



BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ALLOTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE

HELD ON TUESDAY 13th NOVEMBER 2018

PRESENT: Cllr. P. Dillon (Chairman), Cllrs: Mrs. S. Daniells (until Min. 24), S. Goodheart (from Min. 20) and Mrs. J. Warr

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. G. Delury, Mrs. L. Russell, Miss. S. Trodd and Mr. J. Yeomans (Tenants Representatives)
Mrs. L. Gill (Allotments Sub-Committee Clerk)

The Meeting opened at 6.30pm

16. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman welcomed those present. Apologies had been received from Cllr. J. Cosgrove due to illness and Cllr. P. Woodall due to another meeting. No apologies were received from Cllr. Stanley. Furthermore, in line with the report given at the November Town Council meeting, Cllr. Enticott was also absent.

17. 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 a Disclosable Pecuniary or Ordinary Interest
- c) the nature of the Interest
- d) if it is an Ordinary Interest whether they intend to leave the room for the discussion and vote
- e) if it is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, and therefore must leave the room for the discussion and vote, whether they will be exercising their right to speak on this matter under Public Question Time

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 Sub-Committee Clerk at the end of the meeting to enable all declarations of Interests 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 or Ordinary Interests notifiable under the Council's Code of Conduct, not already recorded on their Register of Interests Form, within 28 days.

The Chairman 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 at this time

18. RATIFICATION OF AND WELCOME TO THE CO-OPTED MEMBERS AS RECOMMENDED BY THE AGM HELD ON 23rd OCTOBER 2018 OF MR. G. DELURY, MR. J. YEOMANS, MRS. L. RUSSELL AND MISS. S. TRODD, AS CO-OPTED NON-VOTING MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** ratification of the appointment of Mr. G. Delury, Mr. J. Yeomans, Mrs. L. Russell and Miss. S. Trodd as co-opted non-voting members of the Sub-Committee.

19. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12th JUNE 2018

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th June 2018 as an accurate record and these were signed by the Chairman.

20. CLERK'S REPORT FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

20.1 Min. 7. refers - 12th June 2018 - Reps Award including consideration of a plaque for the plotholder to place on the winning plot

Following the June meeting the Sub-Committee Clerk was advised by the Town Clerk that it would not be possible to vire money from the Maintenance Budget to the Competition Budget as all requests for virement of budgets must be made through the Policy and Resources Committee in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

For 2018 a sponsor was found and Gardner & Scardifield kindly sponsored the plaques for £60. There is no budget allowance for 2019. The Sub-Committee can recommend to the Policy and Resources Committee that as there is insufficient funds in the Competition Budget to meet all Competition expenses, it is possible the budget will be overspent. In these circumstances the excess could be taken from underspends in other budgets under the Allotments Cost Centre.

Members agreed that sponsorship for plaques for 2019 would be sought but in the event of none being found this would be the fallback position.

20.2 Min. 14 refers - 12th June 2018 - Reports from Allotment Holders including report on plot conditions

The Sub-Committee Clerk confirmed that, as thought, there is a roll of weed suppressant material in storage. It was noted that the cost of a zinc stencil to mark it had been quoted at £104.00 and whilst Members **AGREED** to proceed and for Town Force to mark the material for use on plots to suppress weeds whilst plots are vacant, it was noted that this expenditure would need to be formally ratified at the next meeting and therefore an item will be included on the next agenda.

21. RATIFICATION OF EXPENDITURE OF £30.09 FOR REFRESHMENTS AT THE AGM HELD ON 23rd OCTOBER 2018 AND ASSOCIATED AGM COSTS OF £27.00

The cost of £30.09 for refreshments and associated costs of £27.00 were **RATIFIED** by the Sub-Committee.

Sub-Committee Members **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** the approval of the cost of £57.09 to the Events, Promotion and Leisure Committee.

22. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTERS RAISED BY TENANTS AT AGM HELD ON 23rd OCTOBER 2018 THAT ARE NOT SEPARATE AGENDA ITEMS INCLUDING; UNCULTIVATED PLOTS AND REQUEST TO INCLUDE IN THE AGREEMENT A CLAUSE TO STATE PLOTS NOT CULTIVATED WITHIN 3 MONTHS WILL BE REPOSSESSED WITH HOLDING FEE AND RENTAL FORFEITED, NUISANCE CAUSED BY FOXES AND HOW THIS MAY BE DEALT WITH AND PADLOCKS BEING LEFT UNFASTENED AND REQUEST TO CHANGE THEM TO BUTTON PADS

The report from the Sub-Committee Clerk was noted.

At the last Tenants Annual General Meeting tenants raised the following issues:

22.1 Plots not cultivated by new tenants and how to address this

It was suggested that a clause be inserted into the Agreement stating plots not cultivated within 3 months will be repossessed with the holding fee and rental forfeited.

