

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 2013 AT 7.30PM IN THE CASTLE,
HERTFORD**

PRESENT Councillor N Wilson, in the Chair

Councillors P Boyle, M McCormick, D Poole and P Ruffles

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms N Villa, Town Clerk
Ms T Carpenter, Civic Administration Manager

166. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Mrs B Haddock (Unwell), Cllr P Moore, Mrs S Newton (Previous engagement) R Radford (Unwell) and R Willis (Previous meeting)

167. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

168. THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2013 were approved as a correct record of the proceedings and the Chairman was authorised to sign same.

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

North Road Plotholder's Group Lease

It was noted that in the new lease communications the NRPG had not raised the issue of the possibility of a reduction in their grant, as was suggested by the group during the original lease discussions.

Community Gardening Projects

The Committee noted the correspondence regarding the future maintenance of the Bluecoats flower beds and were informed that it was unlikely that permission would be granted for a community gardening project to be implemented at that site.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The action sheet be noted.

169. QUESTIONS AND/OR STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE

PUBLIC

None.

170. 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.

It was noted that waiting lists continued to be kept to a minimum and that new plot holders were regularly joining the sites. It was requested that a press release be issued to outline the success the Council had in keeping its allotment sites virtually fully tenanted.

A suggestion was proffered that Grounds staff be requested to dig over all vacant plots during the winter months to keep the weeds at bay, however it was confirmed that over grown plots were strimmed prior to new tenants being recruited to sites.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The allotment statistics and maintenance details be received and noted.

171. ALLOTMENTS – MUDLARKS COMMUNITY GARDEN PROJECT

The Committee received a report from Mudlarks regarding the recent activities of the project. The Committee remarked on the impressive transformation of the front beds of the Castle Gardens, and the achievements of Mudlarks generally on their work across the Town, which was considered to be remarkable.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee notes the report.

172. NORTH ROAD PLOTHOLDERS GROUP

The Committee received a report regarding the recent activities of the North Road Plotolders Group and the issue of the compost bays was noted.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee notes the report.

173. 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 noted that there had been a

reduction in burials on the same period in the previous year which could have an impact on the budget turnout and the end of the financial year.

It was requested that details be provided of the number of burials in the last year which had been new burials as opposed to re-open burials.

A discussion took place regarding a request by a resident to remove gates to the footpaths in All Saints Churchyard in order to reduce manoeuvring around them from Hagsdell Road. Concern was expressed that this could lead to an increase in cyclists within the Churchyard (and possibly motorcyclists) and it was further noted that the gates acted as a barrier to the road for smaller children who often run in front of their parents.

It was requested that the Churchwardens be approached to ascertain whether the Church was happy for the Council to consider the request as a serious option.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The Committee notes the report.
2. The view of the Church Wardens of All Saints Church be sought to ascertain whether the Council should consider the removal of the gates.

174. SEASONAL INSPECTION NOTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Seasonal Inspection Report be noted.

175. CEMETERY MESS ROOM

The Committee received a report outlining a proposed action for proceeding with initial investigations for a new mess room and workshop at the cemetery. It had been outlined in the report and recommended to the Committee that the Chairman draw up a set of plans and that pre-planning advice be sought.

Following a discussion regarding the recommendation a counter recommendation was approved which limited the level of expenditure in this financial year to £2000.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **delegates** authority to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman to develop a choice of proposals for the cost-effective upgrade of the Cemetery mess room and that pre-planning advice be sought as to the feasibility of the same with a limited spend at this stage of £2000.

176. SUB COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY SUB COMMITTEES

Hertford Youth Town Council

The Committee noted the successful Youth Town Council event on 17 July 2013 and noted the date of the next meeting as 25 September 2013.

177. FINANCE - FIRST QUARTER INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2013/14

The Committee received a report detailing the first year income and expenditure for the Community Services Committee 2013/14.

A query was raised regarding the level of rental income for Crawleys Field and for Fishing Rights and the Clerk agreed to investigate current expected rates of income for similar land to ensure that the Council's level of charging was commensurate.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee notes the first quarter income and expenditure for 2013/14

178. DRAFT BUDGET 2014/15

The Committee had received a first draft of the proposed budget for 2014/15 and noted that the optional budget items suggested by Officers currently stood at £46,000.

A discussion took place regarding the suggested optional projects, and at this early stage in the budget discussions, it was felt that the following items could reasonably be reduced or excluded.

Cemetery Mess Room	Reduce from £10,000 to £5000.
Cemetery Memorial Repairs	Reduce from £5000 to £3000
Refurbishment of benches	Delete £2000
War Memorial Reserve	Consider deletion £5000 (funds to be utilised from Building Reserve) Further discussion required.

The Committee was requested to consider any further projects which members wished to see included in the budget 2014/15.

The meeting closed at 2135.