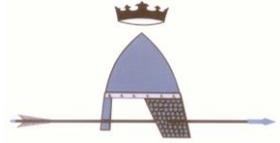




Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held on Tuesday, 1 August 2017 at The Almonry, High Street, Battle at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs G Favell (Chairman), J Gyngell, M Howell, R Jessop and J Reeves.
In attendance: Carol Harris (Town Clerk)

- 1. Apologies for Absence** – Cllrs J Boryer, P Fisher and D Furness.
- 2. Disclosure of Interest** – None.
- 3. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 6 June 2017** were approved by Members and duly signed by Cllr Favell.

4. Matters arising from previous meetings, not on this agenda

The Clerk reported:

- that the **mowers** have been sold and the **bier** donated to Jempsons. She confirmed that the **prayer book furniture** was not of interest to the auctioneers and it was agreed to offer these free to collector;
- the annual **maintenance work to the football pitch** has been completed and an invoice for half the cost has been issued to Battle Baptist Football Club, as agreed;
- research on the **wood chipper** has identified that one which will be accessible to smaller areas, easier to move on wet ground and small enough to store is beyond the existing budget of £10k. She highlighted the possibility of purchasing a good used chipper, although this would still be in the region of £12,500. **Members agreed that:**
 - **the Clerk continue with the purchase of a suitable chipper;**
 - **an application be made to the Rother Community Grant scheme for £500;**
 - **the remainder of the cost be allocated from budgets: Tree work (4390) £1,000; New machinery (4380) £750; any balance General maintenance recreation ground (4205).**

5. Correspondence & communications – None.

6. Allotments

- a) The Clerk confirmed that **current vacancies** are: Cherry Gardens – 3(all offered and awaiting payment/agreement); Netherfield Hill – 1; Virgins Croft – 4; Watch Oak - 10.
- b) The **Action Plan for Allotments** was discussed and it was agreed that, given the present lack of demand for plots for residents with reduced mobility/flexibility that the need for this be revisited in the future.
- c) The Clerk reported that **routine inspections** were carried out and letters issued to the tenants of plots identified as needing improvement. Some plot holders had responded and progress measures agreed.

7. Cemetery

- a) The **Action Plan for the Cemetery** was noted, as attached. Cllr Favell confirmed that the Opening of the new cemetery was well attended and positively received.
The Clerk reported that the first **hiring of the Ceremonies room** had taken place. This had raised issues relating to the hire hours and the use of electricity: our member of staff had returned to lock the facility out of work hours and returned on Monday to find the heating had been left on.

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Members agreed that a draft hiring form should be brought to the next meeting for approval, this will include a premium for out of hours hiring; no naked flames; and a deposit requirement against damage and excessive electricity costs.

The Town Clerk also reported that the memorial inspections at both the Cemetery and Churchyard had been carried out the previous day. The (t)DTC will advise funeral directors; place a report on the website and in the local press.

- b) Two styles of **way marker signs** had been circulated to members. **It was agreed to place an order for a metal sign in keeping with those already at the Cemetery at a cost of £116 from the PWLB budget (3600)**
- c) The current **Deed of Grant** is assigned for a period of 50 years. As the Council is promoting pre-purchase of plots, **Members agreed to amend the period of the Deed of Grant to 100years.**
- d) **Members agreed that the children's burial area should contain ashes interments at the perimeter of the area, close to the yew trees, with burial plots in rows with the foot towards the pathway.** The Clerk to formally mark out.
- e) The Clerk reported that a provisional date of 31 October 2017 has been agreed for the **consecration of half of the children's interment area.** The Diocese of Chichester require an admin fee of £1000. In light of this, the Clerk suggested that consideration be given to extending the area to be consecrated. Members asked the Clerk to approach the Fraternal Plus to contribute to this charge in view of their request for the children's area to be consecrated.
- f) Cllr Favell reported that there had been one meeting of the **Friends of Battle Cemetery** group, which had been a success, with further meetings planned for the 2nd Wednesday of every month.
- g) The Clerk reported that the **doors to the chapel and ceremonies rooms** require redecoration/refurbishment respectively and new locks fitted to both. An indicative cost had been obtained from a previously used contractor at £950. **The Clerk was asked to obtain further quotations and delegated to arrange for the work to be carried out at a maximum cost of £1,000 from the PWLB budget (3600).**
- h) The Clerk reported that, subsequent to the extension and refurbishment works at the cemetery, it is necessary to obtain a **re-valuation for insurance purposes.** An indicative cost had been received of £550 but consequent advice had been received from the Council's broker to suggest that this service could be provided within the insurance renewal contract.

