



**MINUTES OF ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017 at 6.30pm at Carnegie House Council Chamber**

<b><u>Present:</u></b>	Cllr Freya Bletsoe Cllr Steven Bletsoe Cllr Lyn Walters Cllr Nicole Burnett Cllr Stuart Baldwin Ex-Officio (Mayor)	Mr B. Miller (Dunraven) Mr D. Williams(G.W.A) Mr. R. Hearse (Coychurch Rd)
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**1. To receive apologies for absence:**

Apologies were received from: Cllr Ceri Evans, Cllr Angela Morelli, Mrs. M. Phillips (Jubilee), Mr. C. Rowland (Coychurch Rd)

**2. To Elect a Chair for the forthcoming Year**

Cllr Freya Bletsoe was nominated. There were no other nominations.

Cllr Freya Bletsoe was duly elected as Chair to the Allotments Committee for 2017/18.

**3. To Elect a Vice Chair for the forthcoming Year**

There were no nominations for the role of Vice Chair.

**RESOLVED:** To leave the role of Vice Chair of the Allotments Committee vacant until the next meeting.

**4. Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

The minutes of the Allotment Committee meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2017 were passed as a true record and duly signed.

**5. Matters Arising.**

There were no matters arising from the minutes

**6. Reports:**

Town Clerk provided new Committee with an overview of the five allotment sites and introduced the individual site representatives.

Town Clerk explained that she was aware of a number of issues that needed to be addressed at the allotment sites. She explained that due to a very heavy workload she had been unable to deal with some of the allotment issues straight away but assured the Committee that they would be dealt with as soon as possible.

**a) Jubilee**

- Plot number 5 is now filled. Deputy Clerk to issue paperwork to new tenant.
- The Committee were informed that all tenants of the Jubilee Allotment Site had been consulted regarding the use of the £2,000 easement money for the site and 14 out of 16 had agreed that the money should be spent on a communal shed.
- Members raised and discussed concerns regarding security, equipment and insurance.

**RESOLVED:** To approve the use of Easement money to fund the purchase of a new communal shed at Jubilee Road Allotment Site with the condition that the shed and its contents is covered by the tenants own insurance.

- Member enquired regarding the policy for selling on site. Town Clerk advised that the sale of produce was not permitted but she would research the selling of seeds for use by allotment tenants.

**b) Coychurch**

- Town Clerk advised that a letter had been sent to offer vacant Plot number 9, which is infected with Mare's Tail, however the prospective tenant had not replied.
- Site representative, Mr Reg Hearse, provided a background to the issues with infected plots 8, 9 and 10 and spoke of the hard work Mr Bill Evans had undertaken to deal with Mare's Tail on plot number 8.
- Mr Hearse explained that plot no. 9 had been offered 4 or 5 times however no-one had wanted to take on the plot because of the amount of work needed to deal with Mare's Tail.
- Mr Hearse expressed serious concerns about the current state of the plot and suggested that if it continued to be left vacant, the Mare's Tail could quickly spread and infect the entire site.
- Mr Hearse offered a solution to the issue and explained that several existing tenants had offered to cultivate the plot with the understanding that that they could continue to use the plot once the Mare's Tail had been dealt with.
- A lengthy discussion took place regarding the current allotment waiting list.
- Mr Hearse explained that plot number 9 required individuals with the experience, time and impetus to deal with the current Mare's Tail problem and highlighted the danger in offering it to prospective tenants with little experience.
- Members agreed that urgent action was required to tackle the current problem with Plot 9 and agreed that due to the extenuating circumstances, the suggestion to use the expertise of current tenants was appropriate.

**RESOLVED:** To allow existing tenants of Coychurch Allotments to work on plot 9 under a joint tenancy agreement or communal plot license agreement for a duration of 3-5 years' subject to appropriate legal advice from the Clerk.

- Town Clerk reported that she had received information that raised bed number 1 was not being sufficiently cultivated. She advised that this will be followed up on the next allotment inspection.
- Site rep reported that the hedge alongside the allotments was very overgrown and dangerous.
- It was noted that tenants are encouraged to maintain the footpaths and hedges themselves when possible.
- Members discussed the boundary and questioned who was responsible for the maintenance of the hedge.

**RESOLVED:** Town Clerk to research the boundary of the allotment site and ownership of the hedge and arrange for the relevant owner to cut back the hedges.

**c) Dunraven**

- Town Clerk reported that there are no vacancies on the Dunraven Site.
- Plot 11b had recently been filled. Deputy Clerk to issue paperwork to new tenant.
- Mr Barry Miller advised that he was acting site rep in the absence of Mr William Carlyon who was currently in hospital.
- Mr Miller reported that trees from the neighbouring Police land were encroaching on the allotment site.

**RESOLVED:** Town Clerk to write to the Police to request that they cut back the trees.

**d) Waunscil**

- Town Clerk advised that there was currently confusion regarding the plot numbers at the Waunscil Allotment site and that she had arranged to meet with Site Rep, Mr Nick Lloyd to resolve the issues.
- Current vacancies: Plot 5b, Plot 12a
- It was noted that Plot 15 had not renewed the tenancy agreement and that the Town Clerk would follow-up with the tenant.

**e) Great Western Avenue**

- Town Clerk advised there were 8 and ½ vacant plots on this site. She explained the reason for this was due to some tenants not renewing their tenancy agreements and the issuing of termination of tenancy letters due to non-cultivation of plots as a result of the last inspection visit.
- It was noted that the plots are now very overgrown and 3 of the plots are infected with Mare's Tail.
- Town Clerk advised that she had discussed the vacant plots with the site rep.

