



BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ALLOTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE

HELD ON MONDAY 15th JUNE 2026

PRESENT:

Cllr. P. Woodall (Chair); Cllrs: K. Batley, D. Dawes,
Miss. C. Needs, P. Ralph, Mrs. J. Warr, and M. White

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs. I. Cross (Allotments & In Bloom Officer)
Mr. C. Penfold (Tenant Representative)
Mr. P. Fortin (Tenant Representative)
Mrs. L. Russell (Tenant Representative)

The Meeting opened at 6.30pm

1. TO APPOINT A NEW CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF THE ALLOTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Having been Chair of the Sub-Committee for the 2025/2026 Municipal Year, Cllr. Woodall opened the meeting by stating the need to formally elect a new Chair and Vice-Chair for the Sub-Committee. Both Cllr. Woodall and Batley, Vice-Chair for 2025/2026, advised they would be willing to continue in their respective roles. Following a vote, it was **AGREED** that Cllr. Woodall would continue as Chair and Cllr. Batley would be Vice-Chair of the Sub-Committee for 2026/2027.

2. WELCOME BY CHAIR

The Chair welcomed those present and read the Council's Opening Statement with particular attention drawn to the evacuation procedure in the event of the fire alarm sounding.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND THEIR APPROVAL, SUBJECT TO MEETING THE AGREED CRITERIA

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. F. Oppler. The Clerk recommended that the reason given was acceptable. This absence was **APPROVED** by Members.

There were no apologies received from Cllrs. P. Botterill, R. Nash, or M. Stanley and these absences could not, therefore, be approved.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair addressed those Members present to ask if they wished to confirm

any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registrable and/or Ordinary Interests that they may have in relation to items on this Agenda.

As noted on the Agenda, Members and Officers should make their declaration by stating:

- a) the item they have the Interest in
- b) whether it is a Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registrable or Ordinary Interest
- c) the nature of the Interest
- d) if it is an Ordinary Interest whether they intend to temporarily leave the meeting for the discussion and vote
- e) if it is a Disclosable Pecuniary or Other Registrable Interest, they must temporarily leave the meeting for the discussion and vote.

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.

As per the Agenda, it is each Member's own responsibility to notify the Monitoring Officer of all Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registrable or Ordinary Interests notifiable under the Council's Code of Conduct, not already recorded on their Register of Interests Form, within 28 days.

The Chair reminded Members to declare their Interests as any arise or again at the relative point in the meeting if they have already.

There were no declarations of Interest

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10th NOVEMBER 2025 AND THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 5th JANUARY 2026

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th November 2025 and the Extraordinary meeting held on 5th January 2026 as an accurate record, and these were then signed by the Chair.

6. CLERK'S REPORT

6.1 The use of drones on the allotments

The Sub-Committee Clerk advised that they had been contacted by an allotment Tenant Representative who had expressed concern regarding the use of drones on site. Having discussed this matter with both the Deputy Clerk and Town Clerk as to the appropriateness of inserting an additional clause into the tenancy agreement regarding drone usage. It was concluded not to do so as legal enforcement would be difficult. It was recommended the Sub-Committee Clerk refer to the use of drones in the next Allotment Newsletter taking the opportunity to discourage all tenants from using them in the interests of protecting personal safety and privacy of all tenants.

6.2 Faulty tap

A Tenant Representative had reported a fault on tap number one on the original site. This has been reported and Town Force will replace the tap shortly.

6.3 Flooring in allotment shelter

The Sub-Committee Clerk advised Members that, as per the email of 6th May 2026, Town Force are committed to completing the flooring in the shelter on the re-established site later in June.

7. RATIFICATION OF EXPENDITURE AND RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

The Sub-Committee Clerk's report was **NOTED**.

The following costs were **RATIFIED** by the Sub-Committee: -

- Purchase of All-weather Combi Padlocks - £69.97 excluding VAT (charged to the Gravits Lane Maintenance Budget)
- Water Rates at allotments Gravits Lane for the period 22nd October 2025 to 30th April 2026 - £441.86 excluding VAT (charged to the Gravits Lane Maintenance Budget)
- Water Rates at allotments, R/O Gravits Lane for the period 22nd October 2025 to 30th April 2026 - £695.02 – excluding VAT (charged to the Gravits Lane Maintenance Budget)
- Water Rates Actual Reading at allotments Gravits Lane for the period 1st April 2026 to 19th May 2026 - £103.99 excluding VAT (charged to the Gravits Lane Maintenance Budget)
- Water Rates Actual Reading at allotments R/O Gravits Lane for the period 1st April 2026 to 19th May 2026 - £175.64 excluding VAT (charged to the Gravits Lane Maintenance Budget)

Sub-Committee Members **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** the approval of the above expenditure to the Environmental and Leisure Committee.

