

WALLINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

of the

Parks, Gardens, Allotments and Open Spaces Committee
Meeting held in the Town Hall, Wallingford
on Monday 11th September 2017

P R E S E N T

The Mayor, Councillor Kidley

Councillors Baroni, Davidson, Lester, McGregor, Upcraft,
In Attendance – Mrs Tracey Collins (Officer and minute taker), Mr Bryan Gilbey
(Parks Foreman)

255. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from The Town Clerk and Councillor Cockman.

256. ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC

There were no admissions to the Public

257. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

PCSO Sue Harris, gave a short talk on security on the allotment site. Sue informed us that thieves are generally after petrol rotavators and strimmers as they can be easily sold on so try not to leave them in sheds. If they have to be left in a shed then ensuring that the doors and windows are secure and nothing inside is visible helps but also using ground anchors to sure items to works well. Sue suggested blocking up hedges that might have gaps in them by using thin trellis, this won't hold someone's weight and will break which will then leave substantial DNA. The Police also now use Smartwater, each bottle has a unique code which can only be seen under UV light. Sue suggested holding an open morning at the allotments so that plot holders could get their valuables marked in case of theft. Sue also suggested the prick a strip which can be bought from most DIY stores, you do need a small disclaimer sign stating you are using it but it doesn't have to be very big. Sue also suggested locking the gate Mrs W, plot 15 asked if any of the areas had "cracked it" unfortunately Sue said no, the only things we can all do is make it more difficult for thieves to steal anything.

Councillor Lester asked Sue about the issue of parking in the Market Place. Sue apologised as this is an ongoing issue due to the fact that there used to be a number of officers in Wallingford but now there is one officer and 2 PCSO's which limits the amount of time they can spend on parking problems but that they will do the best they can.t there

Councillor Ros Lester thanked PCSO Sue Harris for coming to talk to the allotment holders and Councillors.

258. IMPROMPTU PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (15 MINUTES IN TOTAL)

Mr W, Plot 15 asked about timescales for Site B, the widening of the footpath and the new allotments. Councillor Lester informed those in attendance that at present there were no timescales but as soon as information was received this would be passed on. Mr W also wanted to know if there was any development with the unkept plots. Mrs Collins updated members, initial letters had been sent out and a second letter (notice to quit) would be sent in the next week as no further improvements had been made on the plots. Mrs Collins was concerned though that the plots were in a poor state and would need rotavating something the parks team were unable to do. It was suggested that the new tenant hire a rotavator for a day for which the Council would pay. Mrs Collins will look into costs.

It was Proposed by Councillor Upcraft, Seconded by Councillor McGregor and

RESOLVED:

THAT the council reimburse a new tenant for the use of hiring a rotavator for a day up to the value of.

Mr & Mrs W, wanted to say how wonderful the hanging baskets and flowers in the town centre were this year.

Mr Dennis Jackson spoke about the Plans and General Purposes meeting on 10th April where the benches in the market place were discussed. Councillor Lester stated that this was an item on the agenda and would be discussed in due course.

259. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Lester reminded Members that information was available on the table for each Councillor to read.

260. MINUTES

i) To sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Parks, Gardens, Allotments and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on the 10th July 2017 as set out on pages 49 - 52 of the Minute Book.

It was Proposed by Councillor Upcraft, Seconded by Councillor Davidson and

RESOLVED:

THAT the Minutes of the Parks, Gardens, Allotments and Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on the 10th July 2017 as set out on pages 49 - 52 of the Minute Book, copies circulated to Councillors, be signed as a correct record.

261. ALLOTMENTS

- a) **Waiting List** – Mrs Collins reported that there were 10 people on the waiting list, 4 wanted a half plot, 2 a full plot and 4 don't mind. Four of these people already have a plot but would like another quite specific next to their existing plot.
- b) **Winner of the Allotment Trophy** – Councillor Lester reported that Mr Dennis James received the trophy this year and was very pleased.
- c) **Available budget for committee** – Councillor Lester discussed this with the Town Clerk who suggested putting any proposals forward to full council.

262. BULL CROFT PARK

- a) **Bullcroft Working Party** – Councillor Upcraft gave a brief update. Hedges the Solicitors are working with OCC who are not being very co-operative. There is the possibility of selling Bullcroft Lodge this is only a consideration and still very early days. Councillor McGregor stated that the immediate priority was Bullcroft Recreation Rooms.
- b) **Family Orienteering Event** – Councillor Upcraft agreed to attend the setting up of this event on the 16th September to ensure all the conditions of the Bullcroft are adhered to.
- c) **Complaint about crows in Bullcroft** - The idea of a cull was discussed but this was dismissed. Once the Bullcroft working party have decided the best way forward this could mean moving the play equipment or reducing the height of the trees this would then ease the situation.
- d) **Burning Waste in the ditch of the Bullcroft** – The parks Foreman reported that some time ago English Heritage gave permission that waste could be burnt in a specific area in the Bullcroft. This specific area is the only place used for burning, the ground has been raised sufficiently so as not to damage the ditch itself.

263. KINECROFT

- a) **Knotweed** – Mrs Collins reported that although the annual inspection and treatment had taken place in June a member of the public had reported a new sighting. This was reported to Elcot who inspected and treated the area immediately in August.
- b) **Pond behind Croft Road houses** – The Parks Foreman reported that the homemade pond had now been moved and the ground put back to its natural state.

264. OPEN SPACES

- a) **Discuss the continued rubbish problem in the Market Place** – Councillor Upcraft reported that the Town Council had the right to set up a by-law in the Market Place if they wished. Councillor McGregor enquired as to how it would be enforced, who would patrol the area? Councillor Kidley explained that he was trying to set up a meeting with A2 Dominion the owners of the flats because they were as fed up as the Council are. It was agreed to defer to the next meeting.
- b) **Discuss if the two benches that are bolted down on the Market Place could be moved** - A long discussion took place between Councillors, Councillor Upcraft had been unable to find out costings to enable the benches to be moved back and forth on a Friday. Councillor Lester had spoken with Mr Chris Hurdman who was keen to look at bollards. The basic ones that he has sourced at £210.94 these could then be removed by the traders and put back as required. Councillor Kidley was still concerned this did not change the fact that two benches were bolted down and according to Mr Smith in the wrong place. Purchasing bollards would only increase costings. The Parks Foreman suggested benches without backs then the stalls could be placed over the top of the benches but could still be bolted down to stop cars coming across the Market Place. Councillor Upcraft asked Mr Gilbey to obtain costings of these benches. Councillor Lester said she would go along to the market on Friday and talk to Mr Hurdman and Mr Smith.
- c) **Car Parking** – Defer to next meeting
- d) **Parking near drop kerbs** – Councillor McGregor was concerned about the number of vehicles that are parking near the drop kerbs so that people in wheelchairs, have pushchairs or mobility issues are unable to access them. Councillor McGregor suggested maybe a leafleting campaign on windscreens or even putting something in the newsletter. Councillor McGregor explained that the decriminalisation takes such a long time but we should be doing something now. Mrs Collins explained that the office staff do sometimes put notices on cars stating they should not be parked there, they either get thrown on the floor or the staff have been shouted at.
- e) **Dual Markets** – Defer to next meeting

265. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Band Concert rota – Councillor to agree schedule in New Year
Band Concert Refreshments – Councillor Lester
Castle ruins – Town Clerk and Councillor McGregor
Discuss the continued rubbish problem in the Market Place – Councillor Upcraft/Mayor
Car Parking – Councillor Davidson
Dual Markets – Councillor Cockman

Meeting closed at approximately 8.30pm