



Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
held ON TUESDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2018 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs G Favell (Chairman), J Boryer, P Fisher and J Gyngell.

In attendance: Carol Harris (Town Clerk)

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Cllrs D Furness and M Howell.
2. **Disclosure of Interest** – None.
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 5 December 2017** were approved by Members and duly signed by Cllr Favell.

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

The Clerk reported:

- a third quote is awaited for the fitting of locks and refurbishment of the **Chapel and Ceremonies doors**. She reminded Members that delegated authority to spend £1,000 had been approved, however, the indicative costs received are in the region of £1,400. **Members agreed that the Clerk be authorised to spend up to £1,400 to fit suitable locks and refurbish the doors at the Chapel and Ceremonies rooms;**
- the **private access steps** to the cemetery have now been removed;
- that a letter has been sent to the **Pre-school Playgroup**, following the agreement of F&GP Committee;
- a suggestion from **Parchment Trust** that they could produce raised flowerbeds and possibly sculptures at **Guild Shaw**. Members were in agreement of this;
- permission has been granted for **access** to land adjoining **Cherry Gardens** to enable the removal of Ash trees once the crops have been harvested in the autumn;
- the resurfacing of the **cemetery access driveway** has been placed with Thornes at a cost of £7,498. This will be carried out at the end of February/beginning March;
- although the original source of **free trees** had closed, further sources have been found and one pack will be delivered to the cemetery next week;
- the **Amenity Site** grass will be cut and removed during February;
- Herington Solicitors have been instructed for the **land transfer at Mansers Shaw** from Coultershaw to the Town Council;
- communication is ongoing with **Plumpton College** in relation to work at Mansers Shaw and information had been received for F&GP to action the apprenticeship scheme
- that a meeting has yet to be arranged with Rother District Council and Optivo to discuss the **Netherfield play area**.

5. **Correspondence & Communications** – None.

6. **Allotments**

- a) The **current vacancies** were noted as: Cherry Gardens – 4; Netherfield Hill – 0; Virgins Croft – 3; Watch Oak – 14.
- b) The **Action Plan for Allotments** was noted. Members noted that the January inspection had been postponed due to the poor weather causing concern for safety. Members discussed the

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high level of vacancies and considered whether it would be appropriate to close one site. It was agreed that vacant plots should be maintained as grassed areas to reduce labour time.

c) It was agreed to ask the workstaff carry out necessary repairs the gates at Watch Oak site to enable easier closing.

The Clerk reported that Optivo have submitted a planning application for 3 cottages on their **land adjacent to the Netherfield Hill** allotment site.

7. Cemetery

a) The **Action Plan** for the Cemetery was noted. The Clerk reminded Members that it had been agreed to request a contribution towards repairs from those properties that have access via the Cemetery road. **Members agreed to request a contribution of £500 from each of the properties.** Cllr Favell confirmed that Friends of the Cemetery would be discussing the Annual Service of Remembrance in March.

b) Members were reminded that there are no compost bins at the cemetery and none for litter in the new area. **Members agreed to the purchase of 2 timber litter and compost bins at a cost of up to £1,400 from the PWLB budget (4600).**

c) Members were reminded that the comments made by the judges were not constructive and agreed that the cemetery should be maintained to a high standard for the benefit of town, not a competition. **It was agreed not to enter this year's South & South East in Bloom competition.**

8. Recreation Grounds

a) The **Action Plan** for the Recreation Grounds was noted. It was noted that the P&T Committee are in discussion with Sustrans in relation to an accessible pathway between the Railway Station and Claverham Community College which included the provision of a bridge at the south eastern corner of the recreation ground. **Members agreed to recommend to P&T that the provision of this bridge be added to its Action Plan.**

b) Members noted that there are funds remaining in the Play Equipment budget (4335) and **agreed to purchase a rowing boat to be sited to the left of the footpath, close to the Pavilion for the use of toddlers at a cost of approximately £2,500.**

c) Members noted that the decision from Tesco on the **grant application** for the table tennis equipment had been delayed. The Clerk advised that the report from Steve Scott is still awaited; this will be circulated when received. Cllr Favell agreed to research appropriate funding sources for the zip wire and facilities for teenagers: shelter; table tennis.