8. Recreation Grounds

- a) The **Action Plan for the Recreation Grounds** was noted.
- b) The Clerk reported that, contrary to advice received from the Contractor, the **CCTV monitoring service of the accessible toilet** was not fit for purpose and had therefore been cancelled at the end of day one. After much email communication there had been an acceptance of this and the equipment removed. However, there has been a request to pay one month's charge and the Clerk had responded that this is not relevant and will not be paid. Members endorsed this action.
- c) The play equipment inspection reports had identified several incidents of vandalism to the **Multi Use Games Area(MUGA) fencing.** This has been made safe but 4 panels remain damaged and liable to further destruction. Members asked that the fencing used by The Hellingly Centre be ascertained and **agreed that the Clerk purchase suitable fencing to a cost of £500 from the General Maintenance budget (4205).**
- d) The inspection reports had also highlighted the poor condition of the **exterior of the play tunnel** which no longer has any grass covering. Members asked that the product used at the Pirate play facility on the beachfront at Hastings be confirmed. **The Clerk was delegated authority to purchase suitable artificial grass to cover the tunnel at a maximum cost of £500 from the General Maintenance budget (4205).**

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- e) The notes from a previous meeting of the **Recreation Grounds Working Group** had been circulated. Cllr Favell highlighted that the grant application for the castle theme play equipment had been submitted to Rother District Council. She also reported on a further meeting at which it had been agreed to submit a grant request to Tesco for the table tennis table with funding for all other play equipment being sought through Steve Scott. It was suggested that the Pavilion café and changing facilities adaptation should be considered as one project. **Members agreed that further investigation on the Pavilion project, in collaboration with Battle Baptist Football Club, should be undertaken and brought back to the next meeting. The Committee further agreed that the café should be managed by a part-time employee under the Council's control.**
- f) Members agreed to develop part of **Telham Playing Field as a wildflower meadow** with access paths and to monitor for success.
- g) Designs for a **covered shelter to be installed in the NTR recreation ground** had been circulated. **Members unanimously selected the Sutcliffe Play YOU 040 shelter.**
- h) The Clerk suggested that legitimate users of the **recreation ground** may wish to access the **car park** prior to 10am during the school holiday period. She also highlighted that the workforce are hard-pressed during this time of year. **Members agreed that the car park should be left unlocked for a period of 2 months and the situation reviewed at the next meeting.**

9. Street Furniture & Lighting

- a) The **Action Plan for Street Furniture & Lighting** was noted. Cllrs Favell and Reeves agreed to survey the **condition of the benches and signage** in the town.
- b) The Clerk reported advice received from the Contractor in relation to the **replacement of sodium with LED lamps**. He had confirmed that, whilst the cost appears high, the savings on energy charges would recoup this within a 3 year period. The Clerk was asked to report to Full Council (September) with an analysis of lanterns that require replacing and number of lamps that can and cannot be altered to LED with a business plan.

10. Remainder of BTC's Estate

- a) The **Action Plan for the remainder of BTC's Estate** was noted.
- b) Members noted the approval from **Sussex Lund Fund** for:
 - contribution for hire of equipment to be offset against purchase of Mule;
 - savings on pathway to provide timber for bridges over stream
- c) Cllr Favell reported that she had been involved in decisions for the **planting scheme for tubs on Abbey Green** next spring.
- d) The Clerk reported that **access to Mansers Shaw from footpath 82** is via land within Caultershaw, Saxonwood Road. It appears that the current agreement has expired and the Clerk has contacted the new owners to discuss the way forward.
- e) Members noted that the **Oak tree bed** is not included within the current Agreement with Beautiful Battle(BB). It was acknowledged that BB undertake a great deal of work throughout the town and felt that it would be appropriate for the Town Council staff to maintain this area; the grass cutting is already part of their schedule. **Members agreed to recommend to Full Council that the Oak tree bed continue to be excluded under the proposed new Agreement due 1 April 2018 and that maintenance be carried out in-house.**
- f) Members noted a **Freedom of Information** request and response in relation to grass cutting/maintenance of the Churchyard.
- g) Members were reminded of the kind donation of a **memorial statue tablet**. **The Committee agreed that a substantial piece of wood, cut at an angle should be placed on the Oak tree area**

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for the tablet to be erected. Cllr Reeves suggested that this should be included on the Battle Arts Trail.

The Clerk reported an offer of grant from 1066 Marketing to purchase an **information sign** detailing how the statue had been designed and constructed. **Members agreed that the grant should be accepted and the information sign positioned, with ESCC permission, on the library bed area.**

- h) The **Risk Assessment** document was agreed, as attached. The Clerk was asked to contact other Parishes for advice on Tree Warden training.
- i) The **Management Plan** was agreed, as attached.

11. Polish War Memorial

The Clerk reported that following discussion with the workforce it was felt inappropriate, based on health and safety concerns, not to take the maintenance of the hedge and grass forward. This was agreed.

12. Budget report

The income and expenditure to 30 June 2017 was noted. The Clerk highlighted the increased utility costs and advised that some contracts are due for renewal with cost comparisons currently being sought. She reported that research on the water supply at Cherry Gardens is also being undertaken.

13. Matters for information / future agenda items

- To agree Terms, Conditions and Hire Form for Ceremonies Room/Chapel
- To receive recommendation in relation to Pavilion project

14. Date of next meeting: 3 October 2017

There being no further business the meeting closed 9.35pm.

Cllr G Favell
Chairman