

CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE
COUNCIL OFFICES, 44 OLD STREET, CLEVEDON,
ON MONDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2013 AT 7.30 pm.

PRESENT: Cllr C Wring, Committee Chairman
 Cllr J Middleton, Committee Vice Chairman
 Cllrs Giles-Townsend, Hatch, Knott & McNeill
 Tenant Representatives, A Baker (WA), R Cheek (HA), J Clark (VR), D
 Regan (ML) & W Rowlinson (ML).
 Mrs S Howard (Committee Clerk)

AL/13/326 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllr Hall, P Cornock (CH), N Foster (CEM) & A Stephens (CH).

AL/13/327 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest.

AL/13/328 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2013 AND 14 OCTOBER 2013

The minutes were **AGREED** as correct and have been ratified at Full Council on 30 October 2013.

PART 2

AL/13/329 TO RECEIVE THE FINANCIAL REPORT OF THE ALLOTMENT COMMITTEE ACCOUNTS

The Committee Chairman advised the Committee that the project to install dip tanks for Cemetery & Moor Lane needs to be deducted from the balance remaining in the allotment account.

AL/13/330 SITE MAINTENANCE REPORTS AND UPDATES ON ACTIONS FROM 30 SEPTEMBER 2013

330.1 Moor Lane

330.1.1 WPC Reports

ML2 – The Tenant Rep advised that the Tenant has still not been seen on site although Tenant has been in hospital recently. The Committee **AGREED** to write to the Tenant asking when they would be fit enough to return to the allotment plot. A deadline of 1 February 2014 was agreed by the Committee as to when to expect the Tenant to be back working on the allotment garden. The garden will continue to be monitored.

Action – Committee Clerk and Tenant Reps

ML29 & ML40 - This plot has had the main spine path between the two plots removed by the Tenant. The Tenant has been sent a letter asking them to reinstate the path at their own expense. The Tenant Rep for Moor Lane advised that the two allotment plots are in different names and is concerned about sub-letting.

ML42 - The Tenant Rep has concerns that the Tenant of this plot is also sub-letting the garden. It was **AGREED** to write a letter to both Tenants to ask for confirmation of the plot holder. The Committee Chairman to assist the Committee Clerk with this letter.

Action – Committee Chairman & Committee Clerk

ML23B - The Tenant has still not been seen on site and the Tenant Rep has cut back the weeds on a couple of occasions. It was **AGREED** to send a WPC2 to the Tenant.

Action – Committee Clerk

The Councillor Rep for Church Hill felt that Tenants who have received a number of warnings for non-cultivation of their plot should not be granted an allotment garden transfer. This has occurred with the Tenant from Westbourne Avenue transferring to the Moor Lane site and the garden on Moor Lane is yet to be cultivated. It was **PROPOSED** and **AGREED** that if a Tenant falls into this criteria, then an allotment garden would not be offered if a Tenant wished to transfer to another site.

ML43 & ML45A - The gardens are looking untidy and it was **AGREED** to send a letter of concern to both Tenants.

Action – Committee Clerk

ML24B - The allotment garden has not been cultivated and it was **AGREED** to send a Letter of Concern to the new Tenant who accepted the Tenancy on 30 September 2013.

Action – Committee Clerk

The Committee Clerk advised that there are Tenants across all sites that are due to have their plot inspected in December 2013 following expiry of their six months Tenancy Agreement. The Committee Clerk will email the Councillor and Tenant Reps the plot numbers that need to be inspected.

Action – Committee Clerk

331.1 Highdale Avenue

331.1.1 General

The Tenant Rep advised a stone has come away from the outside of the boundary wall to the Allotment site. The Committee Chairman advised that North Somerset Council is responsible for the wall and will be contacted to ask for the stone to be reinstated.

Action – Committee Clerk

The Tenant Rep asked if the litter bin that was on the outside of the allotment site that was burnt out would be replaced. The Councillor Rep for Victoria Road advised that the Transport & Highways Committee's request for the bin to be replaced was refused by North Somerset Council.

332.1 Victoria Road

332.1.1 General

The Councillor Rep advised that the stone wall to the right hand side of the allotment site looking from the road belongs to Oaklands and the stone wall at the bottom of the allotment site belongs to The Hawthorns.

The concrete lump that was left when the new gate post was installed on site is still located by VR88 and needs to be broken up and removed. The Tenant Rep for Cemetery had offered to remove this with assistance from the YMCA.

Action – Tenant Rep for Cemetery

The Tenant Rep advised that rubbish was beginning to be dumped outside the allotment site, but has since been removed. The Tenant Rep to monitor.

Action – Tenant Rep

The Committee Clerk advised that the Tenant of VR86B is now out of hospital which is good news.

333.1 Westbourne Avenue

333.1.1 WPC Reports

WA90 – Concern is now being raised with regards to the Tenant paying a gardener to manage the allotment plot. A letter will be written to the Tenant advising them that the Tenant needs to be the person who cultivates the plot only.