- Town Clerk explained that she had sought a quote from a professional contractor to clear the vacant plots and deal with the Mare's Tail. The quote was £1,000.
- Site rep suggested that if BTC could hire a heavy duty strimmer, he and fellow tenants could trim some of the vacant plots.
- Members discussed methods for dealing with Mare's Tail including the use of weed killer versus organic methods.
- Town Clerk was asked to research the cost to hire a heavy duty strimmer and liaise with the contractor to reduce the cost of the quote accordingly.
- Members agreed that the overgrown plots and Mare's Tail should be dealt with as a matter of urgency so that available plots can be offered to the waiting list.

**RESOLVED:** Town Clerk to present all relevant costs associated with clearing the vacant plots at GWA allotment site to the next Finance Committee meeting for consideration.

- Town Clerk provided an overview of the current parking situation at the site. She explained that the site was the largest out of the five allotment sites but it has the smallest parking provision. It was noted that the carpark at the far end of the site was currently reserved for blue badge holders only.
- Town Clerk explained that consideration had been given to creating a larger car park at the far end of the site. Arrangements could then be altered so that this car park would be exclusively for allotment tenants at the top of the site, whilst the car park at the entrance would be for tenants at the front of the site.
- Members discussed the proposal and considered the loss of one and a half allotment plots in order to extend the car park provision.
- Town Clerk advised that due to the time of year no action should be taken until the end of the growing season. She explained that plots can be reclaimed via a Notice to Quit process and tenants can be offered alternative plots.
- The Town Clerk was asked to further research the legalities associated with losing allotment plots to extend the carpark.

**RESOLVED:** Members of the Allotments Committee to investigate the position and implications of increasing the size of the top carpark during the next allotment inspection visit.

- Site rep reported a leaking water pipe at the site and offered to attempt to repair the leak prior to calling a plumber. This was agreed by Members.
- Town Clerk explained that she had received correspondence from an allotment tenant on GWA allotments and asked Members if they wanted to consider the matter under this agenda item. Members agreed the matter could be considered.
- Town Clerk read out an email from Wendy Gardner regarding damage to her mother's property in Spring Field Gardens which was caused by a Polytunnel from the GWA Allotments which became unsecure during high winds.

- Town Clerk explained that she had spoken to the Site Rep and had been assured that the polytunnel was secured however the exceptionally bad weather had caused it to break loose.
- Town Clerk explained that the Town Council provides Public Liability Insurance for accidents on the allotment site however Polytunnels and equipment on individual plots is the responsibility of individual allotment tenants.
- Members considered the issue and agreed that although the incident was regrettable, it was not a matter for the Allotment Committee. It was agreed that the allotment tenant should resolve the matter directly with the home owner. The Town Clerk was instructed to respond to the letter accordingly.

#### **7. “Wartime Bridgend” – Town Centre Event Allotment Stall Update**

- Chair thanked Site Reps Maria Phillips and David Williams for all their efforts arranging the ‘Dig for Victory’ stall at the Wartime Bridgend event on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June.

#### **8. To Agree Arrangements for Allotments Summer Competition 2017 & Presentation Evening.**

- Town Clerk provided Members with the date of the competition and explained that arrangements had been made for the competition to be judged by two representatives from the National Vegetable Society.
- The Chair of the Allotment Committee was invited to attend the judging for the competition.
- The Town Clerk explained that a presentation to winners would be held at the autumn meeting.
- Members discussed who should present the prizes. Consideration was given to local politicians and celebrity gardeners.

**RESOLVED:** Town Clerk to extend an invitation to Radio Two allotment expert Terry Walton in the first instance.

#### **9. Any other Business**

##### **a) Letter from June Mills, plot 49 GWA**

- Town Clerk read out a letter from June Mills, plot 49 GWA.
- Members considered the possibility of adding family members to a tenancy agreement.
- Town Clerk advised that due to ill health, Mrs Mills grandson had been helping cultivate the plot. She added that he was also on the allotments waiting list and his name was very near the top of the list.

**RESOLVED:** To add Mrs Mills grandson to the allotment agreement and remove his name from the allotment waiting list.

##### **b) Letters from Mr Rees**

- Town Clerk provided an overview of two letters she had received from GWA Allotment Tenant Mr Rees. She explained that a situation had arisen regarding the removal of paving

slabs on a vacant allotment plot. Town Clerk advised that the matter was a personal dispute between allotment holders.

- Members agreed that the situation was not a matter for the Town Council Allotment Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk notify the tenant that the matter should be resolved independently.

c) Role of the Site Rep

- Town Clerk requested that the role of Site Rep is clarified.
- Members discussed the role of a Site Rep and agreed that a Site Rep should represent the views of tenants on their respective allotment sites at the Allotment Committee meetings, but do not have the authority to act on behalf of the Council.
- Site Reps should not swap tenants plots, split plots or make demands on allotment tenants.
- All changes to tenancy agreements and significant changes on allotment sites should be notified officially via the Town Clerk.
- It was agreed that a more frequent and informative allotment newsletter could be issued by the Town Council.

10. Date for next Meeting: 25<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at 6:30 pm

- The date was approved by Members

The meeting concluded at 8.35pm

Signed .....  
Allotment Committee Chair

Date .....