



BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN CLERK Glenna Frost, The Town Hall, Clarence Road,
Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO21 1LD
Telephone: 01243 867744 Fax: 01243 865744
E-mail: bognortc@bognorregis.gov.uk

MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

TUESDAY 5th NOVEMBER 2013

PRESENT: Cllrs. P. Dillon, D. Meagher and W. Toovey

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. M. Bicknell, Mrs. T. Griffiths, Mrs. V. Johnson and Mr. P. Ledword
(Tenants' Representatives)
Sheila Green (Allotment Committee Clerk)

The meeting opened at 6.30pm

25. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman welcomed those present. Apologies had been received from Cllrs. J. Brooks and T. Gardiner

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of Pecuniary and/or non-Pecuniary 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 a non-Pecuniary interest and the nature of the interest
- c) Whether it is also a 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 take no 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 Pecuniary and non-Pecuniary. These forms to 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 Pecuniary Interests, not already recorded on their Register of Interests Form, within 28 days.

The Committee noted that there were no Declarations of Interest made at this point in the Meeting.

27. RATIFICATION OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS AS RECOMMENDED BY THE AGM HELD ON 22ND OCTOBER 2013 - MR. M. BICKNELL, MRS. T. GRIFFITHS, MRS. V. JOHNSON AND MR. P. LEDWORD AS CO-OPTED NON-VOTING MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** ratification of the appointment of Mr. Mr. M. Bicknell, Mrs. T. Griffiths, Mrs. V. Johnson and Mr. P. Ledword as co-opted non-voting members of the Sub-Committee.

28. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11TH JUNE 2013 AND THE ADDITIONAL MEETING HELD 17TH SEPTEMBER 2013**

29. The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th June 2013 and the additional meeting held 17th September 2013

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

There were no matters arising.

31. **CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTERS RAISED BY TENANTS AT AGM HELD ON THE 22ND OCTOBER 2013 INCLUDING: THE PROBLEM OF FOXES – MIN. 17 REFERS**

At the recent AGM a tenant asked if anything more could be done to address the problem of foxes. The Committee Clerk reported that an application of fox deterrent had been applied around the allotment perimeter but this had had little success. Unfortunately there is very little that can be done as trapping and extermination are not permitted. The Committee Clerk will arrange for another application to be applied but this will be dependent on the weather. It was hoped that the planned hedge clearance would disturb the nest and encourage the foxes to move on. However, this is currently on hold and has been referred back to Environment & Leisure Committee. The allotment representatives reported there was some disappointment from tenants that the plans to erect new fencing would not be proceeding at present as there are areas that are becoming exposed following the hedge cutting by Arun District Council. Members confirmed they would take the tenants concerns to the Environment & Leisure Committee when they discuss the issue.

32. **CONSIDERATION OF THE UNAUTHORISED EXTENSION OF PLOT ON GRAVITS LANE SITE AND THE ERECTED POSTS ON PATHWAY BY THE HEDGE**

The Committee was asked to consider what action, if any, should be taken with regard to a plot holder erecting two posts on the pathway and extending the plot. Photographs and correspondence along with a background report had been distributed to the Committee and a discussion took place. It was felt that if this were not addressed a similar situation to the problems that have developed in other areas, where the pathways have disappeared, could arise. There were also concerns raised about the Health & Safety issue of contractors working with chainsaws on a reduced pathway. The Committee **AGREED** that a letter should be written to the tenant asking him remove the posts and re-instate the paths allowing a short time span to do this. If the tenant had any further objections designated authority would be given to the Committee Clerk to meet him on site along with Cllr. Toovey for the opportunity to discuss it directly.

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the decision that the pathway is re-instated and the posts removed.

33. **HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT AT THE ALLOTMENTS**

The annual Health & Safety inspection had been carried out and individual letters will be sent out to the relevant tenants.

34. ANNUAL REVIEW OF RENTAL CHARGES - CONSIDERATION OF ANY INCREASE FOR 2014/15- MIN. 8 REFERS

At the June meeting of the Allotment Sub-Committee it was decided that no increase of rents should be applied for 2013/14. However, an increase for 2014/15 should be considered and the item deferred to the November meeting. Whilst the Committee acknowledged that the economic climate was still difficult it was **AGREED** that a small increase should be applied. A discussion took place and both the Committee and the Tenants Representatives felt that an increase of £1.00 for small plots, £2.00 for medium and £3.00 for large would be a fair increase.

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the proposed rent increase for 2014/15

35. ANNUAL REVIEW OF ALLOTMENT GUIDELINES/CODE

The Sub-Committee noted the guidelines previously circulated to them. It was felt there was no need for any amendments.

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Allotments Guidelines/Code.

Mrs. Johnson gave her apologies and left the meeting at this point.

36. CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLY SPLITTING SOME OF THE LARGER PLOTS ON THE ORIGINAL SITE

The Committee Clerk asked if consideration could be given to splitting some of the larger plots that had become vacant. Three plots 13b, 20b and 22a are large plots and have proved to be unmanageable by previous tenants. Splitting the plots will also help to ease the waiting list. One of the representatives did not feel that this was a good idea as some people did want and could cope with larger plots. Unfortunately new tenants tend to take on plots because of the length of time they have been on the waiting list rather than wait for a plot they can manage. A discussion took place and it was **AGREED** that the plots should be split as there is no restriction on the number of plots a tenant can have.

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** plots 13b; 20b & 22a should be split.

37. REPORT ON LETTINGS

The Committee Clerk reported that there are currently 8 vacant plots following the annual renewals which will increase to 11 once the agreed plots had been split. There were still 2 plots holders that had not responded to the renewal letters and reminders, so these would possibly become vacant as well.

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

A representative raised the issue regarding what is considered to be a suitable standard in relation to the upkeep of plots and how it was apparent that everyone had their own idea as to what was acceptable. As long as a plot is cultivated and tidy with minimum weeds it would be considered a suitable standard. It was acknowledged that overall standards on the original site had very much improved following the frequent visits of Cllr Toovey and it is hoped that this will continue. Two plots were highlighted as an immediate cause for concern number 30 on the original site and number 102 on the re-established site. Photographs will be taken and a letter will be sent.

39. CORRESPONDENCE

British Beekeeping Association Policy & Guidelines on allotment beekeeping

The Meeting closed at 7.45pm