



Battle Town Council



**MINUTES of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
held on TUESDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2019 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle AT 7.00pm**

Present: Cllrs V Cook (Chairman), B Brown, G Favell, M Kiloh, H Sharman and C Would

In attendance: Mrs S Burton (Battle Health Pathway Project Manager), Amanda Kerr (Battle Against Climate Change), Carol Harris (Town Clerk)

Public Question Time

None.

The Chairman congratulated all those involved in the town's Christmas lights which are receiving many positive comments. She also thanked Cllr Sharman for her wonderful Christmas tree entry at St Mary's on behalf of the Council.

1. **Apologies for absence** – Cllr L Samms.
2. **Disclosure of interest** – Cllrs G Favell and V Cook as members of Battle Health Pathway Group.
3. **Minutes of previous Meeting held on 22 October 2019** were approved by members and duly signed by Cllr Cook.
4. **Report from Town Clerk**
 - The pre-application advice for **flood lighting on the MUGA** has been applied for and a response awaited.
 - Further emails had been sent to East Sussex College Hastings(ESC Hastings): the brickwork tutor and the section leader for confirmation of **work to the mortuary** but with no response. The Clerk suggested that alternative options may need to be considered.
 - The **notice board at the cemetery** has now been installed.
 - The work to the **willow tree at Cherry Gardens allotments** site is scheduled for 19 December.
 - A second contractor has attended the **ceremonies room** but, to date, has failed to provide a quote for work. This is being chased.
 - Rother District Council(RDC) had responded that they have no knowledge of any local rocket or tumbler composters. Contact has been made with Hastings Borough Council and East Sussex County Council to seek joint use of resources, particularly in light of the Climate Emergency issues. It was suggested that Wealden District Council and contractors Biffa also be approached.

5. Correspondence & Communications

English Heritage had reported **that Battle Abbey will be open on Boxing Day** and wished to ensure that there would be no health and safety issues if the traditional "**Hunt**" meet is planned. The Clerk confirmed that no permission to use the Abbey Green had been received but that a reminder had been issued.

6 Climate Emergency

The presentation made by Battle Against Climate Change to previous Full Council had been circulated to all Councillors. Members were reminded of the Council's Statement on the Protection of our Environment that had been adopted in July 2019, as attached. It was noted that this confirms the Council's commitment to protecting the environment within the Battle area. Cllr Cook highlighted the actions already agreed by RDC and many other local authorities to lead as climate champions and

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emphasised that the Town Council already undertakes positive actions. Cllr Cook proposed to recommend to Full Council “Battle Town Council declare a Climate and Ecological Emergency and pledge to do what is within our powers to be carbon neutral by 2030 taking into account both production and consumption missions”. There followed much discussion surrounding the action that can be taken to reduce the Council’s impact on the environment and the necessity to implement any statement made. Concern was raised in relation to who would undertake the tasks required in light of the reduced number of Councillors and workload of staff. It was noted that the Council is asked to lead by example and publicise the message. **Members agreed that, subject to acceptance by Battle Against Climate Change, Cllr Cook should be recommended to Full Council as the Council’s representative on that group. Cllr Favell proposed to amend the tabled proposal to read “Battle Town Council acknowledges the climate and ecological emergency and pledges to work towards being carbon neutral by 2030.” This was seconded by Cllr Brown and agreed unanimously. It was agreed to present this proposal to Full Council on 17th December**

7. Allotments

- a) The **report** from the **Assistant Town Clerk** including the current allotment vacancy position: Cherry Gardens – 1; Netherfield Hill – 0; Virgins Croft – 2; Watch Oak – 11, was noted, as attached.
- b) The **minutes from Senlac Allotment Association Annual General Meeting** had not been received by the office, despite a request. Cllr Brown reported that he had been unable to attend but would circulate the minutes.
- c) The **detailed action plan for allotments** was noted, as attached. The Clerk confirmed there had been no requests for an allotment by persons with any additional needs.

8. Cemetery

- a) The Clerk highlighted the difficulty in adhering to the placing of only one toy or similar item at the children’s area at 18 on the **Cemetery Regulations**. Following discussion it was agreed that the allocation of Councillors to review the Cemetery Regulations should be on the next agenda.

AK left the meeting

In light of the requirement to avoid any chemical use for any burial in the natural burial area, **Members agreed to the addition of “All burials within the natural burial area must comply with regulation 11 of the Cemetery Regulations (2019) which state “No interment shall take place in a grave in the Natural Burial area than in a fully biodegradable coffin, casket or shroud. The body must be prepared without the use of chemicals” to any Deed of Grant for that area.**

- b) The **detailed action plan for the Cemetery** was noted, as attached. As reported earlier, there had been no response from ESC Hastings to confirm work to the mortuary.

9. Recreation Grounds

- a) The **notes from Fit for Battle Working Group** had been circulated and were noted. *Standing Orders were suspended to allow Mrs Burton(SB), Battle Health Pathway Project Manager, to address Members.*

SB reported that the project is moving forward more quickly. She confirmed that although the application to the National Lottery Community Fund had been unsuccessful due to large cost, when many towns and parishes do not have a recreation ground facility, an invitation to submit a Stage 2 application to Places to Ride had been received. British Cycling and Sports England will be supporting this bid and have indicated that it may be possible to include the pavilion with community refreshment area. It has been suggested that an “activator” be employed for 1-2 days per week for 6 months to encourage longevity, evaluation and monitor usage. A new project group would lead on this, not the Council. Bikes for learners eg balance bikes could be purchased to encourage groups of people that do not currently cycle. It had been recommended that an area

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with a suitable surface for practice be agreed. The Multi Use Games Area and tennis courts were discussed as possible sites, although it was acknowledged that this required further consideration.

- b) The **annual play equipment inspection report** had been circulated. It was noted that there were no high risk items and the Clerk confirmed that all maintenance items would be carried out during the winter period. The build-up of grass cuttings close to the adventure play area was highlighted and the Clerk was asked to research the cost of disposing at the local waste and recycling centre.
- c) The **detailed action plan for the Recreation Grounds** was noted, as attached.

10. Street Furniture & Lighting

- a) The **detailed action plan for Street Lighting and Furniture** was noted, as attached. The Clerk was asked to confirm the number of outstanding LED conversions.

11. Remainder of BTC's Estate

- a) The **detailed action plan for the Remainder of BTC's Estate** was noted, as attached. The muddy condition of Park Lane, broken fencing at Mansers Shaw and missing barrier tape at George Meadow was reported.

12. Financial Matters

- a) The **budget report at 31 October 2019** was noted, as attached.

13. Matters for information / future agenda items

- Responsibility for review of Cemetery Regulations

14. Date of next meeting: 4 February 2020

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

CLLR V COOK
CHAIRMAN