e) The Clerk reported that she had met with the **Recreation Ground Working Group**, representatives of Battle Baptist Football Club and the Architect at the Pavilion to discuss requirements of both the Council and Club. A provisional drawing is awaited.

f) Details of the existing information boards at the recreation ground were circulated. **Members agreed:**

- The main entrance notice board be reworded: "Use of the tennis courts and MUGA is free; No area within the recreation ground may be used for financial gain without written permission from the Town Clerk; For further information about the use of these facilities, including booking, please phone 01424 772210; **Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times; Please use the dog bins provided – failure to remove dog faeces is an offence and may result in a fine;** Parking is for recreation ground users **only**";
- A cost be obtained for a long, shallow sign for the overhead bar at the car park entrance "Parking is for recreation ground users only and may be locked at varying times";
- The car park diagrammatic sign be moved to near the steps;

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- The Rother District Council signs at the south east entrance by Mansers Shaw be erected on trees.

g) Members considered the removal of old play equipment for safety and access reasons. **Members agreed to remove the slide structure and see-saw and await confirmation of funding sources for new equipment prior to the removal of other items.**

h) Members agreed to invite local primary school children to design an anti-litter/clear up after your dog poster. This would include their name and be displayed in the recreation grounds.

i) The minutes of Battle Health Pathway meeting were noted.

9. Street Furniture & Lighting

a) The **Action Plan** for Street Furniture and Lighting was noted.

b) Members noted that the **benches** are being well maintained by Council workstaff, Michael Deboick. Two areas were highlighted for future memorial benches: by the old Chapel building and a backless bench at Chequers Corner. Several minor issues were highlighted and the Clerk was asked to report or arrange as appropriate for these to be dealt with. **It was agreed to recommend to Full Council that the circular bench to be installed around the Oak tree, once the existing planting has been removed, is dedicated to the memory of Richard Jessop.**

10. Remainder of BTC's Estate

a) The **Action Plan** for the remainder of BTC's Estate was noted.

b) Cllr Boryer highlighted the constant issue of members of the public breaking through the fence at **Mansers Shaw** into private land. He suggested that a public right of way would prevent this. The Clerk was asked to approach the landowners for their view on this.

c) Members noted that the use of **water storage granules** was not recommended by either the Beautiful Battle Committee or Royal Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

d) **Abbey Green:**

- Members were reminded that the current **lease** for the management of the Abbey Green expires in December 2018. **It was agreed to recommend to Full Council that the existing terms remain appropriate and a further 10year Lease should be requested.**
- It was agreed that the **lettings policy** should be revised:
 - No political or religious activity;
 - Commercial lettings would be considered individually;
 - Must be for the benefit of the town and town's people;
 - Costs will be in-line with the recreation ground policy.

12. Financial Matters

a) The budget report at 31 December 2017 was noted. **Members agreed that the remaining funds in Recreation Ground General Maintenance (4205) should be transferred to the Football Pitch Maintenance (4325). It was also agreed that up to £6,500 of the underspend from Street Furniture and General Areas General Maintenance budget (4205) is used in this financial year to fund the levelling of the junior football pitch.**

b) In relation funding of ongoing projects, **Members agreed to recommend to F&GP:**

- **Café project earmarked reserve to remain;**
- **Any unspent funds for New machinery (4380) be transferred back into the earmarked reserves for machinery;**
- **Unspent funds for Tree work (4390) should be carried over as an earmarked reserve for future tree work.**

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c) It was agreed to recommend to F&GP that Mansers Shaw and Amenity Field are added as separate budget headings.

12. Matters for information / future agenda items

Cllr Fisher highlighted the requirement for de-weeding of the **Churchyard pathways**.

The Clerk confirmed that Ms Williams from Battle Abbey has confirmed that drainage work is being undertaken at their car park and that the issue of excess water onto **Bridleway 86b** will be monitored.

13. Date of next meeting: 3 April 2018

There being no further business the meeting closed 9.30pm.

Cllr G Favell
Chairman