



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 14th MARCH 2018 IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM AT THE CIVIC CENTRE AT 7.00PM.

PRESENT: Cllr P Barton (Chairman), Cllr P Smith (Mayor), Cllr T Luker.

Co-opted members: Mrs H Summers, Mr A Burns, Mr I Jones.

IN ATTENDANCE Administrator Mrs D Hyam.

188. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Cllr R Claydon (Deputy Mayor), Cllr N Pinnegar, Cllr L Farmer.

189. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS. None expressed by members.

190. PUBLIC FORUM. None present.

191. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 10th January 2018. Proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr T Luker that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2018 to be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. All in favour.

192. NEW PATH AND GATE AT NEW ROAD ALLOTMENTS. The Chairman confirmed that the works to improve the path and the installation of the new gate at the main entrance had been completed, and the new noticeboard had been installed. The new water supply had been fitted and was awaiting connection to the existing system on the allotment site. The contractor will be returning to repair a bulged pipe in the new stand pipe housing. The pipe froze in the recent cold weather as a result of water supply being left on. It was also noted that plot 42 at New Road had been strimmed and covered with weed proof membrane.

Mr I Jones entered the meeting

193. KNAPP ROAD STRIMMING AND CLEARING. Plots 22A and 21B have been strimmed and covered with weed proof membrane. The area inside the main gate near plot 23 has been cleared of rubbish and items of fly tipping by hiring a skip. Other rubbish collected from New Road Allotments including an old rotivator were also disposed of in the skip at Knapp Road allotments. The fence boundary around plot 23 will be treated with weed killer at a later date to kill brambles and some fence posts will be replaced.

194. BEST KEPT ALLOTMENT COMPETITION. It was agreed by the committee to hold the competition/judging in June as in previous years. It was suggested that Mrs Jane Whittingstall could be approached to be a possible judge or to ask Mr David Wilson and Mr Jim Morrow from the Garden Club.

195. ALLOTMENT NEWSLETTER. The first edition of the newsletter was issued at the end of January. Mrs Hyam reported that she had received compliments from some of the allotment tenants. The Chairman thanked Mrs Hyam for the work that had been put into producing the "Allotment News". Future items for the next publication will include the benefits of composting.

196. PLOT 15 NEW ROAD MEMORY GROUP. The Chairman and Mrs Hyam met with the representatives of the Memory Group and they would like to take on the plot. It was proposed by

Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr T Luker that the memory group be allowed to take on the plot. All agreed.

197. HOLDING DEPOSITS FOR NEW TENANTS. It was noted that the Holding Deposit will be introduced shortly. This will mean that any new tenants will have to pay a £50 holding deposit for their plot. Photographs will be taken prior to the commencement of the tenancy and the prospective tenant will sign an agreement to confirm that they are a true record of the plot's condition. When the tenant gives up the plot, photos will be taken again to compare. If all is in order the deposit will be returned, but if any improvements or disposal of rubbish is needed the cost will be taken from the deposit and the remainder will be returned, if any.

198. FOOD BANK. It was noted that enquiries have been made to investigate the possibility of surplus produce being collected from the allotments for the Food Bank. There was an arrangement made 2 years ago with a volunteer and she will be contacted again to ask if this can be replicated for this year. At present tenants leave surplus produce, plants etc by the notice board at Knapp Road so other tenants can help themselves. A similar system could be adopted at New Road now that the new noticeboard has been installed.

199. VACANT PLOTS. There are 4 full plots and 1 half plot at New Road Allotments and 2 full plots at Knapp Road. It was noted that this may increase following plot inspections that are due to take place soon.

200. REPORT FROM KNAPP ROAD REPRESENTATIVE.

a) It was requested that the water supply be turned on at the being of April and a meter reading could be taken when the system is switched on and retaken a day later to check for leaks. It was noted that the hedge needs to be trimmed to gain easier access to the stopcock and water meter.

b) Concern was raised regarding the mound next to plot 35. It was suggested that the mound be spread out around the area recently cleared to level it off, but a digger may be needed to achieve this.

c) It was requested that a hand rail be installed next to the middle steps as they are steep and several of the tenants who are elderly have plots in this area.

d) Concern was raised following a planning application to build houses on land near Fountain Crescent. It was confirmed that Knapp Field belonged to the Town Council and was not included in this application.

201. REPORT FROM NEW ROAD REPRESENTATIVES.

a) It had been noticed that some activity had taken place in the field below the allotments near plots 30 (the Orchard) and plot 29. As there is a badger set nearby there is concern that the landowner has interfered with the set. Mrs Hyam to investigate reporting procedure as they are protected by law.

b) It was reported that a simple ladder made of 2x2 batten has appeared at the boundary of plot 30 and the field next to the Fire Station. Concern was raised that this may be put in situ for unauthorised people to access the allotments, or put there in readiness to take produce from the site. Mrs Hyam to ask if this can be removed as soon as possible.

c) Some tenants have recently been having bonfires to burn garden waste. However, it has been noticed that on occasions there has been a smell of burnt plastic. Some bonfires have been lit while other tenants are tending their plots and smoke has been drifting across the site resulting in this being a nuisance. It was noted that tenants should be encouraged to compost as much garden waste as possible on their plots. More care should be taken when lighting bonfires and no other materials should be brought onto the site for burning. Composting and bonfires to be included in the next newsletter.

202. ALLOTMENT TENANTS MEETING. The next allotment tenants meeting is planned to be held on 11th June 2018 in the Coombe Suite at the Civic Centre at 7.00pm.

203. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING. To discuss budget items to be put forward for consideration to the Town Council for next year's budget.

204. FUTURE MEETINGS. 4th July and 19th September 2018.

Signed.....Chair of the Allotments Committee

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