

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY, 2 JUNE 2008 AT 7.30PM IN THE CASTLE, HERTFORD**

PRESENT: The Mayor, Councillor Miss K P Darby, in the Chair for the
start of the Meeting

Councillors J F Cook, Mrs H P Durbin, Mrs B S Haddock,
Mrs S M Newton, R A K Radford, N Wilson and Mrs B M Wrangles

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor P A Ruffles
Ms N L Villa, Town Clerk
Mrs M E Aldrich, Administrative Secretary

22. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor N Wilson was elected Chairman for the forthcoming civic year. The Chairman then took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

23. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor Mrs B M Wrangles was elected Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming civic year.

24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillor D R Poole and S Baker, Grounds Supervisor.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs H P Durbin declared a personal interest in minute 29 relating to Hertford Essential Connections, as she was a member of that organisation. A personal interest in minute 27 relating to the Community Garden at Cromwell Road, as she had had discussions with Mudlarks who were project organisers.

Councillor P A Ruffles declared a prejudicial interest in minute 36(b) relating to community grants, as he was president of the Hertford Horticultural Society. He left the meeting whilst this grant application was discussed.

Councillor Mrs B M Wrangles declared a personal interest in all matters relating to the Cromwell Road allotments, as she was an allotment holder at that site.

26. THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2008 were approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

27. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT DEALT WITH ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Action Sheet be received and noted.

Matters Arising

- Rabbit Control – Cromwell Road and Bengoe – It was noted that regular shooting was only a short-term measure. The Town Clerk was requested to write again to Railtrack and Thames Water regarding the Cromwell Road site as Members still considered that the rabbits were coming onto the allotments from the Meads.
- Oak Tree - It was noted that the tree could not be removed until a formal bat survey had been carried out. It was believed that this tree was inhabited by bats.
- Fence at Holy Trinity – It was agreed that this should be an item for consideration by the Working Group.
- Community Garden, Cromwell Road Allotment Site – Request Mudlarks to submit a regular report to this Committee similar to the North Road Plotolders Group.
- Community Orchard, Cromwell Road Allotment Site – The Town Clerk was requested to contact Ms Myra Campbell on progress with the scheme.

28. QUESTIONS AND/OR STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

29. HERTFORD ESSENTIAL CONNECTIONS

The Committee received a report from representatives of the Hertford Essential Connections Group on their formation and their aims to work together with the Town Council to make Hertford a plastic bag free zone.

On view at the meeting were cloth bags that the group were hoping to promote in Hertford, these were priced between £2-£3.

Ms Lakshmi Turner of the group gave statistics about plastic bags, these were –

- 500 billion single-use plastic bags were produced each year, which if joined together, would stretch 3,042 times round the world.
- Plastic came from petroleum and it took 11 barrels to produce one tone of bags.
- 60 million barrels of oil per year were used to produce plastic bags.
- Less than one per cent of bags were recycled per year.
- The average lifespan of a bag was 20 minutes before it was thrown away.
- The average person in the UK was expected to use 30,000 bags in their lifetime.
- It took more than 1,000 years for plastic to disintegrate.
- Discarded plastic bags were a danger to wildlife, marine life and nature.

A general discussion took place on the use of plastic bags and the excessive packing of foods.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The adoption by the Town Council of the Hertford Essential Connections project be approved.
- The formation of a working group be approved.
- The Town Clerk to include in the Weekly Bulletin a request for Members willing to participate on the working group.

Councillor J F Cook voted against the proposal and wished for this to be recorded.

30. ALLOTMENTS - NORTH ROAD ALLOTMENTS SITE

The Secretary of the North Road Plotolders Group presented the report of the group. He commended the Grounds Supervisor and his staff for the prompt attention they gave to requests for assistance on the North Road site.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report from the North Road Plotolders Group be received and noted.

Matters Arising

- The Committee noted that the North Road site now had a waiting list of five.
- The potholes at the entrance to the site had been reinstated.
- The Group would be holding a BBQ on the 22 June 2008 and Town Council members were welcome.

31. ALLOTMENT STATISTICS

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The allotment statistics be received and noted.

32. ALLOTMENTS MAINTENANCE

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report on Allotments Maintenance be received and noted.

Matters Arising

- It was noted that since the access road on the Cromwell Road site had been tarmaced plotolders had a tendency to speed along the road. It was

agreed that a 5mph speed restriction sign be installed at the Rowleys Road entrance gate.

- Steps at Ware end of Cromwell Road Allotment Site – It was noted that the steps were to be repaired.
- New hinges to Rowleys Road entrance gate – It was noted that costs being investigated.

33. CEMETERY AND CLOSED CHURCHYARDS - STATISTICS FOR BURIALS AND INTERMENT OF ASHES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report on the statistics for burials and interment of ashes be noted.

34. ST LEONARD'S GARDEN AND HOLY TRINITY MAINTENANCE

The Committee considered a report on the maintenance of St Leonard's Garden and Holy Trinity Churchyard.

Councillor J F Cook stated that he had contacted the new Bengoe Nursery regarding the maintenance of St Leonard's Garden and they had advised that they were not in a position to commit themselves to any sponsorship at the present time, but would look at it again in the autumn.

The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council might also wish to look at taking over the maintenance of the front lawn area of the Castle Grounds which was now included in the lease, and look at planting that was in keeping with the heritage of the Castle.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The proposal to appoint a contract garden to assist in the upkeep of garden areas in St Leonard's Garden and Holy Trinity Churchyard be approved provided it did not exceed this year's budgeted spend on casual labour.
- The proposal to investigate appointing a contractor, via a tendering process for next year and beyond be approved.

35. CEMETERY AND CLOSED CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report on the maintenance work programme for the Cemetery and Closed Churchyard be received and noted.

36. SUB-COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY SUB-COMMITTEES - HERTFORD YOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Minutes of the Hertford Youth Town Council meeting held on 6 March 2008 be received and noted.

37. FINANCE - GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Committee noted that there was a budget of £10,000 for Community Grants in 2008/09.

The Committee considered the following applications and **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) East Herts Citizens Advice Service Ltd be awarded a grant of £1,000 towards the purchase of three personal computers.
- (b) Hertford Horticultural Society be awarded a grant of £200 towards prize money for the September show.

38. FINANCE - BUDGET SUMMARY OF SERVICES MANAGED BY THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The budget summary of services managed by the Community Services Committee up to 31 March 2008 be received and noted.

Members commented that there were still a number of outstanding issues relating to the refurbishment of the War Memorial that required attention - the grouting between the slabs was cracking and coming loose and there were splashes of cement on the lighting fixtures and other parts of the memorial.

It was agreed that the Rhodes Partnership be asked to carry out an inspection of the War Memorial to clarify the outstanding issues that needed to be addressed. The Town Clerk to report back to the Committee at a future meeting. The Committee also requested the Town Clerk to check whether the floodlighting to the War Memorial was in working order.