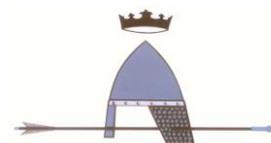




Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the COUNCIL MEETING held at 7.30pm
on Tuesday, 15 October 2013 at
The Almonry, High Street, Battle

PRESENT: Cllr R Bye – Chairman
ALSO: Cllrs C Bishop, J Boryer, P Fisher, D Furness, J Gyngell,
M Howell, R Jessop, J Ormonde-Butler, S Pry and D Wilson.

Public Question Time

Simon Alexander reminded the Council that this is the third time he has presented an event to Members: Marvellium; Queens Diamond Jubilee Garden and now Concorde 950. He advised that there is a small Steering Committee comprising English Heritage, Battle & Area Historical Society, Battle Museum, 1066 Marketing and a few individuals with specific experience that had put together some outline ideas to commemorate the 950th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings. Having very recently completed these basic ideas the group had felt that, to coincide with 14 October, it would be helpful to issue a brief press release. This had been copied to the Council with the intention that the Council would become fully involved in working up further details. Councillors expressed concern that the Council had not been shown the courtesy of being informed prior to the press release nor invited to be represented on the Steering Group. However, they agreed that the event should be welcomed and that it would be fully supported by the Council. The Chairman thanked Simon Alexander for his presentation and for his invitation to nominate a representative on the Steering Committee.

John Harmer expressed concern that there did not appear to be a good communication from English Heritage regarding the lack of annual events this year at the Battle Abbey site. Cllr Jessop advised that Jo Stewart is working hard to create better links with the town and is hopeful that next year the grounds will be in a better condition to fully utilise.

-
- 1. Apologies for Absence** – Cllrs J Carter, J Eldridge, K Kiloh and M Palmer.
 - 2. Disclosure of Interest** – Cllr Wilson expressed a pecuniary interest as a member of staff at Battle & Langton School should the planning application in the Planning minutes of 25 September be discussed.
 - 3. Minutes of the Council Meeting** held on 17 September 2013. Cllr Jessop proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr Bishop. This was agreed and they were duly signed.

4. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

The Chairman reminded Members that urgent **underground pipe replacement work at the cemetery** had been agreed at the previous meeting. A **quote of £1320** has been received and although other quotes had been requested these had not materialised. **Cllr Bye proposed that this quote be accepted. Cllr Wilson seconded and all agreed.**

Cllr Bye confirmed that he had been in contact with the Chairman of Rye Town Council regarding a meeting with the President of Battle Chamber of Commerce regarding **car parking issues** and was awaiting suggested dates.

The Chairman reported that there had been a further issue caused by the delay in amending signatories on the **Barclays Bank** account resulting in an embarrassment when attempting to purchase the **new IT equipment** for the office, as agreed at the previous meeting. Council agreed that this situation was most unsatisfactory and that financial and punitive compensation should be requested. Cllr Bishop confirmed that the computers

Battle Town Council

have been purchased but that as no debit card is currently available, purchase of some of the equipment has been postponed. This would be undertaken over a further 2 visits. Cllr Bishop was thanked for his ongoing help with this matter.

5. Police Matters

The Chairman welcomed Insp Scott and Carol Studley from the Safer Rother Partnership.

The Chairman confirmed that **crime updates** are still not being received. Insp Scott thanked the Council for the invitation to attend the meeting and confirmed that a new appointment had been made and the crime updates will be reinstated as a priority. He will introduce the successful candidate to Council in due course.

He reported on **crime statistics** in the Battle area over the last 6 weeks, confirming that figures are generally lower than the previous year and that targeted areas are being given crime prevention advice and more regular police patrols. On the issue of parking he advised that regular checks are carried out on double yellow lines but less attention is being given to parking bays.

Insp Scott reassured Members that there will remain a police presence in Battle whether that is in the current **Police Station** or elsewhere. In future he will attend Council meetings on a regular, probably quarterly, basis in order to provide similar, comprehensive reports.

Carol Studley reported on the work of the **Safer Rother Partnership** and the various agencies involved, within interests in antisocial behaviour, travelling criminals and youth offenders. She highlighted a White Ribbon event on 22 November in the Market Square for raising awareness of domestic abuse and agreed to send literature and ribbons to the Council.

The Chairman thanked Insp Scott and Carol Studley for their reports.

6. Report from County Councillor

Cllr Field had sent her apologies.

7. Report from District Councillors

Cllr Davies had sent her apologies.

Cllr Dixon reported that:

- Rother staff have been awarded a 1% pay increase, the first in several years;
- the restructuring of senior staff from 9 to 6 had been made;
- a further staff reduction of about 30 still to be undertaken;
- a reduced car parking charge has been agreed for long stay areas; the use of technology to cope with one hours free car parking is being investigated, though it was not clear in which areas this might be introduced;
- the implementation of the new waste contract in Rother, including the changed arrangements for garden waste, has been delayed by 4 months.

