

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2010 AT 7.30PM IN THE CASTLE,
HERTFORD**

PRESENT: Councillor Miss K Darby in the Chair.

Councillors Mrs H P Durbin, Mrs A Emsley, Mrs B Haddock, R Radford and Mrs B Wrangles.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor P A Ruffles
Councillor M McCormick
Mrs N L Villa, Town Clerk
Ms T Carpenter Civic Administration Manager
Mr S Davies, Finance Manager
North Road Plotolders Group
Mudlarks Community Allotment Group
3 Members of the public

251. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J Hedley (Unwell) Mrs S Newton (family commitment) D Poole (previous engagement) and N Wilson (family commitment)

252. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs H Durbin	Personal	Item 6(d) Mudlarks Committee member of Mudlarks
Cllr M McCormick	Prejudicial	Item 7(b) Cemetery. If St Andrew's Churchyard discussed. Member of St Andrew's Church PCC
Cllr P Ruffles	Personal	Item 7(b) Cemetery. If St Andrew's churchyard discussed. Member of St Andrew's Church
Cllr Mrs B Wrangles	Personal	Item 6 Allotments. Husband is an Allotment holder.

253. THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2010 were approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

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

Cemetery

The Town Clerk advised that there had been a break-in at the Cemetery over the weekend of 13-14 November 2010 with the loss of approximately £2500 worth of equipment. The break-in had been reported to the Police and the Council's insurers. The premises would be secured and consideration given to storing equipment at the Castle over the winter.

Living Churchyard Scheme, All Saints

It was confirmed that there had been no feedback received from members of the public regarding the introduction of the Living Churchyard scheme at All Saints.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Action Sheet be received and noted

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

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

256. ALLOTMENTS – NORTH ROAD ALLOTMENTS SITE

The Committee received a written report from the Secretary of the North Road Plotolders Group. A joint Health and Safety inspection had recently taken place, with no significant concerns to report

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

257. ALLOTMENT - STATISTICS

The Committee noted that the report detailing the latest statistics. It was requested that a site inspection be arranged at Cromwell Road to check the level of cultivation of certain plots at the site. Cllr Radford volunteered to attend.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The allotment statistics be received and noted.

258. ALLOTMENTS - MAINTENANCE

The Committee received a report which provided details of work completed across the allotments sites since the beginning of September 2010.

It was reported that fly tipping of up to 70 tyres had taken place at Hertingfordbury allotments and the Council had had to pay for their removal.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report on allotments maintenance be received and noted.

259. ALLOTMENTS - MUDLARKS

The Committee received a report from Mudlarks regarding the recent activities of the project.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report be noted.

260. 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.

261. CEMETERY AND CLOSED CHURCHYARD - MAINTENANCE

The Committee received a report detailing the maintenance which had taken place in the Cemetery and Closed Churchyards since the beginning of September 2010.

Cllr Ruffles questioned the reason for the siting of the plaque on the gate pillar of the St Andrew's Churchyard, which he felt was inappropriate given the historic significance of the pillars. The Town Clerk advised that the information provided on the plaque was a requirement of the Green Flag process but confirmed that this could be removed once the notice board inside the gate had been refurbished.

Note: Having already declared a prejudicial interest, Cllr McCormick vacant the room during the discussion on this item.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

262. REPAIRS TO WALLS AT HOLY TRINITY AND ST LEONARD'S CHURCHYARDS

Following a recent seasonal inspection, the walls at both Holy Trinity and St Leonard's churchyards had been found to be in urgent need of repair. At a meeting of this Committee 6th September, it was agreed that the Town Clerk be requested to seek quotations and in, consultation with the Chairman, progress repairs on the worse affected areas. Following discussions between the Town Clerk and the Chairman, the repair work had been authorised and the Committee was requested to retrospectively ratify the repairs at a cost of £5000 and £4200 respectively. It was noted that grants had been received from East Herts Council in the sum of £1000 for Holy Trinity and £500 for St Leonard's towards the cost of the repairs

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The action taken and expenditure incurred by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman be ratified and that the repairs to the walls be approved.

263. BENCH AT WINDSOR DRIVE

This matter had been deferred from the last meeting to allow for consultation with the Police concerning its removal. Cllr R Radford had discussed this matter with the Police who had confirmed their preference to have it removed. Numerous complaints from members of the public had been received by local councillors that the bench was used by groups of young people, often under the influence of alcohol who caused an anti social and litter nuisance. Whilst concern was expressed that the anti social behaviour problem was likely to move elsewhere nevertheless the Committee was of the opinion that on the information received from the Police the bench should be removed.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Arrangements be put into place for the bench at Windsor Drive to be removed.

264. CASTLE GROUNDS

The Committee received a verbal update from the Clerk concerning the proposal for the Council to assume responsibility for the maintenance of the Castle Grounds from East Herts Council on 1 April 2011. The Finance, Policy and Administration Committee had agreed to enter into a full tender process for the appointment of a new Contractor and following the appointment, the oversight of the contract will become the responsibility of the Community Services Committee. An area of the Castle Grounds, including the 'bowling green' at the front, the area surrounding the Castle and at the back up to 15m onto the lawn currently formed part of the Council's lease but had historically always been maintained by the District Council.

The remainder of the grounds were in the ownership of the District Council. Following discussions with officers from East Herts Council a proposal had been made that the maintenance responsibility of the whole grounds be transferred to the Council, with a financial contribution being paid from the District Council.

A suggestion was made regarding the introduction of a communal planting area, where the public could harvest the produce. The Chairman advised that this was a matter that could be considered once the responsibility for the grounds had been transferred to the Committee

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The verbal report be noted.

265. SUB COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY SUB COMMITTEES

The Committee had received a copy of the minutes of the Youth Town Council held on 14 September 2010. The Committee was impressed by the range on issues discussed by the Youth Town Council and was pleased to note several members attended and helped at the Remembrance Sunday Parade. It was requested that the Youth Town Council be advised of the Committee's gratitude for the work carried out by the young people on the Youth Town Council and to offer support on any matter they may wish the Committee to consider.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the Youth Town Council meeting held on 14 September 2010 be received.

266. FINANCE - 1st HALF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

The Committee received a report detailing the 1st half income and expenditure and it was noted that expenditure was broadly on target with an overspend of £5000 which was largely as a result of the need to purchase a new van for the grounds staff.

It was noted that the water rate at the allotment sites was likely to increase, but that the water had been turned off for the winter months.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The report be noted.

267. ITEMS FOR BUDGET 2011/2012

The Committee had received a report providing a draft budget for the financial year 2011/12 with projects of resurfacing at the cemetery and closed churchyard being included which still resulted in a 0% increase in the precept.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee recommend the budget to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee for consideration at its meeting on 20 December 2010.

The meeting closed at 8.05pm.