8. UPDATE ON HEALTH & SAFETY INCLUDING: - REPORT ON THE INSPECTION HELD ON 12th NOVEMBER 2025; TO NOTE THE DETAILS OF THE INSPECTION TO BE HELD ON 11th JUNE 2026

The Sub-Committee Clerk's report in relation to the Health & Safety inspection completed on 12th November 2025, was **NOTED**.

The Sub-Committee Clerk explained that the Health & Safety Inspection due to be held on 11th June 2026, had not taken place due to unforeseen circumstances, and would now be re-arranged as a matter of urgency later in June. A report detailing the findings was, therefore, **DEFERRED** and will be made available at the next meeting.

9. REPORT ON LETTINGS

The Sub-Committee Clerk's report was **NOTED**.

A Member enquired how much time tenants were given to pay their annual rents once letters had been distributed. The Sub-Committee Clerk explained the process undertaken to ensure rents were paid promptly yet ensuring the approach adopted when chasing outstanding rents was also fair and reasonable. A Tenant Representative suggested the need to be more proactive in chasing payment and an extension of a month for tenants to pay their rent was more than adequate.

10. REPORTS FROM CO-OPTED ALLOTMENT HOLDERS, INCLUDING REPORT ON PLOT CONDITIONS

A Tenant Representative, in advance of the meeting had compiled a slide show of photographs recently taken at the allotments. The Tenant Representatives subsequently talked through the pictures to explain the various activities taking place on site. Appreciation was expressed by Members, specifically by those unable to attend site in person.

A short discussion took place concerning how tenants use their plots in different ways and what the challenges are for tenants in maintaining their allotments in extreme weather conditions.

A Tenant Representative spoke of their wish to support the Sub-Committee Clerk in ensuring vacant allotment plots could be re-let as soon as possible. They observed the increase in work volumes for the Sub-Committee Clerk since moving the annual allotment rent review from October to April. This subsequent change coincided with an increase in activity on the In Bloom calendar with many of the competitions also being launched. They proposed having the contact details of those at the top of the allotment waiting list so they might ring and organise viewings of vacant plots more quickly.

The Sub-Committee Clerk expressed their thanks for the Tenant Representative support but was mindful of the Town Council's obligations regarding GDPR and the use of personal data. It was **AGREED** the Sub-Committee Clerk would enquire with the Deputy Clerk and Town Clerk as to how best this situation might be managed in the future.

A Member asked what the process was in relation to ensuring Tenants maintained their plots to the required standard. The Sub-Committee Clerk explained the legal process of sending Notice to Cultivate Letters before issuing any Notice to Quit letters. They added that, in their experience, most Tenants did respond upon receipt of any letter and made efforts to improve their plots. The challenge lay in ensuring these improvements were not 'short-lived' and Tenants were genuinely committed to maintaining their individual plots in the longer term.

A Member enquired whether there should be a limit concerning the number of times they should receive such letters, for example 3 before the issuing of the Notice to Quit letter.

The Sub-Committee Clerk acknowledged that having checked previous records, some tenants appeared to receive Notice to Cultivate letters on an annual basis. The situation improved for a while, before it was observed their plots deteriorated and the process started all over again. Examples of this may be where the Tenant had responded and advised of a health condition (long or short-term), preventing them from attending their allotment regularly. In such circumstances, the Sub-Committee Clerk explained the Town Council wished to adopt a fair and reasonable approach, responding to the individual needs, but acknowledged the importance of continuing to monitor such situations.

At the Chair's discretion a member of the public was permitted to speak on this item, where they suggested that if someone were ill then maybe those on the allotment waiting list might be contacted to see if they may be willing to come forward to support them.

It was **AGREED** that the Sub-Committee Clerk would speak with the National Allotment Society to seek further assistance in relation to how many times the process had to be repeated in such circumstances.

