

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

01442 800146
enquiries@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk

www.berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk

2nd Floor
Civic Centre
161 High Street
Berkhamsted
Hertfordshire
HP4 3HD

10 October 2014

There will be a meeting of the **Allotment Management Team** on Thursday **16 October 2014** at **10.30am** in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted.

Councillors: A Armytage Chair
 E Collins
 J Laws

Allotment Reps: John Eaton, Sunnyside
 John Fisher, Butts Meadow
 Diana Reay, Dellfield
 Lin Philips, Sunnyside
 Geoffrey Wallington, Butts Meadow
 Keely Charlick, Sunnyside Rural Trust

Town Council: John Bushby, Town Warden


Gary Cox
Town Clerk

THE PUBLIC ARE INVITED TO ATTEND ALL MEETINGS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

AGENDA

OPENING MATTERS

AMT 36/14 Apologies for Absence

To receive **any apologies for absence**.

Minutes of Last Meeting

AMT 37/14 To approve the **minutes of the last meeting** held on 24 April 2014. (Minutes attached)

AMT 38/14 To invite any public participation.

FINANCE MATTERS

Income and Expenditure Report

AMT 39/14 To consider the **allotment income and expenditure and reserves** for 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014 and the projected outcome at 31 March 2015. (Paper attached)

AMT 40/14 Allotment Budget 2015/16

To consider an **early draft allotment budget for 2015/16** and identify any **new or amended expenditure proposals or works** to be included in that budget. (Draft attached)

ALLOTMENT MATTERS

AMT 41/14 School visit to Dellfield

To note that Year 1 children (age 5-6) from **Westfield School will be visiting Dellfield Allotments**, as part of a healthy eating and growing vegetables project.

AMT 42/14 Allotment Management System

To note that the **new Allotment Management system has been installed**, all tenant and waiting list details entered and **used to issue invoices for 2014/15**; and to discuss **arrangements needed to ensure records are kept up-to date**.

AMT 43/14 Access to Butts Meadow Allotments

To discuss arrangements for **access to Butts Meadow Allotments**.

AMT 44/14 Allotment Reports

To consider **allotment and plot inspection reports** on:

- (i) Dellfield
- (ii) Sunnyside Old
- (iii) Sunnyside New
- (iv) Butts Meadow
- (v) Sunnyside Rural Trust

Allotment Risk Management

AMT 45/14 To consider **any allotment risks** and agree required mitigating actions.

Date of Next Meeting

AMT 46/14 To note the date of the **next AMT meeting** is arranged for 10.30am on Thursday 29 January 2015; and to **propose any specific agenda items** for that meeting.

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the

ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted on

Thursday 17 July 2014 at 10.30 am

PRESENT:

Councillors: J Laws Chair
E Collins

Allotment
Representatives: John Eaton, Sunnyside
Jenny Sippings, Sunnyside
Diana Reay, Dellfield

Town Council: John Bushby, Town Warden

ALSO PRESENT: 1 member of the public.

OFFICER: Gary Cox - Town Clerk

Before the start of the meeting, Committee members offered condolences to Mrs Earl, on being advised that former Councillor Victor Earl passed away on 16 July 2014.

AMT 24/14 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Armytage, John Fisher, Geoffrey Wallington, Lin Philips and Keely Charlick

AMT 25/14 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 24 April were agreed.

AMT 26/14 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

AMT 27/14 Income and Expenditure Reports

The Committee noted the budget outturn for 2013/14, with a surplus of £1,599 being added to the allotment reserve, which currently stood at £8,066; and the budget variance for 2014/15 as at 31 June 2014.

AMT 28/14 Allotment Rent and Water Rates 2014/15

Following discussion members agreed to a proposal not to increase land and water rent for 2014/15 and would propose to Finance and Policy Committee that they remain at:

- Land rent: £0.098845 per square metre (equivalent to £2.50 per pole)
- Water rent: £0.059307 per square metre (equivalent to £1.50 per pole)

The Committee noted that allotment fees were due on 29 September and that invoices would be sent out to tenants from mid-September.

Allotment representatives agreed that inspections and notification on any tenant evictions should be completed and sent to the Town Clerk in August, in advance of invoices being sent out. **Action: Allotment Representatives**

ALLOTMENT MATTERS

AMT 29/14 Allotment Reports

Dellfield

It was agreed that Water Tank 3 should be painted with fluorescent paint to make it highly visible to a regular tractor driver. **Action: Town Warden**

Following discussion, it was agreed that the warning letter to tenants concerning non-cultivation of their allotment should ask that they keep their allotment in a 'state of good cultivation for the remainder of the gardening year'. **Action: Town Clerk**

A tenant had expressed an interest in keeping bees on the site and had discussed proposals with the Clerk and Allotment representative. The allotment holder had decided not to keep bees on the site at this time.

Sunnyside Old and New

It was agreed to clarify in the water supply application form that only hoses (and not sprinklers) can be used. **Action: Town Clerk**

The Committee noted that work to merge the two Sunnyside Rural Trust leases would be completed by September 2014.

