

**HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL**  
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**MINUTES of the Meeting of the ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE**  
 held at  
**The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich**  
 on  
**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at 7pm**

<b>Present:</b>	Councillors J Brown (from 7:14 ), Calver, Fay, McLeod and F Powell
<b>In the Chair:</b>	Councillor Todd
<b>Clerk:</b>	Lucy Ballard
<b>Also present:</b>	Site Representatives Mr Crowther and Mr Edmunds No members of the public and no members of the press

**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:**

None

<b>A51/16</b>	<b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b> Cllrs Ashley, J Henderson, Morrison and Struth Site Representatives Mr Button, Mr McCoy and Mr O'Hara
<b>A52/16</b>	<b><u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS</u></b> None
<b>A53/16</b>	<b><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u></b> <b>RESOLVED:</b> that the minutes of the Allotments meeting held on 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2016 (previously circulated) be approved by the Committee and signed by the Chairman as a true record.
<b>A54/16</b>	<b><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•<b>A46/16</b> – The Chairman confirmed that the role of the Site Representative has been displayed on all notice boards.</li> <li>•<b>A47/16</b> – The Chairman confirmed that recommendations for allotment budgets for the municipal year 2017/18 had been approved by Full Council as follows:            Ground Maintenance: £3000            Water Rates: £1800            Reserve Fund: £2000</li> </ul>
<b>A55/16</b>	<b><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES</u></b> None
<b>A56/16</b>	<b><u>VACANT PLOTS/WAITING LIST/NOTICES TO QUIT</u></b> The Chairman advised numbers of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•13 people on the waiting list (most are waiting for specific sites or plots)</li> <li>•15 vacant plots</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•No NTQs issued since the last meeting</li> </ul>
A57/16	<p><b><u>SITE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS</u></b></p> <p><i>Mr Crowther – Apart from some rats on site, which have been dealt with, all is good and no problems to report.</i></p> <p><i>Mr Edmunds – Nothing to report.</i></p> <p><i>Mr Button – There’s still 7 vacant plots on the BC site that aren’t being worked, but everyone else seems to be happy. He offered his thanks to Peter Barrenger for repairing the water pipe on the site following damage caused by a stake going through it.</i></p>
A58/16	<p><b><u>ALLOTMENT RENTS</u></b></p> <p>The Clerk briefed members on the current allotment fees and those which had been agreed to be implemented in September 2017. Cllr Calver said it was unsustainable and has compared our fees against those charged for an allotment in Colchester. He proposed that from 2018 the charge is increased by 50p per rod and the OAP discount is reduced to 25%. He calculated that an OAP will pay just £9.75 for a 5-rod plot plus water, making it still very affordable in comparison with Colchester, where the equivalent costs £35.40 plus water at £18.90. Members were all in agreement and it was <b>RESOLVED:</b> To set 2018 fees at £2.60 per rod and set the discount for those in receipt of state pension at 25%.</p>
A59/16	<p><b><u>BOUNDARY PLOT MARKERS</u></b></p> <p>The Clerk presented a report from the Estates Supervisor following the installation of plot markers at the Dunns Meadow site. They were easy to install and plot holders were felt they were a good idea. Now that the stencils have been made up, it will be easier to make up the markers for the other sites and by using plastic, it won’t rot and they’re easy to re-number if the paint fades. The Clerk reported on the cost to mark the remaining sites, which would be to cover the plastic only since there was sufficient paint available. Members were content that if they do the job and the funds are available then it’s appropriate to proceed now.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To proceed with purchasing sufficient plastic to mark the remaining allotment sites at a cost of £382.50 inc. del, to be expended from the Allotments EMR. Members extended their thanks to Peter Barrenger for his work on this project.</p>
A60/16	<p><b><u>AMENDMENTS TO HTC POLICIES ON ALLOTMENTS</u></b></p> <p>Members discussed measures to increase the numbers on the waiting list and ensure vacant plots are filled more easily. Cllr Calver said it would be a good move to adapt the policies as we are struggling to fill the vacant plots. He proposed that we permit residents within the parish to have multiple plots and that we also permit residents outside of the parish to take up a plot but that anyone taking up an allotment who resides outside of the parish does not receive any of the concessions (i.e. OAP discount). Cllr Todd asked if a radius should be set outside of the parish but members agreed to allow the Assistant Clerk to use her discretion and that if there was any uncertainty, this could be brought before the next meeting for agreement. Cllr J Brown suggested advising the other local clerks that plots are available to their residents.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To permit existing plot holders to hold multiple plots, and to permit those living outside of the parish of Harwich &amp; Dovercourt to hold a plot with no discount for those in receipt of state pension is applied.</p>
A61/16	<p><b><u>MATTERS TO BE REPORTED</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chairman reported that the Estates Supervisor had carried out repairs to a damaged water pipe at Boatswains Call at the cost of £5.50, after a stake had accidentally been put through it, and repairs to the water tap supply at Willow Way, at</li> </ul>

	<p>the cost of £22.94 after it was found to be leaking. A lock has now been fitted to the tap casing and all plot holders on that site have been issued with keys.</p> <p>•Damage had been sustained to a water pipe at Dunns Meadow after a spade was accidentally put through it. As it was at a weekend, Mains &amp; Drains was called out and the invoice is yet to be received.</p> <p>Cllr Calver suggested we look into somehow marking them out to avoid this again. Mr Crowther also warned of the likelihood of frost if the water pipes are not sufficient deep in the ground. The Clerk agreed to liaise with the Estates Supervisor in this regard.</p>
<b>A62/16</b>	<p><b><u>VOLUNTARY POSITIONS OF SITE REPRESENTATIVES FOR ABDY AVENUE AND WILLOW WAY</u></b></p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that following the advertisement for site representatives on the above sites, no volunteers had come forward for either site. Mr Edmunds said he would cover Willow Way in the short term and Mr Crowther said he would cover Abdy Avenue in the short term. Thanks was given.</p>
<b>A63/16</b>	<p><b><u>MATTERS RECEIVED IN THE POST OR RAISED BY MEMBERS</u></b></p> <p>None</p>
<b>A64/16</b>	<p><b><u>TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></b></p> <p>The next meeting of the Allotments Committee will be held at the <b>Guildhall, Church</b> at <b>7pm</b> on <b>Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017</b>.</p>

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.31pm

**CHAIRMAN:**

**DATE:**