

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the

ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted on

Thursday 16 October 2014 at 10.30 am

PRESENT:

Councillors: A Armytage Chair
J Laws

Allotment
Representatives: John Eaton, Sunnyside
Jenny Sippings, Sunnyside
Diana Reay, Dellfield
John Fisher, Butts Meadow
Geoffrey Wallington, Butts Meadow
Keely Charlick, Sunnyside Rural Trust

OFFICER: Gary Cox - Town Clerk

ALSO PRESENT: 1 member of the public.

OPENING MATTERS

AMT 36/14 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor E Collins, John Bushby and Lin Philips.

AMT 37/14 Minutes of the Last Meeting

One change was agreed to the minutes of the last meeting held on 17 July 2014 regarding item 31/14 to ...'outstanding work on removal of trees lining the railway line at SSO and SNN.'

Subject to that change, the minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

The Management Team noted that all actions from the last meeting had been completed and the Town Clerk was asked to:

- check the link from the Town Council website to watering good practice guidance on the Sunnyside Allotment Society website;
- confirm that Mr Stout would consider shooting pigeons as well as rabbits on SSO, as was taking place on SSN;

- consider a further option to improve vehicle access to Butts Meadow Allotment; and
- explore further options for trees abutting the railway line at SSO and SSN to be felled. **Action: Town Clerk**

AMT 38/14 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

AMT 39/14 Income and Expenditure Reports

The Management Team considered the income and expenditure report at 30 September 2014; noted that the projected outturn at 2014-15 year end was for a surplus of £1,602 and requested the report be developed to include more information on budget/expenditure variances. **Action: Town Clerk**

AMT 40/14 Allotment Budget 2015/16

The Management Team considered first draft budget proposals for 2015/16.

It was noted that income proposals were based on an assumption that there would be no change to land rent and water rates when set next year, but if this position were to change, then a revised budget would be presented to the Management Team at that time.

The Management Team requested that the expenditure proposals should include provision for legal costs and suggested the following improvement work for 2015/16 be costed and included in the budget proposals:

- Improvements/strengthening the Butts Meadow roadway
- To consider with the SS representative the scope and cost for improved rabbit fencing, including around some individual plots. **Action Town Clerk/John Eaton**

ALLOTMENT MATTERS

AMT 41/14 School Visit to Dellfield Allotments

The Management Team noted that Year 1 children from Westfield School had visited Dellfield Allotment the previous day as part of their 'healthy eating project'.

AMT 42/14 Allotment Management System

The Town Clerk reported that the new allotment management system had been installed. After considerable hard work by the Allotment Officer, the system contained up-to-date tenant details and tenancy invoices for 2014/15 had been sent out.

The Management Team noted that all but a few invoice payments had been by cheque or on-line, rather than by cash

Allotment Representatives agreed that, to ensure tenant records were accurately maintained:

- tenants who wished to relinquish plots should be encouraged to complete a termination form or send an email confirming they are relinquishing their tenancy. The termination form would be made available on line. **Action: Town Clerk**
- new tenants should not be allowed to tend their new plot until a signed tenancy agreement form and rental payment had been received by the Town Council to allow for details to be entered onto the new system.

Following discussion, the Management Team proposed that the Allotment Reserve fund should pay for an enhancement to the new Allotment Management System so that by Allotment Representatives could view-only access though secure web-access. **Action: Town Clerk**

AMT 43/14 Access to Butts Meadow Allotments

The Management Team noted that the Borough Council had changed vehicle access arrangements to Butts Meadow.

The Borough Council has installed a new lock to the access gate, necessary as it is no longer possible for insurance and liability reasons to allow uncontrolled vehicle access over council land, especially when crossing pathways and near playgrounds.

Anyone needing access into Butts Meadow and to the Allotments will need to produce public liability insurance to gain a licence and provide the dates required for the gate to be opened, limited to between 9am and 2pm Monday to Friday.

