

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE  
HELD ON MONDAY, 19 JANUARY 2009 AT 7.30PM IN THE CASTLE,  
HERTFORD**

PRESENT: Councillor N Wilson, in the Chair.

Councillors J F Cook, Miss K P Darby, Mrs B S Haddock, D R Poole,  
R A K Radford and Mrs B M Wrangles.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Dr L E Radford  
Mrs N L Villa, Town Clerk  
Miss M Challis, Assistant to the Town Clerk (minutes)

234. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Councillor J F Hedley, and Mrs S M Newton.

235. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors J F Cook and Mrs B M Wrangles declared personal interests in item 6 relating to allotments as they are both allotment holders.

236. **THE MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2008 were approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

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

The Committee received an updated Action Sheet.

(a) The Town Clerk confirmed that the Allotments Officer is taking additional action to deal with the rising rabbit population at Cromwell Road.

Herts and Middlesex Bat Group have still not carried out a survey on the oak tree in Block B at North Road Cemetery..

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(a) The Action Sheet be received and noted

(b) The Town Clerk would contact East Herts Council to survey the tree at North Road Cemetery.

238. **QUESTIONS AND/OR STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

**239. ALLOTMENTS – NORTH ROAD ALLOTMENTS SITE**

The Committee received a written report from the Secretary of the North Road Plotters Group. The Allotments Officer and Mr B Wilkerson have checked allotment waiting lists for duplicate applicants and found only one.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

**240. ALLOTMENT STATISTICS**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The allotment statistics be received and noted.

**241. ALLOTMENTS MAINTENANCE**

The gate which was noted in the report as “repaired” at Cromwell Road was the wrong gate. A new order has been placed with the contractor to fix the correct gate.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(a) Grounds Supervisors Stuart Baker and his team were to be thanked for the work covered in such a short space of time. The Town Clerk was requested to draft a letter for the Chairman of the Committee to sign.

(b) The report on Allotments Maintenance be received and noted.

**242. ALLOTMENTS REVISED RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The Rules and Regulations for the allotments have not been reviewed for a number of years, and there has been the need for more definition in the general conditions, particularly regarding dogs, bonfires and general upkeep.

It was felt that the revised Rules and Regulations still require some clarification on a number of points, as they were either ambiguous or too complex and restricting for today’s allotment holders.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Town Clerk and the Committee Chairman would re-word these items and present them at the next Community Services Committee meeting.

**243. 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 is noted.

**244. CEMETERY AND CLOSED CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE**

David King, the recently appointed contractor responsible for the maintenance of St Leonard's Garden and Holy Trinity Church, was invited by the Committee Chairman to give an overview of his plans for the two gardens .

- The potential at St. Leonard's garden has not quite been fulfilled. Mr King hopes to increase the planting over the coming months and to introduce a supplement planting plan to create "all-year-round" interest in the garden, and to plant more scented plants. He is aware that the rhubarb plant is to remain.
- Pathways have been carved out around the larger areas to be able to view the garden from different perspectives.
- Mr King wants to replace the hazel panels to the back of the garden with a beech hedge, which will control bindweed growth.
- He hopes that he will be able to construct four composting bins from pallets (to be shielded with the hazel panels as mentioned above) to be able to process waste on site. He would also like to have a covered water butt.
- The Rev'd. Robert Thompson at Holy Trinity church has given positive feedback on Mr King's progress.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The report on the maintenance work programme for the Cemetery and Closed Churchyard be received and noted.
- (b) Mr King would put his requirements in writing to the Town Clerk and any urgent matters, particularly because of planting time restrictions, were to be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Committee Chairman.
- (c) Mr King would send a regular report to the Committee.

**245. REVIEW OF CEMETERY FEES AND ACCESS**

The Committee received a report on the current and proposed cemetery fees and charges, which had not been reviewed for more than two years. It was noted that the fees are generally significantly lower than those charged at other local authorities. The difference is mainly attributed to the fact that Hertford Town Council includes the cost of interment within its Exclusive Right of Burial fee, whereas other

authorities charge the internment as an additional cost, usually based on the cost of digging the grave. It was recommended that fees should be increased to a more comparable level.

It was also recommended that fees to non-Hertford residents should be trebled as the current policy of doubling the fee was considered too generous in comparison.

Councillors were in agreement that the proposed increases for Exclusive Right of Burial (currently 99 years), including that for a child under the age of 10, were too high and could not be justified, particularly in the current economic climate. Burial space is limited at North Road cemetery and the proposed trebled fees were still considered to be too generous, to dissuade applications for non-Hertford residents.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The cost of purchasing an Exclusive Right of Burial is to be increased by 3% in line with inflation and to add an Internment Fee (currently included) of £50.00 (£25.00 for a child under the age of 10).
- (b) Future increases for the Exclusive Rights would continue to be in line with inflation, and increases to the Internment Fees would be reviewed annually.
- (c) Fees to non Hertford applicants should be quadrupled.
- (d) All other proposed increases for 2009/10 were agreed.
- (e) These increases are to take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009.

**246. SUB-COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY SUB-COMMITTEES - HERTFORD YOUTH TOWN COUNCIL**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Minutes of the Hertford Youth Town Council meeting held on 21 August 2008 be received and noted.
- (b) The Minutes of the Hertford Youth Town Council meeting held on 18 December 2008 have not been circulated.

**247.** Councillor Wilson announced that he would be stepping down as Chair of the Community Services Committee at the end of this Mayoral year. The Mayor thanked Councillor Wilson for his time and dedication given whilst Chair.