

## **BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Meeting of the

### **ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted on

**Thursday 23 April 2015 at 10.30 am**

#### **PRESENT:**

Councillors: A Armytage Chair  
E Collins

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

Town Council: John Bushby, Town Warden

**OFFICER:** Gary Cox - Town Clerk

**ALSO PRESENT:** 1 member of the public

#### **OPENING MATTERS**

##### **AMT 13/15 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Laws, Lin Philips and Jenny Sippings.

##### **AMT 14/15 Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 29 January 2015 were agreed.

Progress on actions from that meeting were noted as follows.

##### ***Tenancy database***

i The tenancy database could not easily be transported to other application such as Excel. This was being raised with the supplier.

##### ***Allotment Forms On-Line***

ii The allotment tenancy and all other forms are now available on-line from the Town Council website at:  
<http://www.berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk/allotments.html>.

- iii **Wood Chippings at Sunnyside**  
Wood chippings over-piled onto the car park had been spread across the car park area.
- iv **Sunnyside Plots**  
John Eaton and Keely Charlick had resolved questions over two potential plots and ownership of one plot on Sunnyside New.
- v **Combination lock at SSN vehicle gate**  
The Town Warden had installed a combination lock on the vehicle gate at Sunnyside New.
- vi **Combination lock at Dellfield**  
It was agreed that a combination lock at the Billet Lane Gate would not be re-installed.
- Water Tank at Dellfield**  
vii The Town Warden had repaired the leak on the Normandy Road end water tank.
- Waiting Lists**  
viii There were no longer any inappropriate waiting list applications from residents who lived more than 1 mile outside the Berkhamsted Parish boundary.
- Allotment Reports**  
ix A summary report of allotment plots, vacancies and waiting list numbers, drawn from allotment management system had been provided for this meeting.

**AMT 15/15**

**Public Participation**

Mr Dyer a local resident and allotment holder asked when contracted grass cutting would start at Sunnyside; and whether the grass would, be cut immediately before the summer Open Day.

Mr Dyer was advised that the first cut was arranged for 29 April and for week commencing 10 August, ready for the Open Day to be held the following Sunday.

**FINANCE MATTERS**

**AMT 16/15**

**Income and Expenditure Report**

The Management Team noted the allotment income and expenditure report for the 2014/15 financial year. This included overall income of £9,007 and expenditure of £7,498.

The Management Team also noted that the £1,509 surplus would be added to the allotment reserve which amounted to £9,569 at year-end.

Following discussion, allotment representatives would look to identify any improvements or work to allotment gardens that might be funded from the reserve.

#### **AMT 17/15**

#### **Allotment Management System**

The Management Team considered the latest position on withheld payments for the Allotment Management System for training and data transfer and proposals from the suppliers regarding those outstanding invoices.

The Management Team agreed that representative access to the allotment management system and reports would be welcomed. The Town Clerk was asked to explore how that access would best be achieved at a reasonable and negotiated cost and that the outstanding payment for data transfer costs could form part of the discussion on access costs.

The Management Team noted that the new Clerk may, and allotment representatives would want to be trained on the allotment management system, but that payment should not be made until that training had been satisfactorily delivered. **Action: Town Clerk**

#### **ALLOTMENT MATTERS**

#### **AMT 18/15**

#### **Tree Maintenance**

The Management Team noted that the remaining planned tree maintenance work on the railway boundary at Sunnyside was completed during the Easter Bank Holiday, when the railway line was closed for engineering works.

The Management Team recognised tree maintenance assessments and work would be needed each year to keep remaining trees in good order and to minimise their impact on allotment gardening.

#### **AMT 19/15**

#### **Storage Shed on Sunnyside Old**

The Management Team considered a proposal from Sunnyside Allotment Society to install a storage shed on an uncultivable part of Sunnyside Old. That site may also be used as a wood store that would free up further suitable allotment land.

The Management Team noted that planning permission would not be required for the shed. The Borough Council had advised that, as it would be on Town Council land, the large shed could be installed under permitted development, provided that it did not exceed 4 metres in height or 200 cubic metres in capacity.

John Eaton confirmed that the proposed storage shed would not reach those dimensions.

**AMT 20/15**

**Public Rights of Way**

The Management Team noted that the annual allotments closure under Section 31(6) will take place on Thursday 7 May 2015.

**AMT 21/15**

**Bee Keeping at Dellfield**

The Management Team considered concerns raised by allotment holders on bee keeping at Dellfield.

The Management Team noted that bee keeping on allotments was permissible; that the tenant had applied to keep bees on Dellfield in April 2014; and that the arrangements had been agreed with the Town Clerk.

The bee keeper had installed 6' high netting on three sides of the hives the fourth side was bounded by a tall tree to complete the enclosure. Some tenants were expecting a more substantial enclosure.

The Allotment Management Team noted that the arrangements for enclosing the hive were satisfactory, according to bee-keeping good practice.

The Town Clerk was asked to discuss risks and contingencies with the bee-keeper again, particularly that a contact number be placed on the noticeboard and on the hive in the event that bees cause any risks to allotments tenants; and to advise neighbouring tenants and the allotment representative of the outcome of that discussion.

**Action: Town Clerk**

**AMT 22/15**

**Allotment Reports**

The following issues were raised in allotment reports.

***Dellfield***

One applicant was to be removed from the waiting list.

The nominated tenant for the Community Orchard on DF24 had moved away from the town. It was agreed that the tenancy, which was a rent free plot, should move to 'the allotment representative'.

The allotment representative would canvas for volunteers to help maintain the Orchard and it was agreed that a free water licence should be granted to help the trees become well-established.

***Sunnyside***

The gates at each end of A Road are in need of repair. **Action:**  
**Town Warden**

Allotment representatives would welcome regular reports on waiting list applicants from the allotment management system. **Action:**

**Town Clerk**

***Butts Meadow***

There were no vacancies on Butts Meadow. Waiting list applicants are being advised to look to other sites where there may be more frequent vacancies.

***Sunnyside Rural Trust***

There was nothing to report.

**AMT 23/15**

**Allotment Risk Management**

There was nothing to report.

**AMT 24/15**

**Date of Meetings for 2015/16**

The Management Team noted the proposed dates for AMT meetings during 2015/16 to be:

16 July 2015  
15 October 2015  
11 February 2016 and  
21 April 2016

Meetings would start at 10.30am.

**AMT 25/15**

**Close of Meeting**

The meeting closed at 11.58am.