Action – Committee Chairman and Committee Clerk

WA91 – The Committee Clerk gave the Tenant Rep the site door key and also the key to the padlock for the Tenant's shed as this is a new tenant who has just taken over the tenancy of this plot.

WA95A – The Tenant Rep has spoken to the Tenant who has confirmed that they will cultivate their plot. The plot is due to have its six month inspection in December 2013. If the plot has not been cultivated by this date then the tenant will be terminated.

333.1.2 General

The Committee Clerk gave thanks to the Tenant Rep who supported a project run by Alliance Homes called Dream scheme whereby there was an organised visit of children who came to help weed and tidy an allotment garden on Westbourne Avenue.

334.1 Church Hill

334.1.1 General

Resident's Fence by CH114 – The Councillor Rep advised that the boundary fence by allotment plot CH114 has been taken down due to a planning application that has been submitted to demolish a property on Old Church Road and replace with a brand new house. The whole of the back garden has been cleared and a large conifer tree has also been removed which was on the allotment boundary and has created a large hole. This is currently being covered by the collapsed fence. It was **AGREED** to write to the developer to ask for the fence to be reinstated as soon as possible as concerns have been raised with the large hole on the boundary of the allotment site. The Committee Clerk confirmed that she has taken photographs of the fence and hole.

Action – Committee Clerk

Dip Tank lid – The Councillor Rep advised that there is a broken lid on Church Hill. The Tenant Rep for Moor Lane advised that he would make some lids from chicken wire and wood, as having a heavy lid causes difficulties with some Tenants not being able to lift the lid to collect water.

Action – Tenant Rep for Moor Lane

CH102 – There is a broken window on the shed and it needs to be removed and replaced with plastic.

Action – Committee Clerk

CH113 – A new marker peg is required for this allotment plot. The Committee Clerk will see if some more plastic strips can be obtained from her contact as before.

Action – Committee Clerk

Paths to South side of Allotment site – The Councillor Rep expressed concern that the paths on this side of the allotment site are still dangerous and narrow in places and tenants are not keeping the grass edges cut and making it more difficult to see the edge of the path ways. It was **AGREED** to send a letter to Tenants to remind them to cut their edges back and keep tidy.

Action – Committee Clerk

Whilst discussing paths, the Tenant Reps for Moor Lane advised that clarification is required as to which paths the Tenants are responsible for. It was **AGREED** that Tenants are responsible for all edges around their allotment plot.

334.1.2 WPC Reports

CH124A – The allotment garden still has glass panels on site despite the Tenant being sent a letter asking them to be removed. It was **AGREED** to send a WPC1 warning letter.

CH131 – The Councillor Rep advised that the plot is still untidy and it was **AGREED** to send a WPC1 warning letter.

335.1 Cemetery

335.1.1 General

Greenhouse Frame on Cemetery bank – The Councillor Rep advised that the empty greenhouse frame on top of the allotment site situated on the bank has not had any plastic panels installed for well over a year and has not got anything in it. It was **AGREED** to contact the Tenant Rep to ascertain what the plans are for this structure.

Action – Councillor Rep

Best Garden Awards – The Councillor Rep advised that she did not agree with all of the awards given to Tenants at this year's Best Garden Awards. The Tenant of CEM135 has worked very hard on their allotment plot and did not receive an award. It was **AGREED** to discuss this further at the next Allotment Committee meeting in February 2014.

335.1.2 WPC Reports

CEM149 – The allotment plot is looking untidy and tools are being left out on site. It was **AGREED** to send a WPC1 warning letter.

Action – Committee Clerk

AL/13/336 TO DISCUSS FUTURE ALLOTMENT PROJECTS AND THEIR COSTINGS TO PREPARE FOR NEXT YEAR'S BUDGET

Main gate on Victoria Road Site. The Committee Clerk provided prices for the refurbishment project of the main gate at Victoria Road.

Three prices were quoted as, £490.00 + VAT, £727.00 + VAT and £785.00.

The Committee **AGREED** to allow for a budget of £600.00 for the refurbishment of the gate and for a new wooden post as the post that the gate hangs from is rotten and needs replacement. The costs for this project will be taken from this year's budget.

Dip tanks on Moor Lane and Cemetery sites. These costs for this project will be paid for from this year's budget. The Committee Clerk to re-establish the costs for dip tanks as prices were obtained some time ago and various matters with regards to which taps are to be replaced with dip tanks needed to be resolved before an order can be placed.

Weed spraying on Moor Lane Site. The Committee **AGREED** that the spraying of the weeds should start in early 2014. The Committee Clerk to obtain a price from a company in Weston Super Mare that spray weeds as currently the only quote received with a company that holds a relevant and current licence has quoted a price of £162.00 with a recommendation of 3 visits annually, therefore the total price would be £486.00 including VAT, which the Committee feels is too high a price to pay for weed spraying.

The Committee **AGREED** to allow for a budget of £500.00 as a general maintenance allowance for items such as weed spraying.

