

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER 2011 AT 7.30PM IN THE CASTLE,
HERTFORD**

PRESENT: Councillor M McCormick, in the Chair

Councillors P Boyle, D Poole, R Radford, P Ruffles and R Willis.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Mrs S Newton, The Mayor
Councillor P Moore
Mrs N James, Town Clerk
Ms T Carpenter Civic Administration Manager
Retiring Youth Town Councillor Miss McFiggans
North Road Plotolders Group
Mudlarks Community Allotment Group
4 members of the public

PRESENTATION: Prior to the meeting the Mayor made a presentation to retiring Youth Town Councillor Miss Emily McFiggans in recognition of her service to the Youth Town Council from 2007 to 2011.

168. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Mrs B Haddock (Holiday) Mrs B Mansfield (prior engagement) and N Wilson (Holiday).

169. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr M McCormick	Personal	Ag item 7(c) & 10	Member of PCC St Andrew's Church
Cllr P Ruffles	Personal	Ag item 7(c) & 10	Member of St Andrew's Church

170. THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2011 were approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

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

Cemetery Signage

It was noted that the replacement signage at the St Andrew's section of the Cemetery was in place and that the plaque on the gate pier had been removed.

Cemetery Resurfacing

Cemetery resurfacing was due to take place shortly, but this work excluded edging work to the roundabout.

Bee Garden, Hertingfordbury

Work to the bee garden was progressing.

Sele Road land

This land was now in the Council's ownership but clearance work had not started.

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

There were three members of the public wishing to address the Committee and the Chairman reminded the Committee of the rules of public participation at meetings.

Mr Grahame Ainge

Mr Ainge wished to address the Committee regarding the renewal of the Devolved Management Agreement for the North Road Allotments.

Mr Ainge stated that he considered he had been harassed and subjected to bullying and intimidation by members of the North Road Plotolders Group Committee following his request for the re-siting of the beehives on the allotment site to prevent him being regularly stung. He requested that when the Council considered the terms of the revised Devolved Management Agreement that a clause be added to ensure that the Council was able to arbitrate in disagreements between allotment holders and the Committee. He further requested that an opportunity be given for individual plotolders to opt out of the Plotolders Group and return to Council jurisdiction and for Plotolders at North Road to be given the same protection under the rules and regulations as those allotment tenants at Council operated sites.

Mrs Anne Ainge

Mrs Ainge did not wish to add anything further to the comments given by Mr Ainge as he had covered all the points they wished to make.

Mr John Cook

Mr Cook wished to address the Committee regarding the resurfacing of the entrance to the North Road Allotment Site.

Mr Cook advised the Committee that the Council did not own the 24' strip of land at the entrance to the North Road allotment site and that the Council deeds were incorrect. He stated that the entrance crossed Grenfell Avenue, which was held as a 'ransom strip' and owned by the late builder Alfred Scales and his executors. In 1963 the then Town

Clerk of the Borough Council confirmed that the land did not belong to the Council. Mr Cook further stated that there was a water pipe under the road and if resurfacing took place a duct should be put in for the water pipe.

173. ALLOTMENTS – NORTH ROAD ALLOTMENTS SITE

Mr Brian Wilkerson, Secretary of the North Road Allotment Group, provided the Committee with a written report of the recent activities.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee receives and notes the report from the North Road Plotolders Group.

174. ALLOTMENT - STATISTICS

The Committee noted the report detailing the latest statistics and in particular that the waiting list at Bengo was comparatively high and that there was no longer any ten pole plots at that site.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The allotment statistics be received and noted.

175. ALLOTMENTS - MAINTENANCE

The Committee received a report which provided details of work completed across the allotments sites from 23 May to 18 August 2011.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee receives and notes the report on allotments maintenance.

176. ALLOTMENTS – MUDLARKS COMMUNITY GARDEN PROJECT

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

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee notes the report.

177. DEVOLVED MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT, NORTH ROAD ALLOTMENTS

The Committee received an update of the work of the Devolved Management Working Party.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee notes the report.

178. 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. The large recent drop in numbers was noted which appeared to have no obvious explanation.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

179. CEMETERY AND CLOSED CHURCHYARD - MAINTENANCE

The Committee received a report detailing the maintenance which had taken place in the Cemetery and Closed Churchyards between 23 May to 18 August 2011.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

180. NOTES FROM THE SEASONAL INSPECTION HELD ON 23 AUGUST 2011

The Committee had received the notes from the recent seasonal inspection of St Andrew's and All Saints Churchyards. The need for a bin to be centrally located within the All Saints Churchyard, close to the Pearson memorial was noted.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The notes from the recent seasonal inspection be noted.

181. SUB COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY SUB COMMITTEES

It was noted that the next meeting of the Youth Town Council would be held on 28 September 2011.

182. FINANCE - FIRST QUARTER INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2011/12

The Committee noted an overspend of £1000 on the installation of the Physic Garden at Holy Trinity and further noted that the contractor had been advised that his work should be modified for the remainder of this financial year to ensure the work remained in budget.

Concern was expressed regarding the imbalance of expenditure in the Bengeo churchyards compared to that in the other churchyards and it was recognised that future projects would be looked at carefully. It was felt that the Council had recently gone over and above the requirements

of the statutory legislation for closed churchyards, which required Councils to merely prevent churchyards becoming overgrown.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee notes the report.

183. FINANCE – TO CONSIDER ITEMS FOR BUDGET 2012/13

The Committee had been provided with the first draft of the proposed Community Services budget for 2012/13 and were requested to give consideration to the projects to be undertaken for the forthcoming financial year.

The Chairman stated that given that this budget would take the Committee to the half way point of this administration careful consideration should be given to each item listed.

The following items were considered as either important or suitable projects for 2012/13:

- Preparation work to Block J
- Bases under benches in Cemetery
- Repainting of bins and benches in Town Centre
- Installation of cast iron bins at All Saints
- Digital archiving of burial records
- Provision of fencing and notice boards at new Sele Road land
- Provision for resurfacing of North Road Allotments Entrance

It was requested that the following projects be considered carefully and that more detailed costings be available for further discussion at the next meeting:

- Resurfacing work at Cemetery
- Memorial repairs
- Footpath resurfacing at All Saints
- Repairs/replacement to railings at St Andrew and All Saints
- Replacement of fencing at Folly Allotments
- Hedge cutting at Hertingfordbury Allotments

The Chairman reminded the Committee of the Council's priorities for 2011-2015 which included seeking to improve the quality of the green areas in the Town, a garden sharing scheme and the establishment of community garden projects. These may require budget provisions. Furthermore, as this budget would take the committee to the half way point of the administration, if members had any ideas for projects they felt the committee should consider pursuing it was an opportune time from them to be brought to the Council's attention.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

All the optional budget items would be further discussed at the Committee's next meeting in November together with any additional projects members wish to have considered.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.