

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the

ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted on

Thursday 15 October 2015 at 10.30 am

PRESENT:

Councillors: A Armytage Chair
F Earl
B Newton

Allotment
Representatives: John Eaton, Sunnyside
Jon Fisher, Butts Meadow
Jenny Sippings, Sunnyside
Keeley Charlick, Sunnyside Rural Trust

Town Council: Christine Jerram, Finance and Allotments Officer

OFFICER: Karen Jones - Town Clerk

ALSO PRESENT: 1 member of the public

OPENING MATTERS

AMT 36/15 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from John Bushby. Jenny Sippings was substituting for Lin Phillips for this meeting.

The Town Clerk reported that Geoffrey Wallington had recently resigned as the Deputy Allotment representative for Butts Meadow. She had written to Geoff thanking him for his hard work and contribution to AMT. It was agreed that formal thanks to Geoff to be recorded in the minutes. **Action: Town Clerk**

AMT 37/15 Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 16 July 2015 were agreed after item AMT 30/15 was amended to read as 'Following discussion members agreed to recommend not to increase allotment rents and water rates for 2015/16'.

AMT 38/15

Chairman's Communications

The Town Clerk reported that she had received an email reporting incidences of dog fouling on Sunnyside North and during discussion it was suggested that the notices refer to a penalty for not clearing dog waste and that consideration be given to putting additional dog bins on the site if there is no improvement.

John Fisher reported that a tenant who already had the equivalent of a full plot had submitted a request for an additional plot at Butts Meadow. He explained that there were already 18 people on the waiting list. Following a discussion it was agreed that the Town Clerk writes to the tenant recommending that in accordance with normal procedures if she requires another plot she should apply to another site. **Action: Town Clerk**

FINANCE MATTERS

AMT 40/15

Income and Expenditure Report

The Management Team noted the income and expenditure report for the period 1 July 2015 to 30 September 2015. This included income of £2,412 for allotment land rent, allotment water rates income of £819, water and key gates sales of £140 and budgeted expenditure of £3,375. The Finance Officer explained that the income presented to the meeting will be updated because not there was more processing to be completed and still some rent outstanding.

During a discussion on monitoring online payments it was suggested that consideration be given to exploring the possibility of online banking. **Action: Town Clerk**

AMT 41/15

Allotment Management System

It was noted that following a change of programmers some of the issues regarding the reports had been resolved. A discussion took place on the outstanding invoices for training and downloading data. It was suggested that consideration be given to making a contribution towards the invoice for downloading the data and that payment should not be made for the training invoice.

AMT 39/15

Public Participation

Mr Dyer a local resident and allotment holder observed that in the Income and Expenditure account presented to the Finance & Policy Committee the allotment reserve figure was red and he suggested that this may be an expenditure figure. This was noted.

Mr Dyer asked if Coopers had invoiced Berkhamsted Town Council for the hedge cutting in Ivy House land because the work had not

been completed and he asked if payment had been made. **Action: Town Clerk.**

Mr Dyer observed that in Sunnyside North when clearing plot SSN 10 he disposed of least a dozen bags of dog mess which had been thrown onto the plot. In his experience this practise was still occurring. This was noted.

ALLOTMENT MATTERS

AMT 42/15

Allotment Reports

(i) Dellfield

No representative present to give a report.

(ii) Sunnyside Old

(iii) Sunnyside New

There were no reports available because no inspections had taken place since July.

There was evidence that badgers were taking sweetcorn.

An invitation had been extended for a quotation to clear the undergrowth in the hazel coppice and to cut the tree roots at the western end in order for a shed to be added to the site, a manure heap and for the car parking area to be extended. **Action: Town Clerk to obtain quotations.**

(iv) Butts Meadow

The occupied and vacant plots at Butts Meadow were reported to be generally in order. A request was made to issue two warning letters. **Action: Town Clerk**

Concern was expressed about the condition of the allotment let to Victoria First School which appeared to be in need of work. It was suggested that an approach be made to the school to try to establish what their plans are and the name of the teacher who will be taking charge of the project. **Action: Town Clerk.** (Clerk's note: The weekend after the meeting the allotment rep reported that the plot had been tidied and all of the rubbish had been cut down).

Reports had been received of rabbits multiplying near the allotments and the playing fields although there was no evidence of them destroying the crops. This was noted.

- (v) **Sunnyside Rural Trust**
There was nothing to report.

AMT 43/15 Allotment Risk Management

The repairs to the gates at Sunnyside Old Grantham Mew entrance were commended and the Town Warden had reported that the gate entrance to Sunnyside Old on Ivy House Lane has a new replacement gate post and fittings.

There were no allotment risks and mitigating actions required to report.

AMT 44/15 Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed to recommend to Full Council that the date of the next meeting be changed to Monday 8 February 2016 at 9.00 am.

AMT 45/15 Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 11.31am.