Car parking area on Moor Lane Site. The company that provided the stone to dust for the last project on Moor Lane has provided a price of £350.00 + VAT for 10 tonnes of stone to dust delivered to site. The Committee **AGREED** to this price to provide more stone on the car parking area of the Allotment site.

Tap on Church Hill. The Committee discussed the provision of a tap on site to assist with those that are a distance from the dip tanks. The Councillor Rep advised that the cost for installing a tap could be around £1,000. The Councillor Rep and Committee Clerk to investigate costs further for this project.

Japanese Knotweed on Church Hill. The Committee Clerk advised the Committee that treatment to the Japanese Knotweed found on site this year will need to start in the Spring 2014. The cost for three treatments in the Spring, Summer and Autumn for the three areas, i.e. allotment site and two residential properties is £200.00 + VAT.

Boundary Badger Fence on Church Hill. The Councillor Rep advised that work needs to be done to the badger fence on Church Hill to try and stop the animals coming through to the site and causing damage to the Tenant's crops. Further investigation is required to establish what work needs to be carried out to the fence, obtain costs and to maybe carry out this project in sections.

It was **PROPOSED** and **AGREED** to request a budget of £4,000 for next year's Allotment budget for the projects that have been suggested by the Committee in 2014/15.

AL/13/337 TO DISCUSS THE TENANCY AGREEMENT WORDING IN RESPECT OF MAKING IT CLEAR WHICH GRASS BOUNDARIES SHOULD BE CUT AND THE SPRAYING OF WEEDS

The Committee **AGREED** that the Tenants are responsible for all grass boundaries on their allotment plots. It was **PROPOSED** and **AGREED** to include the words ***** around all sides of your plot** - under Item 4 of the Tenancy agreement that reads –

4) Pathways between the gardens to be maintained at the agreed width, (18 inches minimum as Council policy). Grass to be cut *around all sides of your plot *** and weeds removed. The use of barbed wire is not permitted.**

This is to make it clear to all future Tenants. Posters will also be displayed on site noticeboards to also make it clear to all existing tenants.

The spraying of weeds was not discussed.

AL/13/338 TO DISCUSS THE ALLOTMENT WAITING LIST AND WHETHER TO HAVE A REVIEW OF THIS LIST BY WRITING TO THOSE WAITING FOR AN ALLOTMENT GARDEN

The Tenant Rep for Westbourne Avenue would like to write to those waiting for an allotment garden to see if they are still interested in an allotment plot. This request has come due to the Allotment Clerk still only allocating gardens to those that have been waiting for a garden since 2009 and sometimes a response is not received from those that are offered a garden and therefore a lot of time and money is wasted. If a review was done this would remove those from the list that are either no longer interested or maybe moved away. The Tenant Rep for Westbourne Avenue has offered to deliver all letters to those on the waiting list to save on postage costs. It was established that there are 83 waiting for a garden from 2009 to 2011. It was discussed and **AGREED** that we will write to those on the waiting list in batches of 20 letters at a time and to give them a response time within 21 days or they would be removed from the waiting list. Any late responses to the letters will be dealt with on a case by case basis. The Committee Clerk will contact the Tenant Rep when the letters are ready to be posted.

Action – Committee Clerk and Tenant Rep for Westbourne Avenue

AL/13/339 TO DISCUSS WHY ONLY THOSE TENANTS ON BENEFITS RECEIVE THE 25% DISCOUNT ON THEIR ANNUAL ALLOTMENT INVOICE, WHY IS IT NOT ALLOWED FOR PENSIONERS?

The Committee Chairman advised that this item requires time for an in depth discussion, and due to the committee time limit this item was deferred to the next meeting in February 2014.

AL/13/340 TO AGREE TO ALLOTMENT COMMITTEE MEETING DATES FOR 2014

The Committee have **AGREED** to the following dates for the Allotment Committee meetings in 2014

Garden Inspections

w/c 17 February 2014
w/c 24 March 2014
w/c 12 May 2014
w/c 14 July 2014
w/c 8 September 2014

w/c 17 November 2014

Allotment Committee Meeting

Monday 24 February 2014
Monday 31 March 2014
Monday 19 May 2014
Monday 21 July 2014
Monday 15 September 2014
Monday 13 October 2014 – **ATM**
Monday 24 November 2014

AL/13/341 TO RECEIVE TENANT REQUESTS

The Committee Clerk advised that there were no Tenant requests.

AL/13/342 ITEMS REPORTING TO ALLOTMENT WATCH

There are no items reporting to Allotment Watch.

AL/13/343 TO NOTE THE FOLLOWING FOR INFORMATION

Termination of Tenancy – ML47B, ML53, WA91, CH112 & CEM148
Allocation of Tenancy – ML47B, ML53, WA91, CH112 & CEM148
Waiting List – The waiting list is now 127 @ 18 November 2013.
Still to Allocate – ML6 & ML11A

AL/13/344 CHAIRMANS ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

There were no Chairman's Items

AL/13/345 TO DETERMINE PART I and PART II Items

There are no Part I items.
All other items are Part II items.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN Date