Butts Meadow

The report was noted. It was confirmed that the non-cultivation warning letter had been sent.

In considering comments on water usage on the site, the Committee agreed that letters accompanying allotment invoices would advise tenants that 'the Town Council is striving to keep allotment water rates as low as possible and those with hose licences are asked to water plots sensibly and not excessively.'

The Clerk would also provide a link to the Sunnyside website on watering good practice. **Action: Town Clerk**

Sunnyside Rural Trust

There was nothing to report.

AMT 30/14 Allotment Risk Management

The Town Warden reported on potential allotment risks, including an assessment of risks to children on allotment gardens.

The main risk was to children falling into uncovered water tanks. The taller, deeper tanks already had covers in place, but there was a risk children might fall into the lower-level tanks.

It was agreed to install covers to the lower-level tanks to mitigate this risk.

Action: Town Clerk and Town Warden

The Warden reported that there were increasing numbers of rabbits causing damage on Sunnyside New Allotments.

The Clerk advised that Mr Stout, a tenant on SSN, had asked for permission to shoot rabbits and pigeons on the allotment. Mr Stout was a member of The British Association for Shooting and Conservation; had public liability insurance and had agreed to comply with health and safety requirements required to ensure the safety of allotment holders and the public at all times.

The Committee agreed that Mr Stout be given permission to shoot rabbits and pigeons on SSN and to be asked to consider a similar approach to controlling the number of rabbits on SSO. **Action: Town Clerk**

Councillor E Collins disagreed with this approach and was of the view that wild animals on the allotment should not be culled.

AMT 31/14 Allotment Maintenance Programme

The Committee agreed to explore the potential, scope and costs for work to improve the entrance to Butts Meadow to allow vehicle access. That work would be subject to the impact on the public footpath at the entrance. **Action: Town Clerk**

The Committee noted outstanding work on removal of trees lining the railway line at SSN. This work was dependant on the electricity supply to the railway line being switched off. As yet Network Rail has not confirmed if or when the supply will be switched off for proposed line maintenance.

It was agreed to contact Network Rail for advice on the conditions under which they remove or trim trees on the railway embankment. **Action: Town Clerk**

AMT 32/14 Butts Meadow Centenary Celebrations

The Committee noted initial suggestions for Centenary celebrations, including planting a tree and a communal meal using produce from the site.

One tenant had asked if there was a budget available to pay for an 'event'.

The Committee agreed as for other allotment sites, events should, be paid for by tenants. It was suggested that Butts Meadow Allotmenters, as with all groups in the town, could apply to the Town Council for a small grant towards costs of an event.

Allotment Administration

AMT 33/14 The Committee noted an update on improvements to allotment administration:

- Revised warning and eviction process was in place
- Gate and water keys could be sold rather than returnable with refund. The Committee agreed that approach should be adopted from now on
- Work to amalgamate all forms into one composite form was underway, to be followed by a re-drafting and simplification of allotment rules

The Committee agreed that proposals for the purchase of a new Allotment Management System should be put to the next Finance and Policy Committee meeting. Indicative Costs are £4,200 in Year 1 and £445 in Year 2 onwards

The Committee considered a proposal to move away from accepting cash as payment of allotment rent and rates, as this was expensive to administer and to consider installation of a chip and pin card machine as an alternative.

Following discussion, the Committee considered costs and ongoing charges to be too high. Instead, the Committee proposed that the Town Council consider accepting a cheque or on-line payment rather than cash as methods of payment. This proposal would be put to the Finance and Policy Committee.

Action: Town Clerk

Date of Next Meeting

AMT 34/14 The Committee noted the date of the next meeting is arranged for 10.30am on Thursday 16 October 2014.

AMT 35/15 Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 11.45am.

AMT 39/14 / AMT 40/14

14/15 061014 v1	2013-14 ACTUAL OUTTURN	2014-15 BUDGET	2014-15 at 300914	2014-15 FORECAST OUTTURN	2015-16 PROPOSED BUDGET	NOTES
INCOME						
Allotment	£8,589	£8,200	£368	£8,400	£8,200	
600/5 Allotment Land Rent	£6,779	£6,600	£194	£6,600	£6,600	
610 Water Rates Income	£1,634	£1,600	£74	£1,600	£1,600	
615/6 Key Purchases	£176	£nil	£100	£nil	£nil	
EXPENDITURE						
Allotments	£6,895	£8,155	£2,087	£6,798	£6,855	
7300 Improvements	£1,858	£2,500	£281	£1,300	£2,000	
7303 Water supply charges	£1,332	£1,400	£533	£1,400	£1,400	
7304 General expenses	£706	£1,200	£65	£500	£750	
7306 Annual Maintenance costs	£2,148	£2,255	£1,065	£2,255	£2,255	
7308 Legal fees	£718	£800	nil	£800	nil	
7309 Allotment software support	£143	£nil	£143	£543	£450	
Surplus/(Deficit)	£1,730	£45		£1,602	£1,345	
RESERVES						
1380 Allotment Reserve Fund	£8,060			£9,662		

