**HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL**Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich, Essex CO12 3DS
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**MINUTES of the Meeting of the ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE**held at **The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich**on

**Thursday 6th June 2019 at 7pm**

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| **Present:** | Councillors Calver, Fay, Chant, Davidson, Richardson, McLeod (sub for Cllr Morrison) and D Smith |
| **In the Chair:** | Councillor Todd |
| **Clerk:** | Michelle Townsend |
| **Also present:** | Site Representatives Mr Botterill and Mrs Feaviour One member of the public and no members of the press |
| **Absent** | Councillor I Henderson and Site Representative Mr Edmunds |

 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:**

None

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| **A01/19** | **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**Apologies received from:Cllr P Morrison (sub Cllr McLeod) |
| **A02/19** | **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS’ INTEREST**None |
| **A03/19** | **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRRESOLVED:** To appoint Councillor David Smith as vice-chair of the Allotments Committee. |
| **A04/19** | **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGRESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Allotments meeting held on 28th March 2019 (previously circulated) be approved by the committee and signed by the Chairman as a true record. **FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the confidential minutes of the Allotments meeting held on 28th March 2019 (previously circulated) be approved by the committee and signed by the Chairman as a true record. |
| **A05/19** | **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES****A31/18** – The Estate Supervisor will continue to monitor the stumps at Abdy Avenue which have been injected with weed killer. **A61/18** – The tree by the main gate on Boatswains Call allotment site has been reduced.**A62/18** – The Chairman presented Malcolm Crowther with a letter of thanks from the council and a gift from staff and members.  |
| **A06/19** | **MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES** **•Redoubt Hedge and Footpath** – Investigation regarding ownership of the Redoubt site is being carried out under the allotment key priority and that on completion this will be passed to the Finance & General Purposes Committee to determine what needs to be achieved regarding asset management.  •Ellisons Solicitors have confirmed that the first registration of Boatswains Call allotment site has been completed. A copy of the Title Register and Filed Plan is held at the Guildhall. |
| **A07/19** | **VACANT PLOTS/WAITING LIST/NOTICES TO QUIT**The Clerk advised members of the following:• 17 people on the waiting list (most are waiting for specific sites or plots)• 1 vacant plot • 1 NTQ issued since the last meeting (TR11A) due to non-cultivation  |
| **A08/19** | **SITE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS*****Mrs Feaviour*** – Members were made aware that the chain link fence, adjoining the recreational ground, has been cut through. Plot holders have placed items along the pathway to deter further uninvited guests. ***Mr N Botterill*** – Plots are being worked and the site is looking tidy. |
| **A09/19**  | **TREE LIABILITIES** The Clerk and Estate Supervisor have reviewed the report and identified the trees which require work. Three of the highlighted trees at the Redoubt allotment site have been taken down by plot holders but the council will need to herbicide the stumps. Quotations for the work will be considered at the next meeting in readiness for the work to be carried out after the nesting season. The Clerk advised that there were 10 trees within the report which require monitoring and that Tree Planning Solutions have recommended a ‘moderate’ inspection frequency for all highlighted trees which is a 12-month inspection.  |
| **A10/19** | **REQUEST TO INSTALL A SMALL POND**Members reviewed the request but raised concerns over safety, size and possible need for it to be removed should the plot be relinquished and given to a new tenant. Some members felt that frogs would be a good eco-friendly source for slug control.**RESOLVED:** Decision to be deferred until after the site visits have taken place to allow the committee to inspect existing ponds on other sites.  |
| **A11/19** | **ALLOTMENT RENTS**The Clerk briefed members on the current allotment fees and those which had been agreed to be implemented in September 2019. Councillor Calver made members aware that the rent charged by the council is still affordable and cheap compared to over towns. The Clerk advised that the Allotments Maintenance budget agreed by the committee for the last financial year was £2000 and the actual amount spent was just over £4000. Whilst there is an Allotment Reserve Fund, tighter control of expenditure is needed to be put in place and members agreed with the Clerk’s suggestion to review the financial position at each meeting. **RESOLVED:** A further increase of 50p per rod (£3.50 per rod) from September 2020 and to keep the discount for those in receipt of state pension at 25%. |
| **A12/19** | **MEMBER SITE VISITS**All members agreed that it would be worthwhile for all new councillors to visit the allotment sites to assist with familiarisation of site locations and management. **RESOLVED:** Clerk to liaise with members and arrange site visits. |
| **A13/19** | **MATTERS RECEIVED IN THE POST, BE REPORTED OR RAISED BY MEMBERS** •Clerk advised members that a plot holder on Boatswains Call site has put a ‘collection crate’ on their plot for all plot holders to place surplus produce which is then being collected by the Food Bank.  |
| **A14/19** | **TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING**The next meeting of the Allotments Committee will be held at **7pm** on a **Tuesday 23rd July 2019**, at the **Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich, CO12 3DS**  |

The Chairman closed the public part of the meeting at 7.45pm.

 **CHAIRMAN: DATE:**