



# Battle Town Council



## MINUTES of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held on Tuesday, 28 July 2015 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm

**Present:** Cllr G Favell – Chairman  
Cllrs J Boryer, D Furness, J Gyngell, M Howell, M Kiloh.

In attendance: Cllr R Jessop and Deputy Town Clerk (DTC)

1. **Apologies for Absence** - Cllr J Lay.
2. **Disclosure of Interest** - None.
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 26 May 2015** were approved and signed by Cllr Favell.
4. **Matters arising from previous meetings, not on this agenda**
  - Rother District Council had confirmed that the **recreation ground at Coronation Gardens** has a small area designated for **football or basketball** but as there are no changing facilities it would not be suitable for a standard football pitch.
  - The **removal of the rope swing** was reported and it was agreed that the Sports & Leisure WG should consider the siting of a formal replacement.
  - Cllrs Howell, Gyngell and Boryer confirmed their acceptance as **Co-ordinators of Action Plans** for Allotments; Street Furniture and Lighting; and Trees respectively.
  - Roy Calthorpe had suggested that the **War Memorial** requires more work to the names than purely repainting. It was highlighted that the Council is responsible for the safety of the memorial but there is no requirement to refurbish. The DTC was asked to clarify with the Dean if the full list of names will be held in the Church in future.
  - Cllr Kiloh suggested that the **St Valery Memorial Stone** should be referred to the Town Improvement WG as part of the Art Heritage Trail. This was agreed.
  - The Committee was advised that there is now a **handrail on the steps to Pavilion**.
  - Investigations into the removal of the **Oak tree** at the recreation ground are ongoing.

*Cllr Favell recorded the suspension of Standing Orders for the following item.*

### 5. **Presentation from Battle Baptists FC (BBFC) relating to football pitch at NTR Recreation Ground**

The Chairman welcomed Andy Garlick, Francis Willoughby and Gary Wenham on behalf of the Battle Baptists FC.

Andy Garlick thanked the Council for the work it does and for inviting them to the meeting. He circulated literature highlighting the values, achievements and aims of the Club. He then reported on the problems with the existing pitch together with the impact and possible solutions, together with indicative costs and funding expectations.

Members agreed in principle with the need to improve the existing pitch and advised that the Sports and Leisure WG are currently reviewing all sports activities and would be reporting to the next Committee meeting prior to budget setting.

Cllr Favell thanked BBFC for the informative and useful presentation.

*Cllr Favell recorded the reinstatement of Standing Orders..*

### 6. **Correspondence & communications**

Members noted:

- acceptance by ESCC of the non-renewal of licence, with no backdated charge, for the **Amenity Site**. They will advise on progress of declaring the land surplus;
- the cancellation of maintenance payments from **Commonwealth War Graves** Commission. The DTC advised that a sum of £30 had recently been received as final payment.

A resident of **Langton Close** has requested **tree work** be carried out at the boundary to his property.



# Battle Town Council



Alternatively he would be willing to consider buying or leasing the land for recreational garden use. Members asked that the tree survey be consulted and the resident informed that the Council would carry out appropriate work.

As a result of the **Kingsmead open space** having received a mis-timed cut earlier in the year, there had been a request for the Council to consider managing the area under licence. The Committee discussed the original issue and implications of this suggestion. Members agreed that it would facilitate a site meeting between RDC and all other interested parties to clarify roles and responsibility but would not take on management of the area.

The annual service to the **CCTV camera system in the Market Square** had found that one of the dome cameras and transmission unit has suffered sunlight degradation. The replacement cost is £786.35. There remain 4 further cameras in the area. The Committee felt that it could not justify this expenditure on non-Council land.

## 7. Allotments

In Cllr Lay's absence there was no report on the **Action Plan** for Allotments. Cllr Favell confirmed that judging of the allotment plots had been undertaken and prizes awarded at the Battle in Bloom event.

Cllr Kiloh reported that access to the **Watch Oak allotment site** is difficult. She suggested that it would benefit from a regular maintenance plan; review of the size of plots and a rationalisation of the numbering system. It was noted that vacant plots 24 and 25 are to be retained as grass areas. It was suggested that discussions should be undertaken with the Senlac Allotment Association(SAA) about development of the area via funding options, particularly to incorporate access and suitable plots for disabled users.

**Current vacancies** were reported: Cherry Gardens 4; Netherfield Hill 0; Virgins Croft 1; Watch Oak 4. Members agreed that tree work to Virgins Croft and Cherry Gardens should be carried out at a cost of £1600.

Concern regarding security at **Cherry Gardens** had been raised by SAA. The Committee suggested that all incidents of misuse should be reported to the Police but there was little that the Council could do to prevent access.

The proposed new **Tenancy Agreement** had been circulated to Members. The aim was to clarify responsibilities of both the Tenant and the Council principally in relation to maintenance of the sites. It would also introduce a deposit scheme against the allotment being left in a poor state upon termination. Members agreed this in principle and the document will now be sent to SAA for comment.

