

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 7.30PM IN THE CASTLE,
HERTFORD**

PRESENT: Cllr P Ruffles, in the Chair

PRESENT D Abbott, P Boyle, S Cousins, Dr J Downs, Mrs S Dunkley, Mrs S
Newton and Mrs S Rutland Barsby

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms Tricia Carpenter – Interim Town Clerk
Ms Jackie Haynes – Mayor’s Secretary

212. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs Haddock (unwell)

213. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr S Cousins	DPI	Agenda item 6E Allotment Rents	Cllr Cousins has an Allotment.
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214. THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2015 were approved as a correct record of the proceedings and the Chairman was authorised to sign same.

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

Cemetery Land

The Chairman advised that he considered there was still information that could be gleaned from Bishop’s Stortford Town Council in its investigations for increasing burial space.

Wall at St Andrew’s Church

East Herts Council officers were still working to ensure the ancient wall was rebuilt and were currently looking at options for match funding between the District Council, Town Council and a local business. Ownership of the wall had still not been established.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The action sheet be noted.

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

None.

217. **ALLOTMENTS – STATISTICS AND MAINTENANCE**

The Committee received a report detailing the latest statistics for the Council's allotment sites, and also maintenance work which had been carried out on the sites. The Committee had been requested to give consideration to a change of wording to the rule concerning the use of Bonfires, to read 'Bonfires are allowed for the burning of diseased plants and organic material, from the beginning of September until the end of April only'. This slight word change is to discourage tenants from having bonfires in the summer months.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The allotment statistics and maintenance details be received and noted.
2. The wording to the Rule 17 be amended to read 'Bonfires are allowed for the burning of diseased plants and organic material, from the beginning of September until the end of April only'.

218. **ALLOTMENTS – MUDLARKS COMMUNITY GARDEN PROJECT**

The Committee received a report from Mudlarks regarding the recent activities of the project. The Committee wished to commend Mudlarks for their work and in particular for the maintenance of St Leonard's Garden, which it was felt was well designed and looking beautiful this year.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee notes the report.

219. **NORTH ROAD PLOTHOLDERS GROUP**

The Committee received a report from the Chairman of the North Road Plotters' Group. Cllr Cousins advised the Committee that, as the Town Council's representative on the NRPG he would shortly be meeting with the Chairman of the group and visiting the site.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee notes the report.

220. LOVELY GRUB GARDEN

The Committee received a report outlining the recent activities of the Lovely Grub Garden. The Committee noted that the Group was looking for funding to install a compost toilet and Councillor Mrs Rutland Barsby advised that should the group raise half of the amount required, funding could be available from the Community Capital grant scheme of one of the East Herts Council Castle Ward members.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee notes the report.

221. ALLOTMENT RENTS

The Committee received a report outlining a proposal to increase allotment rents from £4.80 per year to £5. This increase would come into effect from 1 January 2017.

The Committee was supportive of the proposed increase and recommended that some changes be made in relation to the concession rates. It was suggested that half price concessions for those already in receipt of a concession would continue, however no new concessions would be granted. Cases of extreme financial hardship would be considered on a case by case basis. It was further suggested that any allotment tenant over the age of 90 would not be charged.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **notes** the report.
- b) The Committee **approves** an increase in allotment rents from £4.80 to £5.00 with effect from 1 January 2017.
- c) The Committee **approves** the cessation of allotment concessions except to those already in receipt of a concession.
- d) The Committee approves that any tenant over the age of 90 will not be charged.

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

The Committee received a report outlining the recent burials and interment of ashes statistics at the Cemetery along with details of the maintenance work programme.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **notes** the report

223. SUB COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY SUB COMMITTEES

Hertford Youth Town Council

A Working Party of Councillors had been meeting to discuss a review of the Youth Town Council and youth engagement. Cllr Boyle, one of the members advised that in the discussions so far the Working Party was looking at a range of options including extending the membership to include such organisations as Scouts, Guides and Cadets, to the meetings being less formal, having more members involved in advising the Youth Councillors, better promotion in schools, provision of civic robes etc. In carrying out their research the Working Party had also met with two current Youth Councillors and one former member. Investigations were continuing.

The Chairman commented that he felt the Working Party could have been a little more ambitious in its investigations and look wider at options for Youth Engagement generally.

It was RESOLVED that:

The Committee **notes** the verbal report.

224. FINANCE - FIRST QUARTER INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2015/16

The Committee received a report detailing the income and expenditure figures for the first quarter 2015/16.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee notes the end of year income and expenditure to 31 March 2015.

225. DRAFT BUDGET 2016/17

The Committee received the first draft of the budget for 2016/17. Queries were raised regarding the proposed costs for the installation of water tanks at the Hertingfordbury Road allotments, which it was felt were excessive at £12000.

The Chairman advised that the proposed payment of £500 to the Lovely Grub Garden was a one off payment and not an annual payment as outlined in the report.

Members were advised to bring any items to the Civic Administration Manager for consideration and inclusion in the budget.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the report.

The meeting closed at 2040