



Battle Town Council



MINUTES of a Meeting of the ESTATES COMMITTEE held on Tuesday, 3 April 2012 at 7.30pm at The Almonry, High Street, Battle

Present: Cllr J Boryer - Chairman
Cllrs R Bye, Mrs P Fisher, R Harris, Mrs M Howell, R Jessop and D Wilson.

John Harmer, Footpaths Advisor and his colleagues Bev Marks and Bernard Mabon from Battle Ramblers were also present.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Cllrs J Carter, Mrs T Farr and Ms M L Neill.
2. **Disclosure of Interest** – None.
3. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 January 2012.** Cllr Bye proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr Wilson. This was agreed and they were duly signed.

4. **Matters Arising from Previous Meetings**

Regarding any **Jubilee tree planting**, as reported to the Council meeting in February, the application to the Woodland Trust for a pack of saplings had been unsuccessful. As promised at that meeting Cllr Carter had filled the breach by ordering a number of well established plants. He had indicated that these would be 20 silver birch and 10 wild cherry, all of which could be planted straight into the ground in George Meadow. However, whilst the wild cherry had been delivered in a mature state about 60 silver birch saplings had replaced the more mature 20 which were unavailable. The Committee agreed that it would be preferable that these be potted up over the summer months with a view to a final decision about where they should be planted being taken in the autumn.

The Clerk confirmed that the **fencing at the rear of the overflow car park** had been completed and that some major **pothole repairs** had also been undertaken.

Supplementing the work to install hard surface paths and log barriers in **Mansers Shaw** a variety of woodland **plants** have now been planted.

5. **Correspondence & Communications**

The Highway Authority has written asking for an update on the costs incurred by the Town Council in **maintaining the roundabout**. They are seeking this in the context of formalising an agreement in respect of sharing the sponsorship income.

6. **Footpath Matters**

An update had been received from the County Rights of Way Team. In terms of progress the stiles on FP101 have now been replaced with gates. Issues relating to the paths across Little Park Farm remain outstanding though, in relation to the ploughed out paths, County will be taking a more proactive approach than hitherto. The replacement of the stile on FP36 with a gate remains in abeyance whilst discussions with the land owner continue. Improvements to FP85 are being considered. This happily coincides with receipt of a number of complaints recently received about the condition of this footpath. Turning to the longstanding issue of the tumbledown stile the Rights of Way Team have recently discovered some old pictures which will enable the stile to be accurately reconstructed. This would not normally be a priority for County and the Town Council were therefore asked to make a small contribution towards the cost. **Cllr Mrs Fisher proposed that £100 be offered. This was seconded by Cllr Wilson and agreed unanimously.** Concluding this part of the discussion Cllr Boryer again drew attention to the condition of FP6.

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The representatives from the Ramblers were welcomed to the meeting and Bev Marks spoke about the need for dealing with a large number of way marking issues. This is a general problem which had been confirmed by a careful inspection along one of the main recommended walks. The Ramblers have offered to undertake a further 3 or 4 surveys of the recommended walks with a view to producing reports and recommendations of where improvements are needed. The Committee welcomed this initiative and gave it full support. Although the Ramblers had indicated a willingness to contribute towards the cost of remedial work the Committee felt that this should, at least, be a shared responsibility with the County and Town Council. In the first instance, however, enquiries will be made of the County to see whether the standard yellow way marking discs can be provided free of charge.

John Harmer reminded the Committee of his offer to conduct a further familiarisation walk. The Committee felt that this would be more beneficial if it could take place at a time other than immediately preceding the meeting. John Harmer will let the Clerk have some suggested routes.

7. Recreation Ground

Following the Council's agreement in principle given at the last meeting the Clerk expanded on the detailed specification for the **replacement of fencing at the children's playground** and the tenders submitted. He confirmed that all tenders had been prepared on the same basis and that there appeared no reason other than to accept the lowest tender. Subject to confirming that this includes setting the posts firmly in concrete **Cllr Bye proposed, seconded by Cllr Jessop that the lowest tender in the sum of £3384 be accepted. This was agreed unanimously.**

A **condition survey of the tennis courts** had revealed that the cost of resurfacing will be more substantial than assumed in preparing this year's budget. The report had covered all aspects of the condition of the tennis courts including fencing and gates as well as resurfacing. However, the resurfacing alone is estimated to cost at least £10,000. One particular aspect considered by the Committee was a reference in the report to the need to excavate a trench and remove roots from the trees along the southern boundary. Committee Members were anxious to ensure that any work would prevent a recurrence of this problem in the short term. In authorising the Clerk to seek tenders for the resurfacing the Committee therefore asked that such tenders should comment specifically on how any contractor would deal with this root damage issue.

8. Budget Report 2011-12

The latest forecast figures were noted. These differ from those made to the previous Committee meeting mainly because it has now been agreed that the transfer to the equipment replacement reserve should be shown within the Estates budget. There had also been further savings on Mansers Shaw and capital equipment though there was increased spend on repairs to machinery and rates.

9. Matters for Information/Future Agenda Items

Cllr Wilson reported having seen children climbing on the pavilion roof.

10. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 26 June 2012

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

J BORYER
Chairman

