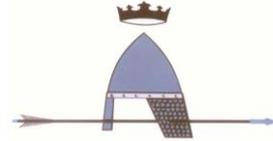




# Battle Town Council



## MINUTES of a SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING held on Thursday, 1 March 2012 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm

**Present:** Cllr Mrs M Kiloh – Chairman  
Cllrs R Bye, J Eldridge, R McDonald and Mrs S Pry.

- 1. Apologies for Absence** – Cllrs R Harris, A Mitchell, M Palmer and D Wilson
- 2. Disclosure of Interest** - None.
- 3. Minutes of the previous meeting** held on 29 November 2011. Subject to adding Cllr Wilson to the list of those present, Cllr Bye proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr Mrs Pry. This was agreed and they were duly signed.
- 4. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings**  
Referring to the discussion at the previous meeting the Clerk said that no further offers of **memorial seats** had been made. It was agreed, however, that when endowments are received they should be placed in a separate reserve and a proper maintenance programme established.
- 5. Correspondence & Communications** – None.

#### **6. Allotments**

As already reported to Council, the lease relating to the **Watch Oak site** has been completed and tenants advised by Rother of the change of management responsibility. The Asst Clerk is also now writing and introducing herself as the main point of contact with the Town Council. The Committee discussed several issues regarding the integration of the Watch Oak site with the Council's existing system:

- **Rents** Whilst the Town Council has always fixed rents based on the actual size of plots, Rother simply defines plots as either large or small. At Watch Oak there are 6 large plots (over 125sq m) and 20 small ones. The rents are £47 and £23 respectively. The Committee felt that, in the long term, it would be desirable to bring all plots managed by the Town Council under a common charging regime based on actual size but accepted that the implications of this could not be determined until the Watch Oak plots have been measured. This should be done over the summer period;
- **Standards** Although probably not applied strictly, Rother's policy regarding uncultivated plots appears to have been less tolerant than that adopted by the Town Council. A common policy must clearly apply and it was agreed that the inspection regime discussed at the previous meeting should be formalised, including a record of the findings of each inspection. The Clerk was asked to devise a checklist for this purpose. Between 1 April and 31 October this should be completed monthly, with perhaps 2 or 3 inspections during the winter period. It was hoped that Cllr Wilson would undertake this task – but Committee Members accepted that it might need to become a shared responsibility. The initial inspections should be carried out in time for the results to be reported to the next Committee meeting;
- **Competition** As with the rent issue, the Committee agreed that the aim should be to bring all the allotments within the ambit of the Competition but that this would not be possible for 2012. As an interim arrangement a £25 voucher should be awarded for the best allotment at Watch Oak.

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The Clerk said that all plots at Cherry Garden and Virgins Croft are let but 2 remain at Netherfield. He had deferred placing an order for plot numbering markers pending receipt of all the information about Watch Oak. Now that this is available he will progress this.

Regarding the supply of water to the Netherfield site, South East Water have advised that to simply make a connection to the main in Netherfield Hill would cost about £1400. This would still leave the Council to make arrangements to link this with the site itself. Doing so by laying a pipe through the connecting private road would be prohibitively expensive. However, if a large tank could be placed on the site the Council's works team could fill this through a hose linked to the main. The Clerk was asked to investigate the cost of a tank with a view to this possible arrangement being reported to the forthcoming F&GP meeting.

## 7. Street Lighting and Street Furniture

There are currently no **street lighting** issues.

Regarding **replacement finger posts** the Clerk's enquiries had indicated that metal replacements would be difficult and expensive. The Committee agreed, however, that black painted timber would be an acceptable alternative. The Clerk will pursue accordingly.

## 8. Cemetery

There are no current issues relating to the cemetery but the Clerk reported a new category in the **South & South East in Bloom competition** for which the cemetery had been entered. He tabled a copy of the marking sheet which will be used by the judges. Committee Members will carry out their own inspection of the cemetery to consider whether any particular improvements or changes may be required in order to achieve success in the competition. The Clerk confirmed that he has already made arrangements for additional bird and bat boxes to be installed.

## 9. Budget Report 2011-12

The attached reported was noted, the main changes to the previous forecast relating to a more accurate allocation of insurance costs and underspends on allotments and cemetery maintenance.

## 10. Matters for Information and Future Agenda Items – None.

## 11. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 1 May 2012

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

CLLR MRS M KILOH  
Chairman

