

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY, 13 JUNE 2016 AT 7.30PM IN THE CASTLE, HERTFORD**

PRESENT: Cllr Dr Linda Radford, in the Chair at the start of the meeting.

P Boyle, S Cousins, Dr J Downs, Mrs S Dunkley, Mrs B Haddock,
P Ruffles and Mrs S Rutland-Barsby

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Joseph Whelan – Town Clerk
Ms Tricia Carpenter – Civic Administration Manager
Miss Jackie Haynes – Customer Services Officer

56. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Cllr S Cousins be elected Chairman of the ensuing civic year.

Cllr Cousins chaired the remainder of the meeting.

57. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Cllr P Ruffles be elected Vice Chairman for the ensuing civic year

58. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs R Bolton (family commitment) and Cllr Mrs S Newton (family commitment)

59. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

60. THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2016 were approved as a correct record of the proceedings and the Chairman was authorised to sign same.

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

Wall adjacent to St Andrew Church

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that East Herts Council had approved a grant towards the rebuilding of the wall of 50% of the quotation cost of £8750. The Committee was asked to make a decision on the height to which the wall should be rebuilt. The Committee recommended that the wall should be rebuilt to just above the level of the existing tombstone adjacent to the wall, but depended on the number of bricks that had been recovered and were reusable.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The action sheet be noted.

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

None.

63. **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 noted the waiting list at the Bengo allotment site and the Chairman advised that he had noted that there were four allotment plots at the site that did not appear to have been worked this year. Officers agreed to carry out a site visit and assess the situation, with a view to starting the process to issuing notices to quit if appropriate.

A local resident had asked 'Has the council any plans to protect their allotments from future building sites?' The Town Clerk advised that policies in both the emerging East Herts District Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan would ensure that the allotment sites would not be at risk from development. The Town Clerk agreed to write to the resident to confirm the above.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee notes the report.

64. **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.

65. NORTH ROAD PLOTHOLDERS GROUP

The Committee received a report from the Chairman of the North Road Plotolders' Group. The Committee was pleased to note the improvements the Group had implemented in recent months and commended the commitment of the plot holders.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the report

66. SELE ROAD LOVELY GRUB GARDEN

The Committee received a report outlining the recent activities of the Lovely Grub Garden

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the report. .

67. 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.

The Committee wished to pass on its appreciation to the grounds staff for their quick response to the removal of an ivy ball which was on highway land.

The Committee was disappointed to note that two old oak trees at the Cemetery required removal for safety purposes, both were dangerous and cordoned off.

The Committee authorised Officers to carry out negotiations with the Diocese for the repair of chest tombs in both All Saints and St Leonard's Churchyard, as indicated in the Heritage at Risk statement.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

68. PINEHURST PLAYING FIELD AND PLAY EQUIPMENT

The Committee received a report outlining the maintenance schedule for the Pinehurst Playing Field and the findings for repairs from a recent inspections.

The Committee noted that some of the damage to play equipment and signage had been as a result of vandalism and it was suggested that the Police be approached to ascertain whether a mobile CCTV camera could temporarily sited in the area. The Town Clerk agreed to contact the Neighbourhood Sergeant.

A suggestion to provide fencing around the play equipment for older children to prevent dogs from accessing the area was considered by members. It was noted that such a provision would be extremely expensive, however the Chairman agreed to meet with a neighbourhood officer from Riverside Housing Association to ascertain whether any grant funding could be made available.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The Committee **notes** the report.
2. The Committee **recommends** to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee that the Pinehurst contingency reserve be utilised as necessary during 2016/17 for maintenance and repairs of the equipment, and Pinehurst Community Area Reserve be topped up to £15000 following the year end.

69. PROPOSED SITE VISITS

Site visits were proposed on the following dates times:

Thursday 23rd June 11am – Pinehurst Playing Field and Hertingfordbury Allotments. Meeting first at Pinehurst.

Tuesday 28th June 11am - St Leonard's and Holy Trinity. Meeting first at St Leonard's.

Friday 22nd July 11am – All Saints and North Road Cemetery. Meeting first at All Saints.

70. FINANCE - END OF YEAR INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2015/16

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

The Committee noted the remaining budget for Churchyard Tree work and requested that this balance be carried forward to 2016/17 to the Cemetery Tree budget, to help to cover the tree work required to the two oak trees.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **notes** the end of year income and expenditure for 2015/16
- b) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance Policy & Administration Committee that the unspent balance of £11,375 in budget code 5342 (Memorial repairs) be carried forward to fund repairs to “at risk” memorials in St Leonards and All Saints Churchyards.
- c) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance Policy & Administration Committee that the unspent balance of £9,050 in budget code 5343 (Unbudgeted Cemetery Works) be carried forward to fund the expenditure incurred in April 2017.
- d) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee that the unspent balance of £7163 in budget code 5250 (Churchyard trees) be carried forward to cover the cost of the removal of the two oak trees in the Cemetery

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm