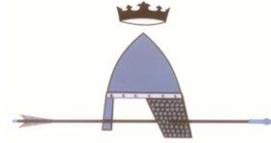




Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held on Tuesday, 21 June 2016 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr G Favell – Chairman
Cllrs J Boryer, P Fisher, D Furness, J Gyngell, M Howell,
R Jessop, M Kiloh and J Reeves.

In attendance: Deputy Town Clerk (DTC)

- 1. Apologies for Absence** – Cllr C Davies.
- 2. Disclosure of Interest** – Cllr Reeves declared a personal interest in item 12 as her husband is the Chairman of Battle Cricket Club.
- 3. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 24 May 2016.** Subject to Cllr Gyngell being removed from those present to the list of apologies, Cllr Kiloh proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr Howell and agreed unanimously. These were duly signed by Cllr Favell.

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

The Committee noted the DTC report:

- Cemetery paths had now been completed;
- Finger post bases had been removed for refurbishment and the new posts and directional fingers ordered;
- Verti-draining work as recommended by Sussex FA had been completed;
- Confirmation from the Sussex Community Foundation of the successful grant application for the pathway at Mansers Shaw from Sussex Lund;
- The new Kubota 1600 II mower had been delivered and is being fully utilised;
- Contract has been awarded for the accessible toilet and baby change facility at the recreation ground. A Community Grant application to RDC is underway;
- Refurbishment of the seats on the Abbey Green had been completed.

5. Correspondence & communications received post Agenda circulation

The DTC was sorry to report that during the recent pathway works at the cemetery, a memorial headstone had been knocked and broken beyond repair. The contractor has confirmed that his insurance company have been made aware of the incident and the DTC has agreed to supply 2 quotes for the replacement.

6. Allotments

Cllr Favell confirmed that, during Cllr Davies' absence, she is happy to undertake the co-ordination of the allotments.

The **Action Plan for Environment Committee appertaining to Allotments** had been circulated to Members for consideration. **The adoption of page 4 of the attached Action Plan was agreed unanimously.**

Cllr Favell volunteered to undertake the role of BTC representative on the Senlac Allotment Association. Subject to her workload remaining manageable, this was

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agreed unanimously.

The DTC thanked Cllrs Davies, Furness and Kiloh for carrying out the recent **allotment inspections** and reported that all tenants with uncultivated allotments or unsafe structures had been contacted. All those that have responded have agreed to work on their allotment and been advised that improvements must be made in time for the next inspection in July.

The Committee noted the **current vacancies**: Cherry Gardens – 5; Netherfield Hill – 0; Virgins Croft – 1; Watch Oak – 2. Cllr Kiloh highlighted the need to promote the availability of the taster plots. Cllr Favell agreed to consider ways of highlighting these.

Cllr Favell reminded the Committee of the persistent issue of excess water emanating from **14 Watch Oak** for some months. The tenant has been terribly patient although had reported the inconvenience and loss of produce. Ongoing investigations firstly with South East Water and then Southern Water eventually found a damaged waste pipe which was repaired 3 weeks ago. Unfortunately, the problem still exists and Southern Water have confirmed further works are required. The tenant has 2 allotments which she works very hard to maintain. In recognition of the loss of crops and land, the inconvenience and the time that the problem is taking to resolve **Cllr Reeves proposed a refund of the full year's rent for 14 Watch Oak of £49. This was seconded by Cllr Gyngell and agreed unanimously.**

7. Cemetery

The **Action Plan for Environment Committee** appertaining to the **Cemetery and Chapel** had been circulated to Members for consideration. **The adoption of pages 2 and 3 of the attached Action Plan was agreed unanimously.**

A written report from the **Cemetery Working Group** had been circulated. **Cllr Favell proposed that recommendations made in relation to maintenance of the area are actioned by the DTC as soon as possible; particularly those that may affect the S&SE in Bloom competition. This was seconded by Cllr Howell and agreed unanimously.**

A design for embellished **posts for the scattering of ashes area in the lower cemetery and the existing babies' area** had been circulated. Cllr Favell confirmed that the 20cm x 20cm posts would be in Oak; the babies' would be approximately 1m high with the other taller to accommodate memorial plaques. **Cllr Favell proposed that: the ashes scattering post is adorned with one acorn; the babies' post with two small acorns and leaves; that "Babies of Battle" be carved into the length; that the DTC is delegated to obtain a quote for the post and babies memorial and order the work up to the value of £1,000, as per the draft Cemetery Business Plan, funded from the PWLB loan. After some discussion relating to the wording, Cllr Jessop seconded the proposal and this was agreed by a majority.**

Cllr Reeves proposed that the additional Garden of Remembrance area situated at EB section be formally titled "Lower Garden of Remembrance". This was seconded by Cllr Kiloh and agreed unanimously.

8. Recreation Ground, Play and Games Facilities

The **Action Plan for Environment Committee** appertaining to the **Recreation Grounds and Pavilion** had been circulated to Members for consideration. There was some

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discussion surrounding ways to save costs: Cllr Jessop to provide information to the DTC on an Army presentation relating to bridge building; Cllr Reeves will speak with Battle Baptist Church for youth help on a cycle ramp and Cllrs Boryer and Gyngell will discuss possible car park charging. **The adoption of pages 5 and 6 of the attached Action Plan was agreed unanimously.**

Battle Baptist Football Club(BBFC) had requested that the Committee consider a **reduction in the charge for the hire of football pitch and pavilion for 2015-16** due to the number of games cancelled due to the pitch being deemed unplayable and alternative pitches used and paid for. The DTC highlighted the fees are paid in 4 instalments with one currently outstanding. **Cllr Favell proposed that the final payment of £245 be waived. This was seconded by Cllr Fisher and agreed unanimously.**

In light of the pitch condition last season, the DTC had investigated how other local councils charge for their games facilities and found that most charge on a per use basis. Members felt that if this option was to be agreed, a reserve for priority use should be offered to BBFC. It was agreed that the Football Pitch Working Group should discuss this and recommend a **charging method for the pitch and pavilion** for the Committee to agree at the next meeting.

Cllr Favell highlighted the progress being made with the **Battle Health Pathway** and is included within the Action Plan as a long-term project. **Cllr Favell proposed that, when the Health Pathway is constructed, BTC will take on the ongoing maintenance within the recreation ground general maintenance budget. This was seconded by Cllr Boryer and agreed unanimously.**

A request from Concorde 1066 to **reconsider the proposed charge to use the recreation ground for car parking** had been received. The Committee were reminded that this decision had been made in light of some reluctance to agree the use of the facility solely as a car park; possibly in preference of the pay and display car parks in the town and that a charge could be recouped from users on the day. **Cllr Furness proposed that, subject to the usual condition that the ground is returned to good condition and is not used if too wet, that Concorde 1066 may use the top area of the recreation ground for car parking on 14 October 2016 free of charge. This was seconded by Cllr Reeves and agreed unanimously.**

The DTC confirmed that, as circulated to Members, quotes had been received for the **Annual Outdoor Play Equipment Inspection**. The Play Inspections Company(PI) is recommended by the Council's insurance company and offered a comprehensive service at a competitive cost. **Cllr Favell proposed that this year's Annual Play Inspection be carried out by PI at a cost of £179.85. This was second by Cllr Kiloh and agreed unanimously.**

It had been agreed that a **recreation ground use and charges policy** should be agreed to ensure consistency. The Committee agreed that essential items for inclusion in the policy should include: all businesses to be charged a deposit against damage of £500; agreement to remove any advertising after the event; all businesses to be charged; any groups raising non-charitable funds to incur a small fee; evidence of insurance policy to be provided. **Cllr Favell proposed that the Town Clerk is requested to provide a draft policy for discussion at the next Environment Committee meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Boryer and agreed unanimously.**

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9. Street Furniture & Lighting

Cllr Howell was thanked for working so hard with great tenacity to take the action of the fingerpost installation forward.

The **Action Plan for Environment Committee** appertaining to **Street Furniture & Lighting** had been circulated to Members for consideration. **The adoption of page 7 of the attached Action Plan was agreed unanimously.**

A request for an **additional memorial bench at either the recreation ground or by Cricket pitch** area had been received. It was agreed that the DTC should discuss and agree a suitable site with the family.

The DTC confirmed that she had established the manufacturers of the finger post at Chequers corner and discovered that there are a further 2: at the entrance to Station Approach and close to the Railway Station. She had received a quote for an additional direction finger at £176.99 plus delivery. Battle Methodist Church had confirmed that they would be happy to make a contribution for 3 fingers. **Cllr Kiloh proposed that the DTC has delegated authority to co-ordinate the project with Battle Methodist Church and an order for 2 fingers for Chequers Corner and the entrance to Station Approach be made. This was seconded by Cllr Reeves and agreed unanimously.**

10. Remainder of BTC's Estate

Cllr Boryer was thanked for his enthusiasm and endeavours to plan the improvement programme for Mansers Shaw and carry it out. Also for assisting with the grant application, which has been awarded to BTC to construct more paths and clear the timber. Thanks were also recorded for his volunteering to enable Michael to undertake tree work in the cemetery and recreation ground saving the BTC hundreds of pounds.

The **Action Plan for Environment Committee** appertaining to **Remainder of BTC's Estate** had been circulated to Members for consideration. **The adoption of pages 8, 9 and 10 of the attached Action Plan was agreed unanimously.**

11. Management of the Amenity Field in relation to Mansers Shaw

Cllr Boryer suggested that the physical and environmental features of the Amenity Field and Mansers Shaw are interlinked and should be considered together. He highlighted the need for vehicular access across Amenity Field to Mansers Shaw. **Cllr Favell proposed that F&GP be recommended to discuss the options for the future management/ownership of Amenity Field. This was seconded by Cllr Jessop and agreed unanimously.**

12. Fees and Charges

Cllr Reeves repeated her personal interest in the Cricket Club and took no part in that discussion.

5 yearly rent reviews:

- **Battle Cricket Club's** current rent is £359 and they have responsibility for maintaining the cricket pitch. **Cllr Jessop proposed an increase to £375pa for the next 5 year period. This was seconded by Cllr Gyngell and agreed;**
- **Battle Guides** currently pay £330. Although there are no direct costs involved, they have use of the car park and utilise their facilities for a variety of groups and activities. **Cllr Boryer proposed an increase to £360 for the next 5 year period. This was seconded by Cllr Howell and agreed unanimously.**

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13. Budget report

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

Members agreed the **3 year plan in relation to proposed costs and funding of projects** as detailed on the Action Plan.

The DTC recommended that an **application for a Community Grant from Rother District Council** towards the **cost of the accessible toilet** at the Pavilion in North Trade Road be made. **This was agreed.**

14. Matters for information / future agenda items

Cllr Favell suggested a **weed/tidy at the cemetery on 1 and/or 4 July** in preparation for the In Bloom judging on 7 July. Cllrs Gyngell and Kiloh volunteered to assist with this on 1 June at 10am. All were welcome to help.

To review the **business plan for the cemetery.**

15. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 2 August 2016

The meeting closed at 9.06pm.

Cllr Favell
Chairman