## 8. Recreation Ground, Play and Games Facilities

Cllr Gyngell reported that the **Multi Use Games Area(MUGA)** appears to suffer from excess litter and it was agreed to provide a litter bin on the post at the entrance to the facility. She highlighted the need for repainting of the **play equipment** and the replenishing of bark on the **adventure area**. Cllr Gyngell also suggested that the picnic table be fixed into position. The **RoSPA report** for the play areas at Telham and North Trade Road had been circulated to Members. An inspection of the adventure area remains outstanding and the DTC was asked to chase this. It was agreed that the report did not appear as thorough as in previous years and an alternative company would be sought in 2016. There were no items of high risk identified in the report although Council workstaff had found a hole in the **basket swing seat**. Members acknowledged that this is a popular item and agreed to replace the seat at a cost of £857.15. The existing seat will be removed for safety reasons.

Three companies had been invited to advise on a procedure to assist drainage on the **football pitch**. All had suggested a verti-drain system. The DTC was authorised to confirm detail and issue an order for work to be carried out. She was also asked to clarify the work involved in levelling the top area for a junior pitch/multi games area. Cllr Favell suggested that an Alder hedge planted at the top of the slope of the existing pitch would act both as a barrier and a water absorber. The approximate cost of this would be



# Battle Town Council



£690. This was agreed.

The DTC reported that there is a constant issue with **litter and glass** being thrown onto the **MUGA and tennis courts**. It was agreed that CCTV at the Pavilion, directed at these sites, may act as a deterrent to this behaviour. The DTC was authorised to purchase this at a cost of approximately £200.

The toilet facilities at the pavilion had recently been inadvertently left unlocked resulting in deliberate vandalism, including filling the toilet bowl with stones. The Committee agreed that the workmen should remove as much of the surrounding **stones from the footway**.

Cllr Favell asked that the Committee consider options for vandal proof **toilet facilities** at the recreation ground. The DTC was asked to investigate costs of composite, stainless steel and compost toilet facilities for the next meeting.

## 9. Cemetery

Cllr Favell reported that planning permission for the proposed **cemetery extension** is still awaited. There have been miscommunications from CDSL resulting in incomplete and incorrect documents being sent to contractors. It was agreed that a letter of extreme dissatisfaction should be sent to CDSL suggesting that the invoice relating to this work should be reduced in recognition of the embarrassment and lack of professionalism. The DTC was asked to send the corrected documentation to all interested contractors as soon as possible. The process for opening and assessing tenders on 18 August had been agreed.

Two quotes had been received for repairs to two of the **cemetery path** in the C section. This would be discussed further in conjunction with the cemetery extension works.

A survey of **works to the Chapel** had been received together with an estimate of costs at approximately £43,750. It was agreed that grant funding should be sought for this.

Members suggested possible suitable sites for the workstaff's **workshop**. This will be discussed with the staff and brought to the next meeting.

Cllr Favell confirmed that she, the DTC and work staff had carried out a preliminary **memorial safety audit** and found several stones requiring re-fixing. She also reported that, together with the DTC and Gary Champion, she would be visiting Hastings Cemetery the following day.

The Committee agreed Membership to the **Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM)** at a cost of £90.

## 10. Reports from Co-ordinators of Action Plans for: Street Furniture & Lighting and the Remainder of BTC's Estate

There were no reports available at this time. The DTC was asked to forward details of the tree budget to Cllr Boryer.

## 11. Town Improvement Group

A report will be circulated to Members for discussion at the next meeting.

## 12. Sports and Leisure Working Group

No report available.

## 13. Risk Assessments

The DTC was asked to forward the draft document to Councillors for discussion at the next meeting.

## 14. Staff Training

Members agreed that Gary Champion should attend the **Memorial Inspection** Workshop at a cost of £130.



# Battle Town Council



The DTC reported on a 3 day **Playground Equipment Inspection** course at a cost of £585. The Committee asked that the DTC investigate and arrange less intensive training that Adrian Blunden could undertake to provide regular playground inspections at an appropriate level for the Council's requirements.

Members considered the training required to enable Michael Deboick to undertake **aerial cutting of trees**. The cost of this is £1562. The Committee agreed that this would be a worthwhile course.

A time scale for reimbursement of fees with staff members must be established prior to commitment of these courses.

## 15. Volunteer Tree Warden

The DTC reminded the Committee that the Council's previous Tree Warden was no longer able to fulfil this role. A local resident, Ian Henson, had volunteered to be trained to undertake this function. Members were delighted to accept this offer.

## 16 Budget report

The Committee noted the current budget position. Cllr Howell agreed to follow up on initial work carried out in relation to replacement **finger posts**. It was suggested that ESCC be asked to contribute towards the cost.

The DTC reported a further street light column damaged by a vehicle at Langton Close. There appeared to be evidence that this was a RDC contractor's vehicle and this will be pursued.

## 17. Matters for information / future agenda items

## 18. Date of next meeting: Tuesday, 22 September 2015

The meeting closed at 10.00pm.

Cllr Favell  
Chairman

