

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ALLOTMENTS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
OF TRING TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, THE MARKET
HOUSE, TRING ON MONDAY 9th DECEMBER 2013 AT 8.00 p.m.**

Present: Councillors: J. Allan, in the Chair
S. Hearn
Mrs R. Ransley

Co-opted Members: Ms M Moxon (Tring Allotments Association)
Mr J. Savage
Mrs B. Kazer (Tring Environmental Forum/Tring in
Transition)
Ms Greta Brown (Chiltern Society)

Also present: Councillor M. Hicks
Mr M. Curry, Town Clerk
Mrs P. Walker, Deputy Town Clerk

No members of the public
1 Member of the press (part)

17157. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from the Councillor B. Batchelor (prior commitment), Councillor N. Nutkins (prior commitment) and Mr R. Wallis (Tring Allotments Association – prior commitment)

17158. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

17159. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd September 2013 were agreed as a true record subject to the correction “composting” (item 16940) and signed by the Chairman.

17160. MATTERS OF REPORT FROM THE MINUTES

Item 16941 (iii) Allotment deposits are being charged for new lets

Item 16944 Woodland Trust Free Trees – the bid for three packs was successful

Item 16947 Town Plan – the Environment Sub-group has completed the task. The resulting questions will be submitted to the next meeting of the Town Plan Working Party

17161. CHAIRMAN’S COMMUNICATIONS

The latest editions of the Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust’s and the Chiltern Society’s newsletters have been received. A request for articles for the Dacorum Digest had also been received – further details available from the Clerk.

17162. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present.

17163. REPORTS FROM CO-OPTED MEMBERS (not covered elsewhere)

Ms. M. Moxon (Tring Allotments Association):

- Thanked the Deputy Clerk for issuing the details of the Association to plot holders when renewing their agreement, reporting that membership had increased
- Noted that the Associations AGM had been held recently, with a small increase in the numbers attending

- Comments made at the AGM included: the possible provision of a key to the contractor delivering compost; a query of charges for non-standard sized plots, and the quality of grass cutting and strimming. Ms Moxon felt that the unevenness of the ground made the latter difficult to improve upon
- She reported that the dog bin had been removed from the entrance opposite the cemetery and suggested there was a need for another dog bin at the Duckmore Lane end of the path

Action: The Deputy Clerk to investigate the comments raised at the Association's AGM.

Mrs B. Kazer (Tring Environmental Forum/Tring in Transition)

- Thermal imaging had begun with approx. twelve bookings before Christmas. A survey of Market House had been completed. The Red Cross Hall was proposed as another venue to survey. Cllr Mrs. Ransley suggested that Dundale Primary School might be interested in thermal imaging as a project
- Mrs Kazer reported on the wildflower planting in the Memorial Gardens. Planting Flanders poppies as part of the commemoration of the commencement of WWI was put forward for 2014

Ms G. Brown (Chiltern Society)

- Commented that the Woodland Trust's work on rights of way and path clearance in Tring Park had enhanced the footpaths
- Preliminary work on the new car park for the Museum appeared to have begun

17164. ALLOTMENTS MANAGEMENT:

(i) *To receive a report from the Deputy Town Clerk on allotment lettings*
Plots are remaining vacant. To let overgrown plots, the first year's rent has been waived; vacant plots are now being strimmed to keep them under control. There does not appear to be an imbalance between supply and demand for plots of a particular size i.e. there is no demand for quarter plots and there are vacant half plots for which demand seems highest.

The Committee noted the report.

(ii) *To receive a verbal report from the Town Warden*
The Clerk reported on the work that the Town Warden had completed at the allotments and throughout the Town.

- **Duckmore Lane Allotments/Grasskeep.** The allotment site continues to improve in appearance, there are vacant allotments available which are being kept tidy by strimming them. The Millennium Woodland area has now been cut. The drop down posts/barriers at all vehicle access points are a success and have only been vandalised once (by someone cutting off a padlock).
- **Bulbourne Allotments/Grasskeep.** The new allotments at the site have not been a success as only one is being worked and there is a vacant plot on the old area.
- **Town Centre Cleanliness.** The town's cleanliness is reasonable but it could be improved, cigarette butts and occasionally glass left in areas the street cleaner and his machine cannot access
- **Graffiti.** Graffiti has not been a problem this period.
- **Grounds' Maintenance Contracts.** The standard of grounds' maintenance continues to be good; and responses to requests for jobs to be done are always prompt. The hanging baskets which DBC agreed to maintain at the Aylesbury end of the High Street are either missing or poorly maintained.

17165. DACORUM LOCAL FOOD INITIATIVE – UPDATE ON POSSIBLE USE OF BULBOURNE ALLOTMENTS SPACE. Deferred pending receipt of report

17166. MANAGEMENT OF THE MILLENNIUM WOOD

(i) Cllr S. Hearn reported the specification for the cutting of the Duckmore Lane perimeter hedge, emphasizing that the western boundary would be left as its management requires careful consideration of the possible effect on the natural habitat. He was pleased that the work was being done by a contractor with long associations to the town.

On the Duckmore Lane side the hedge would be cut back to six feet high with control of the blackthorn. Along the Aylesbury Road specimen trees would be saved, and the ground trimmed from the road to the base of the boundary bank. This would identify gaps for possible wildflower planting and the planting of the Woodland Trust tree packs. Cllr S. Hearn told Members that the packs were of species that would generate a very typical Chiltern hedgerow.

Trimblings would be stacked and stored for a programme of controlled burning, weather conditions permitting.

(ii) The Good Wood Project report on Millennium Wood (circulated prior to the meeting) was very favourable and gave recommendations on the work currently needed, which was not major.

(iii) In light of (ii) above Members considered establishing a 'Friends of Millennium Wood' group to assist the long-term management of the Millennium Wood. Cllr S. Hearn stressed that whilst there was a role for such a group, management of a wood was essentially a professional task and the group would have to operate within this framework. Members agreed the proposal. The educational role the group could fulfil was stressed.

RESOLVED (i) That Cllr S. Hearn constitute a 'Friends of Millennium Wood' group

(ii) Cllr S. Hearn and the Clerk prepare a press release on the work being done at, and the plans for, Millennium Wood.

17167. THE CHILTERN CONSERVATION BOARD – CONSULTATIONS

The Committee considered the reports circulated prior to the meeting with regard to the consultation on the Chilterns AONB Management Plan for 2014-19. Whilst the report was informative, highlighting the issues to be tackled and the approach that will be adopted Members felt a response was not required.

RESOLVED To note the report

17168. PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHIP GRANTS 2014

The Committee agreed that, following the outcomes of the Town Plan preliminary research highlighting better signage, the bid should be directed to the provision of signs to encourage walking. The signs should indicate the destination, where appropriate, and distance. Mr J. Savage volunteered to undertake an audit of the town's paths and prepare a prioritised, schedule of requirements.

Action Mr J. Savage and the Clerk liaise to source an up-to-date copy of the definitive pathways map.

RESOLVED (i) Mr J. Savage, upon behalf of the Committee, prepare a prioritised, schedule of requirements for the 2014 3P bid
(ii) The Clerk to investigate costs of the proposed provision

The meeting closed at 8:50 p.m.