Date: 10/10/2014
Time: 09:56:43

Berkhamsted Town Council

Page: 1

AMT 39114

1.Nominal Activity - Excluding No Transactions

Date From: 01/04/2014
Date To: 30/09/2014

N/C From:
N/C To: 99999999

Transaction From: 1
Transaction To: 99,999,999

N/C: 7300 Name: Allotment Improvements Account Balance: 280.94 DR

No	Type	Date	Account	Ref	Details	Dept	T/C	Value	Debit	Credit	V	B
21929	PI	13/09/2014	MBMCLEA	5133	13 supported water tank	0	T0	280.94	280.94		N	-
Totals:									280.94			
History Balance:									280.94			

N/C: 7303 Name: Allotment Water Supply Charges Account Balance: 532.92 DR

No	Type	Date	Account	Ref	Details	Dept	T/C	Value	Debit	Credit	V	B
21798	PI	18/07/2014	TVW01	1129796-0	Dellfield Water Supply Jan to	0	T0	94.19	94.19		N	-
21819	PI	26/07/2014	TVW01	3017475-9	Sunnyside New - Water	0	T0	144.23	144.23		N	-
21820	PI	26/07/2014	TVW01	1133344-0	Sunnyside Old - Water charges	0	T0	189.24	189.24		N	-
21829	PI	02/08/2014	TVW01	1130612-2	Water useage Butts Meadow	0	T0	105.26	105.26		N	-
Totals:									532.92			
History Balance:									532.92			

N/C: 7304 Name: Allotment General Expenses Account Balance: 65.43 DR

No	Type	Date	Account	Ref	Details	Dept	T/C	Value	Debit	Credit	V	B
21245	PI	08/04/2014	TRDPC01	1404-04	To repair of tap at Dellfield	0	T0	60.00	60.00		R	-
21569	CP	13/05/2014	1200	PC09/14	Repair to tap at Dellfield	0	T1	5.43	5.43		R	R
Totals:									65.43			
History Balance:									65.43			

N/C: 7306 Name: Allotment Contracted Annual Maintenance Account Balance: 1,065.00 DR

No	Type	Date	Account	Ref	Details	Dept	T/C	Value	Debit	Credit	V	B
21362	PI	30/04/2014	FCS01	28129	Grass cutting etc. Allotments	0	T1	213.00	213.00		R	-
21562	PI	30/05/2014	FCS01	28316	Grass cutting etc. Allotments	0	T1	213.00	213.00		R	-
21735	PI	30/06/2014	FCS01	28550	Grass cutting Allotments June	0	T1	213.00	213.00		R	-
21828	PI	31/07/2014	FCS01	28796	Grass cutting Allotments July	0	T1	213.00	213.00		N	-
21911	PI	29/08/2014	FCS01	29051	Grass cutting Allotments	0	T1	213.00	213.00		N	-
Totals:									1,065.00			
History Balance:									1,065.00			

N/C: 7309 Name: Allotment Software Account Balance: 142.50 DR

No	Type	Date	Account	Ref	Details	Dept	T/C	Value	Debit	Credit	V	B
21246	PI	01/04/2014	SCRIBEO1	1406/63/21	Renewal of Annual Software	0	T1	142.50	142.50		R	-
Totals:									142.50			
History Balance:									142.50			

ALLOTMENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT TO AMT October 2014

Name of Site Representative	<i>John Fisher</i>
Site(s) covered by this report	<i>Butts Meadow</i>
Date of AMT meeting	<i>16/10/2014</i>

ALLOTMENT VACANCIES & WAITING LIST APPLICATIONS

NB: entries are for changes since date of last meeting	Total Nr allotment plots	Vacant Plots	Nr of waiting list applicants
B/F total from last meeting date	66	3	10
Add plots created by subdivision	0		
Add Nr plots vacated/evicted		1	
Add Nr new waiting list applicants			9
Deduct plots 'lost' by amalgamation	0		
Deduct Nr plots let to new tenants		1	0
Deduct Nr of withdrawn applications			1
Total C/F to next meeting	66	3	18

SITE INSPECTIONS UNDERTAKEN (PLEASE STATE PLOT REFERENCES)

No current issues until rents are renewed (lack of cultivation on some plots may indicate an intention to relinquish the plot).

LETTERS TO BE WRITTEN TO TENANTS

	Plot reference(s)
Overgrown warning letters	<i>None pending rent renewal</i>
Letters of eviction due to non-cultivation (based upon the spread sheet showing list of tenants sent allotment warning letters)	<i>None pending rent renewal</i>

OTHER ISSUES:

1. Restriction of access to the allotments following change of lock by Dacorum 2. Centenary: cancelled planned event. Recommend manufacture of 'Centenary Notice Board' to be unveiled by Mayor 3. Need a ruling on application from MP Andreoni - is she entitled to more plots? 4. Length of waiting list given that other sites have none.