

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 9th MARCH 2016 IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM AT THE CIVIC CENTRE AT 6.00PM.

PRESENT: Councillors; P Barton (Chairman), P Smith (Town Mayor) T Luker, L Farmer, N Pinnegar, N Clement Co-opted members: A Burns, Mrs H Summers, C Mitchell, , I Jones.

IN ATTENDANCE Mrs D Hyam.

105. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: G Martin, S Todd.

106. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 9th SEPTEMBER 2015.

Proposed by P Smith and seconded by N Pinnegar of the Allotments Committee that the minutes of the meeting held on 9th September be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Agreed all in favour.

107. MATTERS ARISING:

a) FOOD BANK. Nothing to report.

b) PATHS AND WATER SUPPLY AT NEW ROAD ALLOTMENT. The Chairman explained that there was a provision made in the budget for alterations to the water supply at New Road. This will include laying new water pipes and these works would need to be carried out before the upgrading of the paths. In some areas where the gradient is steep the steps will have to remain but where possible shallow steps will be considered. The Chairman pointed out that there was concerned that having dip tanks would make watering difficult for older tenants as this would mean carry water to their plots. The suggestion had been made that the burying of the pipework go ahead and taps be installed with one way valves. The Chairman and the Allotments Clerk will be attending an Allotment Officers Forum on 28th April and Mr A Cavill of the National Allotment Association will be speaking on the subject. The regulations regarding water supply on allotments are detailed in the WRAS Water Legislation 1999 Water Act. This states that water tanks should be installed.

L Farmer and I Jones entered the meeting.

The Town Council had obtained quotes for alterations to the system this highlighted several options and vast differences in quotes given for the work. The Chairman added that advice would be taken following discussions at the Allotment Officer's Forum.

c) DEVELOPMENT AT THE LAND BEHIND THE FIRE STATION. The developer Colburn Developments are putting forward plans to build houses and a car park on the land behind the Fire Station in Symn Lane. A Burns pointed out that there will be a difference in the process as Stroud District Council have adopted a new Local Plan when considering the development. Mrs Hyam added that there will be a public consultation event at the Civic Centre on Friday 18th March where plans will be on show and the public can put forward views and have a say on the style of the buildings. H Summers asked if this development would affect the allotments in any way. The Chairman confirmed that the allotments will not be affected and that the Council would seek to have a hedge installed along the boundary between the development and the allotments by the developer. I Jones said that Section 106 money might be available from the application but this would go towards amenities in the town. P Smith explained that there would be discussions on this along with landscaping in regard to

CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) monies where it could go to the parish and the developer cannot dictate where the money is spent. All agreed that this would be a good opportunity to get a hedge planted and in turn this would help the security of the site. A Burns added that it would be advantageous for substantial plants of approximately 2-3 years old to be considered so the hedge is established quickly.

d) BOUNDARY WALL AT NEW ROAD NEAR PLOTS 2-8. The Chairman confirmed that the wall had been inspected and there was concern if the ivy was removed that the wall would collapse. It was agreed that the overhanging branches would be trimmed by the Buildings Manager.

e) POPLAR TREES. Continue to monitor following pollarding.

f) MAIN GATE. Mrs Hyam confirmed that the gate had been replaced and the Chairman added that the replacement was now of an acceptable standard.

g) SYCAMORE TREE ON PLOT 1 NEW ROAD ALLOTMENTS. Mrs Hyam reported that she has requested quotes for the removal of the tree and it will be put forward for approval at the next Town Council Meeting.

h) PATH TO MAIN GATE NEW ROAD ALLOTMENTS. The Chairman explained that the quotes put forward for next year's budget included a handrail to run down the side of the path to the gate. H Summers said that this would not solve the problem of the path being slippery and A Burns added that it would not be practical having a handrail as most tenants are carrying equipment or plants to their plots. The Chairman concluded that this would need to be looked at again to investigate an alternative solution.

i) NOTICE BOARD NEW ROAD ALLOTMENTS. Mrs Hyam to look at options for a noticeboard at the site. Mr Jones said that the Knapp Road Allotments Association had a noticeboard donated by the Co-op some years ago and it didn't need replacing.

108. PLOT INSPECTIONS. Mrs Hyam confirmed that the plot inspection forms had been sent to all tenants as inspections are due to start this month. H Summers asked if letters would only be sent to tenants who need to improve their plots. Mrs Hyam said that this would be the case. L Farmer asked if tenants that are doing well could receive a letter to praise them for keeping their plots in good order. Mrs Hyam said that this might be possible and that the committee would have a better idea following the first inspection. Further discussion at the next Allotment Committee Meeting.

109. ALLOTMENT RENTS. Mrs Hyam confirmed that the request for payment has been sent to all tenants. This the scheduled six month payment until October 2016 and the rents will be collected annually from October in future. The Tenants were also given notice that the rents would increase in 2017 to £30 p.a for a full plot and £15 p.a for a half plot.

110. WAITING LIST. Mrs Hyam confirmed that there was one name on the list for Knapp Road and two out of the area on the list for New Road. Usually if there is a number of plots available the Council advertise for new tenants. P Smith asked how a new tenant progresses from a half plot to a full one Mrs Hyam explained that if all was satisfactory the tenant would be offered a vacant plot as near to the existing one as possible. No tenant would be asked to vacate their allotment to house another tenant.

112. KNAPP ROAD ALLOTMENT REPORT.

a) I Jones reported that the Knapp Road Allotment Association had not met yet this year C Mitchell added that he had heard the Chairman of the Knapp Road Mr Didcott had moved out of Wotton but this was unconfirmed.

b) At the next Knapp Road Allotments Committee meeting they will discuss the improvements planned to the top path. The work may not entail as much work as first thought as the tenant of plot 6 has made an allowance to widen the path and it is now more accessible.

c) I Jones raised a concern regarding a quantity of metal rubbish by the gate near plot 23. The Chairman suggested that the Buildings Manager arrange for the rubbish to be removed P Smith agreed this should be cleared.

113. NEW ROAD ALLOTMENT REPORT.

a) The Chairman asked if there had been any progress with forming an allotment association at New Road. A Burns said unfortunately there had been no interest shown by fellow tenants. The Chairman thanked A Burns for his support and representing New Road Allotments.

b) A Burns circulated photos of plot 12 where a large quantity of wood has been put on the plot. He also added that the weed proof membrane covering the plot had been in situ for about a year and he had not seen much cultivation on the plot. Mrs Hyam to contact the tenant to make enquiries.

c) It had been noticed by Mrs Summers that some galvanised metal sheeting was left near to plot 13. Mrs Hyam to make enquiries.

114. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS.

a) **BEST KEPT ALLOTMENT COMPETITION.** To discuss further awards and judging after comments suggestions were made.

b) **REPORT FROM ALLOTMENT FORUM MEETING.**

c) **REPORT FOLLOWING PLOT INSPECTIONS.**

115. DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS. Wednesday 25th May 2016, Wednesday 13th July 2016, Wednesday 14th September 2016.

116. This completed the business of the Allotments Committee.

Signed.....Chair of the Allotments Committee

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