



Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held on Tuesday, 13 September 2016 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr G Favell – Chairman
Cllrs 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 J Boryer.

Cllr C Davies was absent.

2. Disclosure of Interest – None.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 21 June 2016. Cllr Jessop proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr Gyngell 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:

- The order has been placed for the **2 memorial posts for the Cemetery** at a cost of £643.80;
- Agreement has been reached with **Concorde 1066** for the siting of memorial seats and replacement of 6 bollards on the **Abbey Green**;
- The contract has been awarded for the 3 projects to **refurbish Chapels 1 and 2** with the latter to include a kitchenette and accessible toilet and the installation of an **equipment store** at a provisional cost of £73,280. A Full Building Regulation application has been submitted with supporting documentation being collated by the Contractor and the DTC to follow shortly. Works are planned to commence 4 October;
- Confirmation received that interments of **non-resident babies and children** up to age 18 are charged at double rate by Robertsbridge and Salehurst Parish Council;
- That there is no restriction on either planning or grant received for charging a fee at the **recreation ground car park**. There is, however, a condition of grant to provide 'short term' only parking;
- The licence for access across the amenity field to **Mansers Shaw** had been received from ESCC and the work to join the pathways had now been completed.

5. Correspondence & communications

A letter of thanks for the new **memorial bench** on the Abbey Green had been received from the Clarke family.

An email of appreciation had been received from a local resident for the new pathway at **Mansers Shaw**, suggesting that the path be made circular in the future.

6. Allotments

No report was available on the progress of the **Action Plan for Allotments**.

Cllr Fisher agreed to carry out the quarterly inspections at the **Cherry Gardens allotments**.

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The DTC was asked to agree a date during the week commencing 17 October for the next **allotment inspections**.

The DTC reported that **current vacancies** are: Cherry Gardens 4; Netherfield Hill 0; Virgins Croft 3; and Watch Oak 2. She confirmed that these include the taster plots but that the situation would change once annual rent reminders had been circulated.

A draft letter requesting **rents** and including brief details of the **annual competition** had been produced. The DTC confirmed that this letter would not be issued to those who had not cultivated their allotments within the terms of the agreement, despite reminders to do so.

7. Cemetery

Cllr Favell reported that she had met with the DTC and Gary Champion, lead work member for the **cemetery**, and agreed that the ashes post may be best installed at the end of the path; the surrounding area can then be designed and planted as required. Cllr Favell confirmed that the grass slope in the lower cemetery will be cleared over autumn/winter and that the path between areas in CB will be cleared and assessed for further re-instatement work.

Cllr Kiloh stated that she had nothing further to add to the DTC's report on the **Chapel**. Members noted that the work-staff are gradually clearing Chapel 2 in preparation for works to commence and that an inventory of equipment no longer used is being produced. Cllr Jessop suggested that Burstow & Hewitt be approached for advice on this.

The DTC reported on the **cemetery memorial inspection** that Cllr Favell, two members of the work-staff and herself had carried out the previous day. Several memorials show signs of slight movement and some headstones have been laid down. The DTC suggested an article in the newspaper and on the Council's website to highlight the inspection and request any concerns be directed to the office as there are no historical details to enable direct contact with owners of memorials. The Committee agreed this and asked that all future memorial requests be recorded to prevent this from occurring in future. Cllr Favell confirmed that the memorials in St Mary's Churchyard will be inspected on Thursday.

8. Recreation Ground, Play and Games Facilities

Cllr Gyngell reported that much of the **Recreation Ground** area is looking in good condition although there remains a constant battle with litter at the car park, MUGA and the benches within the beech hedges. She suggested that a frayed rope hanging from an Oak tree near to the wooden play facility should be removed. Cllr Gyngell informed Members of a conversation with a Westfield youth football club manager that was using the pitch without prior notification. The DTC was asked to make contact with Westfield FC to clarify. Cllr Gyngell expressed concern at the missing saplings in the hedge at the top of the bank and suggested that some form of protection should be provided. The Committee agreed that the existing gaps should be turfed to provide natural access areas and that the remainder of the hedge should be protected.

The DTC was asked to make contact with Sue and Oli Burton to arrange a site meeting to discuss the **cycle trail** at the existing scrub area below the football pitch. Members asked that the Town Clerk approach the Community Payback Team to provide regular help eg the cycle trail, paths at St Mary's Churchyard and general tidying at the cemetery.

Cllr Reeves apologised for the lack of **progress on the Action Plan for the Pavilion** and confirmed that a report would be available at the next meeting.

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Email communication between **Battle Baptist Football Club** and the DTC had been circulated. In response to the request to review the fees for the current season **Cllr Favell proposed a fee of £1250 for the use of both the football pitch and pavilion for the 2016-17 season. This was seconded by Cllr Gyngell and agreed unanimously.**

The Town Clerk had circulated a note and attached the Council's current Lettings Policy together with RDC's comprehensive Events documentation for the Committee to consider the **Recreation Ground Policy and Fee Structure**. Cllr Favell had produced a draft fees and charges schedule that included deposits to be taken from all hirers. **Cllr Jessop proposed that Cllr Favell and the DTC work on the fees and charges policy to supplement the BTC Lettings Policy and bring it to the next meeting. This was agreed unanimously.**

9. Street Furniture & Lighting

Cllr Howell reported that the **fingerposts** will be installed within the next two weeks and that the additional fingers at Chequers Corner and Station Approach had been delayed but would be available within three weeks.

10. Remainder of BTC's Estate

The DTC confirmed that **tree work** is due to continue this week and that, as previously reported, the pathway at **Mansers Shaw** is complete.

Cllr Fisher reported that the **Abbey Green** is looking good and motorbikes are no longer parking there for extended periods. She suggested that the **Churchyard** should be mowed more frequently and highlighted the untidy passageway between **High Street and Mount St car park** and that bottom section of **Western Avenue** is in great need of a clean. It was agreed that all the clearing and cleaning items should be added to the request for the Community Payback team.

Cllr Favell reported that the Management Plan is to be considered at this meeting and there are no other **administration actions** outstanding at this time.

An email request from **Battel Bonfire Boyes to use George Meadow for the setting off of fireworks on 5 November**. Subject to there being no objection from either the tenant farmer or Battle Cricket Club and that all Risk Assessments and Insurances are in force, the Committee agreed this.

11. Management Plan

Cllr Favell had circulated a draft Management Plan. This was agreed as attached. The DTC was asked to ensure that this is published on the website. It will also be transferred into diary form.

12. Budget report

The income and expenditure to date was noted. For clarity, the Committee asked that the cemetery fees be broken down into categories of purchases, interments and administration costs.

13. Matters for information / future agenda items

To receive written reports from the Coordinators of Action Plans

14. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 25 October 2016

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The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Cllr Favell
Chairman