A Tenant Representative referred to a tree growing in the gardens of a property in Hawthorn Road. The tree is now creating shadow over some of the allotments and is self-seeding. As ownership of the tree is unclear, the question was asked as to whether it was possible for the overhanging branches to be cut to the property boundary, and then politely offered back to the owner before finalising arrangements for disposal.

It was **AGREED** that the Sub-Committee Clerk would investigate this proposal further and report back their findings at the next meeting.

The condition of the hedge between both allotment sites was discussed. The Tenant Representatives advised those present that the hedge was currently full of brambles and bindweed. The Tenant Representatives continued by saying the hedge would benefit from hedge laying as in places it was now 8ft wide. It was suggested that to get it back in shape there would be a need to take the back and front off, trimming as hard as possible (about a foot on each side), allowing the top to grow and then continue to repeat this process. In summary a 10-year plan was needed.

The Sub-Committee Clerk **AGREED** to make further enquiries, in relation to Town Force carrying out this work.

11. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE JUDGING OF THE ALLOTMENT ANNUAL AWARDS AND TO AGREE A DATE FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING OF ALLOTMENT HOLDERS

The Sub-Committee Clerk's report was **NOTED**.

Cllrs. Batley, Dawes, Ralph and Mrs. Warr volunteered to carry out the judging of this year's allotments award between 6th-17th July 2026. The Sub-Committee Clerk agreed to circulate the judging sheets to these Members.

It was **AGREED** the Annual Meeting of Allotment Holders would be held on Monday 19th October 2026 starting at 6.30pm.

Members **AGREED** a budget for refreshments of up to £75.00 for this event.

12. TO FURTHER CONSIDER THE PURCHASE OF TWO NOTICEBOARDS FOR THE ALLOTMENT SITES, DEFERRED FROM THE MEETING OF 10th NOVEMBER 2025 – MIN. 28 REFERS

The Sub-Committee Clerk's report was **NOTED**.

After a short discussion, Members decided to purchase two new noticeboards, rather than refurbishing existing noticeboards, to ensure their robustness. Members **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** to the purchase of a new noticeboard from Company C at a cost of £160.80 (including VAT), with any additional expenditure incurred to be ratified at the next Sub-Committee Meeting.

Members also **AGREED** that sponsorship of the new noticeboards be sought by contacting local Bognor companies. Suggestions included Natures Way, B&Q, MKN Building Supplies, Covers Timbers & Builders Merchants and Screwfix.

13. TO FURTHER CONSIDER ANY AMENDMENTS TO THE BAN ON HERBICIDES AND PESTICIDES, DEFERRED FROM THE MEETING OF 10th NOVEMBER 2025 – MIN. 29 REFERS

Cllr. White requested a recorded vote for this agenda item. Cllr. White continued by saying that, as a Town Council, Bognor Regis was considered a 'leader' in its attitude towards the use of chemicals and other councils were mirroring our way of operating in this area. Cllr. White asked why the Town Council would want to change its policy now and, in doing so, take a retrograde step, with the belief that changing the policy would be detrimental to the growth of flowers and vegetables and be harmful to wildlife. Cllr. White stated they were also mindful of residential properties surrounding the allotments and the potential impact for residents if the policy were to be changed. Cllr. White said they felt Bognor Regis Town Council should continue to be groundbreaking in their approach and this should extend to what Arun District Council did within the Town. It was also considered appropriate to assess what Town Force used, as it was felt they ought to be in 'lockstep' with the approach adopted at the allotments. The Sub-Committee Clerk agreed to explore the matter further with the Town Force Manager. A Member pointed out that, in more general terms, the Town consisted of roads and pavements all maintained by West Sussex County Council. They enquired what they might be doing by way of treating any of these surfaces. They felt all parties should be 'singing from the same hymn sheet'. It was **AGREED** the Sub-Committee Clerk should contact both Arun District Council and West Sussex County Council to see what their approaches might be.

Considering most tenants, having been canvassed for their opinion prior to the meeting, were in favour of maintaining the current ban, it was decided that a recorded vote was not necessary and it was unanimously **AGREED** that the current policy, banning the use of herbicides and pesticides at the allotments, would remain unchanged.

14. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE ALLOTMENTS INFORMATION LEAFLET

The Sub-Committee Clerk's report, including the draft Allotments Information Leaflet attached as **Appendix 1**, was **NOTED**.

Members **AGREED** to the proposed changes to the Information Leaflet, highlighted in red.

15. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

The Meeting closed at 7.51pm