Following discussion, the Sub-Committee **AGREED** there should not be an additional clause in the contract which is already a long document. It was **AGREED** that the agreement and information leaflet should be on the website for anyone to read and that the Tenant Representatives and the Sub-Committee Clerk together would create a Gardener's Calendar of tasks expected to be done during the gardening year to be given to prospective

tenants by the Representatives when showing them round. This would help prospective tenants see what the expectation of the Council would be and how much work is required to run an allotment successfully.

In addition, it was **AGREED** that the Sub-Committee Clerk would liaise more closely with the Tenant Representatives regarding the timing of the issue of the "Notice to Cultivate" letters to seek assistance with the monitoring of progress.

22.2 Nuisance caused by foxes and how this can be dealt with

It was **AGREED** that there is little that can be done about foxes apart from advising ploholders not to encourage them by feeding them.

22.3 Padlocks being left unfastened and the request for button pads

It was requested they be changed to button pads. Town Force have now surveyed the gates and can confirm that of the four remaining gates using padlocks only one could be adapted to take a button pad. Pads cost £20.00 plus Town Force time for installing. Following discussion, it was **AGREED** not to change the lock to a button pad and to remind ploholders again to secure the gates as they go through them.

23. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSAL THAT ALLOTMENT RENTS ARE ROUNDED UP/DOWN TO THE NEAREST POUND TO ASSIST WITH BANKING

The report from the Sub-Committee Clerk was noted.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to the Events, Promotion and Leisure Committee that with immediate effect all future rents are rounded up to the nearest pound to facilitate banking.

24. RATIFICATION OF EXPENDITURE OF £56.60 ON THREE COMBINATION PADLOCKS TO REPLACE TWO BROKEN ONES AND TO HAVE ONE SPARE

The cost of £56.60 for three combination padlocks to replace two broken ones and have one spare was **RATIFIED** by the Sub-Committee.

Sub-Committee Members **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** the approval of the cost of £56.60 to the Events, Promotion and Leisure Committee.

25. TO NOTE RECENT BILLS FOR WATER SUPPLY TO ALLOTMENTS AND CONSIDERATION OF MANAGEMENT OF FUTURE WATER USAGE TO ADDRESS INCREASED COSTS

The Sub-Committee noted the report detailing the increase in usage of water on the original site as indicated by the latest water bill readings. It was accepted that it had been a hot and dry summer, and this may be an exceptional year. However, it was also agreed that there should be a contingency plan in case this summer was not an isolated case.

Following discussion, it was agreed that more needed to be done to encourage ploholders to be careful with water resources. The newsletter will include information on this. The site will be inspected to ensure there are no water leaks to account for some of this large increase in usage. It was further **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to the Events, Promotion and Leisure Committee that from October 2019 a Water Levy be included on the renewal notice. This would be worked out in proportion to plot size and would not be part of the rental for the plot. Money taken would be accounted for separately and unspent funds placed into Earmarked Reserves at the end of each financial year towards future water bill increases due to especially high usage.

26. HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT AT THE ALLOTMENTS

The Health and Safety inspection had taken place. Some minor issues had been found and the identified ploholders would receive a letter requesting they attend to the issues as soon as possible.

27. REPORT ON LETTINGS

The Sub-Committee Clerk reported that there were three vacant plots. One of these vacant plots is very large and it is feasible for it to be split into a combination of small and medium sized plots. Members noted that small plots would each attract a charge of £14.00 per annum, medium a charge of £20.00 each and if it were to remain as one large plot, it would have an annual rent of £26.20.

Following discussion, Members **AGREED** to split the plot into one medium and two small plots attracting a total rent of £48 per annum.

There are currently fifteen Bognor Regis residents on the waiting list, but some are waiting for a second or third plot near their existing one or have stated they are not yet ready to take on a plot.

Following a discussion on the initial start up cost of taking on a plot for someone on a low income it was **AGREED** that a "Gardening Tool Bank" be set up and organised by the Representatives. Anyone upgrading their tools or leaving their plot and having no need for tools, would be invited to donate them to the tool bank to enable a new tenant to have a free basic set of tools to help them get started. It was suggested that an appeal for old tools be posted in the Newsletter and on the Town Council website and Facebook page to start the tool bank and the Representatives will monitor uptake to ensure they are not inundated with donations.

28. REPORTS FROM ALLOTMENT HOLDERS INCLUDING REPORT ON PLOT CONDITIONS

The Representatives advised that there were no issues apart from those raised at the Annual General Meeting and they will continue to advise the Town Council via the Sub-Committee Clerk of any issues.

29. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to report.

The Meeting closed at 7.45pm