



BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

TUESDAY 17th NOVEMBER 2015

PRESENT: Cllrs. P. Dillon (Chairman), Mrs. S. Daniells, and P. Woodall

IN ATTENDANCE: P. Carpenter, C. Penfold, Miss S. Trodd and Mrs. L. Russell
(Tenants Representatives)
Sheila Green (Allotment Committee Clerk)

The Meeting opened at 6.40pm

18. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman welcomed those present. Apologies had been received from Cllrs. Mrs. J. Warr and D. Barnes.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and/or Ordinary Interests that they may have in relation to items on this Agenda

Members and Officers should declare an interest by stating: -

- a) The item they have an interest in
- b) Whether it is an Ordinary Interest and the nature of the interest
- c) Whether it is also a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

They then need to re-declare their interest and the nature of the interest at the commencement of the item or when the interest becomes apparent. They should request that it be recorded in the Minutes that they will leave the meeting and will neither take part in discussion, nor vote on the item.

In accordance with good practice, individual forms were available to those Councillors present in order that they could personally record their interests - both Disclosable Pecuniary and Ordinary. These forms should be returned to the Committee Clerk at the end of the meeting to enable all declarations of interest to be accurately recorded in the Minutes. Members were reminded that it is their responsibility to notify the Monitoring Officer of all Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, not already recorded on their Register of Interests Form, within 28 days.

20. RATIFICATION OF THE CO-OPTED MEMBERS AS RECOMMENDED BY THE AGM HELD ON 13th OCTOBER 2015 OF P. CARPENTER, C. PENFOLD, MISS S. TRODD AND MRS. L. RUSSELL, AS CO-OPTED NON-VOTING MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** ratification of the appointment of P. Carpenter, C. Penfold, Miss S. Trodd and Mrs. L. Russell as co-opted non-voting members of the Sub-Committee.

21. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2nd JUNE 2015

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd June 2015.

22. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES WHICH ARE NOT SEPARATE AGENDA ITEMS

22.1 2nd June 2015 Min.11 refers: Consideration to purchase and erect a noticeboard for notices, guidelines, information and contact details.

At the last meeting the Sub-Committee rejected a proposal to erect noticeboards but is happy for the tenants to make their own arrangements if they wished. Tenants of the original site are considering putting a noticeboard by the middle gate. The position was indicated on a site map to the Sub-Committee who **AGREED** that this would be permitted. The Committee Clerk reminded the tenant representatives that they would take sole responsibility for the maintenance, upkeep and any insurance liability. Tenants on the re-established site do not wish to erect a noticeboard on that site.

23. RATIFICATION OF EXPENDITURE FOR REFRESHMENTS AT THE AGM HELD ON 13th OCTOBER 2015

The cost of £30.47 for refreshments was ratified by the Sub-Committee.

Sub-Committee Members **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** the approval of the cost of £30.47 to the **Environment & Leisure Committee**.

24. FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE – THIS ITEM WAS DEFERRED FROM THE MEETING 2nd JUNE 2015 MIN.13 REFERS

Following a request from the Town Council for tenants to hold 3rd party liability insurance for their plots, one of the tenants had made enquiries with a couple of insurance companies who confirmed that the liability within their household policies may not extend to the allotments. An extra premium would be required which the majority of allotments holders have indicated they are not prepared to pay. It was also suggested that 3rd party liability could not be enforced. Following advice from their own insurance company the Town Council acknowledge that this cover is not compulsory by law however a letter will be sent to all tenants to advise that the Town Council hold liability cover for their own legal liabilities but this will not provide indemnity to individual plot holders and that they should consider the risks of individual law suits for injury or damage that they may cause.

Therefore it will be the responsibility of each plot holder to decide whether to take 3rd party liability insurance cover.

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** this decision.

25. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTERS RAISED BY TENANTS AT AGM HELD ON 13th OCTOBER 2015 INCLUDING: REVIEW OF EVICTION PROCEDURE FOR UNCULTIVATED PLOTS; PATHS & EDGES; COMPOST & RUBBISH BINS FENCELINES; GATE ENTRANCES AND BEES

Review of eviction procedure for uncultivated plots: One of the tenant representatives asked if the eviction procedure for uncultivated plots could be reviewed as the process seemed to take a long time.

The current process is as follows:

- *A letter of cultivation is sent asking for a response to the office within 7 days*
- *A strong reminder with a photograph of the overgrown plot and 14 days from the postmark of the letter, in which to bring the entire plot up to the standard required by the tenancy agreement*
- *A letter with Notice to Quit immediately*

Following discussion it was agreed that the current process is adequate but was probably being held up as the Committee Clerk does not always have the capacity to do a site visit to ensure the necessary action has been taken resulting in a delay. The tenants representatives offered to help with this which will assist with a quicker turnaround. It was **AGREED** that the current system will continue.

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to continue with the current eviction procedure and if necessary review again in the future.

Paths & Edges: There were some concerns that plot holders are not keeping their paths and edges tidy. The Committee Clerk advised that tenants were reminded of their obligation in the latest newsletter. The tenants representatives will monitor the situation.

Compost & rubbish bins: A tenant wanted to know if the Town Council supplied compost or rubbish bins and would remove waste. Bins are not supplied by the Town Council but it is believed compost bins can be purchased from Arun District Council. The Committee Clerk would like to remind tenants that they are responsible for the removal of their own waste. The Town Council Town Force team can remove rubbish and waste but there would be a charge for this. Current Town Force charges are £22.00 + VAT per man per hour. Any charges incurred at the tip would also be passed on.

Fencelines: The Committee Clerk reported that Town Force has been issued with a job ticket to trim the fencelines and trim the hedges and work would commence over the next few days weather permitting. She also asked if tenants could do their bit and keep the back of their sheds clear.

Gate entrances: There is a buddleia tree by the middle gate that is overhanging and causing obstruction. One of the tenants representatives will undertake to cut this back.

Bees: One of the new tenants asked if she could keep bees on the allotments. This was discussed and whilst everyone agreed it would be good for the environment there were concerns raised with regards to swarming, the fact that the allotments are in the middle of a residential housing estate and the risk of allergic reactions to possible stings.

The Sub-committee **RESOLVED** not to allow bee keeping on the allotments at this time.

26. HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT AT THE ALLOTMENTS

It was **RESOLVED** that The Committee Clerk and Cllr. Dillon would undertake a Health and Safety Risk Assessment, with a representative from each site. The Committee Clerk will arrange a mutually convenient date.

27. REPORT ON LETTINGS

The Committee Clerk reported that there was only 1 vacant plot for the original site and 2 for the re-established site. Arrangements had been made for viewings. There are currently 5 people on the waiting list.

28. REPORTS FROM ALLOTMENT HOLDERS INCLUDING REPORT ON CONDITIONS OF PLOTS

It was reported that as a whole the standard had improved considerably on both sites. The tenants representatives have played a large part in assisting with this and the Chairman thanked them on behalf of the Sub-Committee. There were only 2 plots that gave cause for concern, plots 5a and 30. The Committee Clerk will arrange for photographs to be taken and letters to be sent.

29. CORRESPONDENCE

The Sub-Committee noted receipt of correspondence from the Sussex Mammal Group, who is undertaking a harvest mouse survey. One of the tenant representatives expressed a personal interest in taking part in the survey and as the survey is open to all the Committee Clerk will pass the details on.

The Meeting closed at 7.45pm