members noted the maximum donation of £500 from the **Policy Property Act Fund towards the pod shelter**
- i) Members noted the successful application to **Tesco Bags of Help for outdoor table tennis**. The Clerk was asked to ensure that this is well publicised.
- j) In response to several requests, **Members agreed that wooden benches, should be constructed by BTC staff, for placing under the trees near to the Castle Play equipment.**
- k) **Members agreed that 2 three "finger" style signage with black lettering should be ordered at a cost of £440 (budget 4385).**

## 9. Street Furniture & Lighting

- a) The detailed **action plan for Street Lighting and Furniture** was noted; the seat provision is ongoing.
- b) The Council's street lighting maintenance contractor has expressed an interest in forming a street light **"energy cooperative"** to obtain a more competitive rate. Initially for a one year period and then on a 3 year rolling contract in line with the maintenance agreement. Members agreed to support this initiative in principle.
- c) Cllr Dass agreed to **compile a report on signage** in the town centre area.
- d) The Clerk reported a **request for an additional fingerpost at St Martins/Abbey Court**. Members did not feel that this was necessary.
- e) A quotation had been received from Jakk Country Furniture and several online costs for a **bench to surround the Oak tree**. These varied from £1300 to £2300. **Members agreed to recommend to Full Council that a bench be purchased from Jakk Country Furniture at a cost of £1995, plus engraving in remembrance of Cllr Richard Jessop.**

## 10. Remainder of BTC's Estate

- a) The detailed **action plan for the Remainder of BTC's Estate** was noted. The Clerk is due to discuss equipment requirements with the staff and will report to the next meeting. It was agreed to defer: the discussion on fees, charges and rents 2019-20 to the October meeting; and the species survey to next year.
- b) The Clerk reported advice from **ESCC Rights of Way team** on designation of paths - after 20 years of proven use or by agreement with the landowner. Both would require an assessment by ESCC on the potential maintenance burden and whether there would be sufficient public benefit; particularly in light of restricted budget constraints. The Clerk was asked to seek permission from the adjacent land owner at **Mansers Shaw**.
- c) The successful application to **Sussex Lund** for funds to extend the **pathway at Mansers Shaw** and carry out **management work at Amenity Field** was noted. The Clerk reported that a condition of the grant was for approval of the surfacing at Mansers Shaw by a representative of the High Weald AONB. This had resulted in an increase in cost by £300. It had also been recommended that a 'turning circle' be provided. Subject to the Clerk negotiating with the contractor, **Members agreed a maximum increase in cost of £500.**

*Cllr Furness repeated his interest in the following item as Chairman of Battle Festival Committee*

- Cllr Furness confirmed that **Yarn bombing of flowers in festival colours** was planned for throughout the town eg bollards, phone box. The items would be placed for approximately

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4 weeks but would be removed if looking shabby. It was agreed that no benches should become unavailable as a result of Yarn Bombing or Scarecrow use. A **Community networking session** comprising refreshments during one lunch or afternoon period to encourage communication between diverse groups eg elderly/youth. **Members agreed to the use of Abbey Green by the Battle Festival for both Yarn Bombing and a Community networking session.**

*Cllr Fisher left the meeting at this point.*

## **11. Financial Matters**

a) The **budget report at 30 June 2018** was noted, as attached.

## **12. Matters for information / future agenda items**

- Fees, charges and rents 2019-20
- Budget 2019-20
- To consider splitting the Environment Committee

**13. Date of next meeting:** 2 October 2018

There being no further business the meeting closed 9.50pm.

Cllr G Favell  
Chairman