Cllr Dixon was thanked for his report.

8. Councillor Vacancy

A single application had been made to fill the vacancy. **Cllr Bye proposed that John Sydes be co-opted to fill the vacancy. This was agreed unanimously.**

Battle Town Council

9. Correspondence & Communications

The Chairman confirmed that a **clean audit report** had been received **following completion of the Annual Return** with no comments having been made.

The **usual request from Chamber of Commerce regarding Council's involvement in Christmas celebrations** including the placing of a Christmas tree on the Abbey Green bullring and Almonry garden; use of the Abbey Green on 30 November for Lights On and Father Christmas at the Almonry on Gala Night, 12 December. All agreed.

10. Minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on 24 September were reported by Cllr Bishop and noted. He highlighted the recommendation that a **6 month trial of Twitter be used by Battle Town Council** with himself, as Chairman of Communications Committee, entrusted with the responsibility of 'tweeting' on behalf of the Council, with a monthly reporting structure. He confirmed that this would be on a news only basis with the aim of engaging more young people on a 2 way basis. **Cllr Bye proposed this recommendation, Cllr Fisher seconded and agreed unanimously.**

11. Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 25 September and 9 October were reported by Cllr Jessop and noted. He highlighted the Committee's intention to produce a list of trees to recommend to Rother for Tree Preservation Orders. He also reiterated the disappointing time delay in action being taken on enforcement issues.

12. Minutes of the Services Committee meeting held on 1 October were reported by Cllr Wilson and noted. He confirmed that advice had been received that a Tier 2 groundwater survey is required for the proposed cemetery extension at an approximate cost of £7,000. Together with potential planning fees this would involve the Council in costs of about £10,000 and it was suggested that the possibility of taking out a PWLB loan to cover this should be explored. This would be separate from any loan to cover the cost of setting out the extension itself. **Cllr Jessop proposed that this option be investigated. This was seconded by Cllr Wilson and agreed unanimously.**

13. Minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 8 October were reported by Cllr Fisher and noted. She highlighted the change of location of the proposed tennis wall and the ongoing issues with the new fence and gates at the North Trade Road recreation ground play area. **Cllr Fisher proposed the recommendation, in principle, to amalgamate with the Battle Schools Greenway proposal, the middle segment from Asten Fields to Saxonwood, to join with the Council's proposed exercise track on the recreation ground. This was seconded by Cllr Bye and agreed unanimously.**

14. Representative on Battle Charities

Cllr Bishop agreed to represent the Council.

15. List of Payments and Receipts was noted.

16. Reports from Representatives of the Council

Cllr Wilson - had attended a meeting of the **1st Battle Scouts Executive Committee**;

Cllr Boryer - attended the recent **BLAP** meeting at which updates were given on the progress of the new church on Blackfriars, the Greenways project, the consolidation of bus timetables and disability awareness issues;

Battle Town Council

- Cllr Fisher - had attended a meeting of the **Battle Charities**;
- Cllr Furness - had attended meetings of the **Battle Partnership** and **Safer Rother Partnership**;
- Cllr Pry - reported that at a recent **Battle in Bloom** meeting aspirations had been expressed to: encourage Jo Stewart (English Heritage) to join the group; obtain signage for the almonry garden (for F&GP agenda); request removal of the cordylines on the roundabout (for Estates agenda) to enable an appropriate WW1 memorial of flowers.
- Cllr Jessop - had circulated his list of meetings to Members. These included the **BLAP** meeting; a **Battle Partnership** meeting and its **AGM** where it was agreed to continue for a further period; a recent **RALC** meeting at which a presentation had been made by the Sussex Assoc for the Blind and Partially Sighted and issues had been raised with Highways regarding potholes, and enforcement matters with Rother; a meeting of **SALC** that covered items including the Quality Council Scheme, parish budgets, Sustainable Communities Act 2007 and the possible dissolution of District Councils by 2020.

17. Mayor's Engagements

Cllr Bye had attended a meeting with **Peter Mills** to discuss availability for helping the Assistant Town Clerk during the Town Clerk's period of sick leave; the **Battle Abbey Founders Day Service** and had accompanied the **Battle Police** on one of their shifts.

18. Matters for Information/Future Items for Agenda

Cllr Bye suggested that, as a fluent French speaker, Cllr Pry would be an appropriate Council representative on the Concorde 950 group. This was agreed, with Cllr Bye acting as substitute when necessary.

The Council thanked **Peter Mills** for volunteering to help during the Clerk's period of absence.

19. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 19 November 2013

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

CLLR R BYE
Chairman