Those requiring an access licence to Butts Meadow Allotments should send a scan or copy of their public liability or vehicle insurance to the Town Clerk to forward to the Borough and for a licence to be issued. **Action: John Fisher/Town Clerk**

John Fisher requested that the Town Council advertise new access arrangements on the Butts Meadow Allotment Notice Board. **Action: Town Clerk**

AMT 44/14 Allotment Reports

Allotment Reports are attached. The following issues were discussed.

Dellfield

There were no issues to raise.

Sunnyside Old and New

The revised, combined lease for Sunnyside Rural Trust was still outstanding. The Town Clerk was asked to produce a draft lease for consideration by the site representative and SSRT. **Action: Town Clerk**

Investigations should be made to ensure the Town Council was receiving the most competitive water rate charges. **Action: Town Clerk**

Wood chippings were being dumped at SS Allotments. Whilst this generally helped maintain driveways the wood chippings had become excessive on SSN. The Management Team agreed that the Town Council would install a notice that anyone wishing to spread chippings on either Sunnyside site should contact the Town Council in the first instance. **Action: Town Clerk**

There were two potential plots on SSN that were difficult to let and might be suitable for Sunnyside Rural Trust. John Eaton and Keely Charlick would consider options for those plots. **Action: John Eaton/ Keely Charlick**

There was confusion over ownership of one plot on Sunnyside New close to Sunnyside Rural Trust rented land. John Eaton and Keely Charlick would review the plot and advise the Town Council on the status of this plot. **Action: John Eaton/ Keely Charlick**

Butts Meadow

The Management Team agreed to a proposal from John Fisher that a Centenary Noticeboard be purchased for Butts Meadow to be unveiled by The Mayor, to commemorate the centenary of BM Allotments. **Action: John Fisher/Town Clerk**

Sunnyside Rural Trust

There was nothing to report.

AMT 45/14 Allotment Risk Management

The latest assessment by the Town Warden had not identified any potential allotment risks. The Management Team noted that risks to children caused by low-level water tanks at Dellfield had been addressed.

AMT 46/14 Date of Next Meeting

The Management Team noted that the date of the next meeting is arranged for 10.30am on Thursday 129 January 2015.

AMT 47/14 Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 12.05pm.

AMT 14/14 (iv)

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.

ALLOTMENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT TO AMT October 2014

Name of Site Representative	<i>John Eaton</i>
Site(s) covered by this report	<i>SSO SSN</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	<i>193</i>	<i>9.75</i>	<i>8</i>
Add plots created by subdivision	<i>0</i>		
Add Nr plots vacated/evicted		<i>4.75</i>	
Add Nr new waiting list applicants			<i>x</i>
Deduct plots 'lost' by amalgamation			
Deduct Nr plots let to new tenants		<i>7.25</i>	<i>x</i>
Deduct Nr of withdrawn applications			
Total C/F to next meeting	<i>193</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>

SITE INSPECTIONS UNDERTAKEN (PLEASE STATE PLOT REFERENCES)

All inspected by 09/09/14

LETTERS TO BE WRITTEN TO TENANTS

	Plot reference(s)
Overgrown warning letters	<i>SSO A7 SSN N4 N7B N41</i>
Letters of eviction due to non-cultivation (based upon the spread sheet showing list of tenants sent allotment warning letters)	

OTHER ISSUES:

SRT Lease, Trees, BTC water terms, woodchip dumping notices, N68,69 SRT, SSN plot ??,25 near SRT

ALLOTMENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT TO AMT October 2014

Name of Site Representative	Diana Reay
Site(s) covered by this report	Dellfield
Date of AMT meeting	16/10/2014

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	6
Add plots created by subdivision	0		
Add Nr plots vacated/evicted		2	
Add Nr new waiting list applicants			
Deduct plots 'lost' by amalgamation	0		
Deduct Nr plots let to new tenants			2
Deduct Nr of withdrawn applications			1
Total C/F to next meeting		5	4

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	none
Letters of eviction due to non-cultivation (based upon the spread sheet showing list of tenants sent allotment warning letters)	none

OTHER ISSUES: