

MINUTES of the Meeting of the ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE
 held on
Wednesday 27th July 2022 at 7.00pm
 at
The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich, Essex, CO12 3DS

Present:	Councillors Davidson (sub for Calver), Chant, Fay, Morrison, Richardson and D Smith
In the Chair:	Councillor Todd
Clerk:	Mrs Marie Snell
Also present:	Lucy Ballard Town Clerk, Andy Wells Estate Supervisor, Site Representatives Ben Chamberlain, Joan Feaviour and Peter Day No members of the public

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:

None

A015/22	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Cllrs Calver, I Henderson, Fowler and Powell Site Representatives Agnieszka Chudy and Robert Bayford
A016/22	<u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTEREST</u> None
A017/22	<u>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u> RESOLVED: The Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Allotments meeting held on 14 th June 2022 (previously circulated) were APPROVED by the committee and signed by the Chairman as a true record.
A018/22	<u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A012/22 – Clerk provided update regarding future electronic invoicing that it is not possible to administer electronic invoicing through the current form of database that HTC uses. Alternative means allotment management software can be sourced through investigative work. HTC's current accounts package have an allotments bolt on to possibly facilitate this requirement. Clerk to investigate alternative database management through different sources and to report back at next meeting. • A010/22 - Cllr David Smith raised concerns regarding the current weather climate and the use of bonfires at allotment sites. Members discussed the need for bonfires whilst plot holders should be composting any waste rather than burning at the sites. During the growing season, the need for bonfires should be minimal. Clerk to make signs for noticeboards to discourage lighting bonfires whilst the weather is as dry as it is.
A019/22	<u>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A056/21 – Clerk provided update regarding The Redoubt hedge cutting. This has now been completed, the company contracted for the work carried out a site-specific risk assessment to not disturb any nesting birds. Site Representatives confirmed the

	work done is to a very high standard and plot holders are grateful for this hedge's cutback.																								
A020/22	<p><u>VACANT PLOTS/WAITING LIST/NOTICES TO QUIT</u></p> <p>The Clerk advised members of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 people on the waiting list (most are waiting for specific sites or plots) • 0 vacant plots • 2 NTQs issued since the last meeting and one plot has already been reissued with the second plot almost ready for a new tenant. 																								
A021/22	<p><u>SITE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS</u></p> <p>Abdy Avenue – Joan Feaviour commented it was nice to see draft minutes from previous minutes on the notice boards. Clerk confirmed this can continue, Estate Supervisor to ensure draft minutes are displayed after each meeting. Joan confirmed everything is going well at Abdy Avenue with plots looking good.</p> <p>The Redoubt/Tower Hill – Ben Chamberlain mentioned the property on the right of slip road leading to The Redoubt, that the hedge is getting overgrown. Queries as to if the owner can be asked to cut back so as not to scratch cars as they arrive at The Redoubt. Estate Supervisor will make contact on his next rounds at the site. Peter Day has noted overgrown footpaths between plots raising concerns that the tenancy agreement specifies footpaths are to be maintained. Brambles on blackberry bushes are overgrowing onto footpaths and potentially scratching passers-by. Cllr Todd asked for specific plot numbers be reported outside of meeting to clerk in order to address with plot holder(s). Peter Day expressed a concern regarding a particular plot that has a structure and during bad weather, this structure appears very unstable, with the panels seen to be lifting. Enquiries raised if this can be addressed with plot holder to encourage removal of the structure. Estate Supervisor confirmed he has reported this structure in most recent site inspection. Peter Day offered his aid to the plot holder to dismantle to avoid safety accident. Clerk to follow up.</p>																								
A022/22	<p><u>BUDGET UPDATE</u></p> <p>The Assistant Clerk briefed members on the current financial position of the allotments budget:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Allotments Maintenance Budget</td> <td>£2000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vacant plots budget (if applicable)</td> <td>£300.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Total expenditure to date</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cherry Tree Removal</td> <td>£250.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Redoubt Hedge Cutting</td> <td>£900.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tap Keys</td> <td>£43.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fence Repairs – Dunns Meadow</td> <td>£26.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Balance</td> <td>£1080.50 (£300 vacant plots)</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Total income to date</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tenant rate and Water rates</td> <td>£260.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black plastic ground cover</td> <td>£77.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£337.00</td> </tr> </table>	Allotments Maintenance Budget	£2000.00	Vacant plots budget (if applicable)	£300.00	Total expenditure to date		Cherry Tree Removal	£250.00	The Redoubt Hedge Cutting	£900.00	Tap Keys	£43.50	Fence Repairs – Dunns Meadow	£26.00	Balance	£1080.50 (£300 vacant plots)	Total income to date		Tenant rate and Water rates	£260.00	Black plastic ground cover	£77.00	Total	£337.00
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A023/22	<p><u>MATTERS RECEIVED IN THE POST, TO BE REPORTED OR RAISED BY MEMBERS</u></p> <p>Clerk reported that The Redoubt plot holder of 31 and 32 is relinquishing the plots. It was explained to the members that the current plot holder was not the cause for the overgrown state of these plots. It is incredibly overgrown with large trees and is not in a suitable standard to begin a new tenancy. It was suggested by the clerk that a further discussion be had regarding how to manage these plots moving forward, Cllr Todd encouraged members to visit the plots to gain further understanding. Clerk to liaise with Chair and members to discuss this matter further and plans for expenditure.</p> <p>Cllr David Smith congratulated the Clerk on her efforts on the Allotments Newsletter, Growing Together which will be published in September in readiness for the new allotment year.</p>
A024/22	<p><u>TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></p> <p>The next meeting of the Allotments Committee will be held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 1st November 2022 at The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich Essex.</p>

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.32pm.

CHAIRMAN:

DATE: