

**MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENTS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE OF THE
TRING TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MARKET HOUSE, TRING
ON MONDAY 20th SEPTEMBER 2010 at 8.05 p.m.**

- Present:**
- Councillors: Mrs R. L. Ransley (in the Chair)
J. S. Allan (ex officio)
Mrs M.V. Booth
M. J. James
- Co-opted: Greta Brown (The Chiltern Society)
Barbara Kazer (Tring Environmental Forum)
Mary Lynn Moxon (Tring Allotments Association)
Rupert Wallis (Tring Allotments Association)
- Also present:** Mrs S. Johnson, Clerk of the Council
Mrs B. Daytonn, Deputy Clerk
Mr C. Jones, Town Warden
4 members of the public

15622. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from John Savage (Ramblers Association).

15623. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

15624. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Allotments & Environment Committee meeting held on 7th June 2010 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman, with an amendment to the dates quoted in Minute 15508 as follows: 2010/11 should have been 2011/12; and 2011/12 should have been 2012/13.

15625. **MATTERS OF REPORT FROM THE MINUTES**

Arising from Minute 15504, no progress had yet been made on the amendment to the London Road speed limit suggested by Wigginton Parish Council.

15626. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

It was **RESOLVED** that Standing Orders be suspended in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 67 so that members of the public might speak.

Three allotment plot holders asked to give up part of their plots appealed against the Council's decision, providing evidence to back up their view.

15627. **DUCKMORE LANE ALLOTMENTS**

- (i) The Deputy Clerk put around the table the annual letter to plot holders, which this year additionally asked for contact details; and for holders to confirm they had read and understood the Regulations of Tenancy each one accepted as the basis for hiring a plot. A copy of the Allotments Letting Protocol was also being provided. The Council was trying to introduce more active management of its sites, to maximise their use. The Clerk answered several questions about the letter's contents. An innovation this year was providing some quarter plots, which were proving popular.
- (ii) The Chairman explained the Council's stance regarding the use of allotment plots: its wish to maximise public resources; and the standards of cultivation expected. She reported on the four plot inspections carried out between May and September. The Committee then considered the three appeals against downsizing. Regarding Plot 61, the Committee agreed that the holder could present more evidence before a decision was reached. Following that evidence the Committee upheld the appeal and allowed the plot holder to retain the whole of the plot for the forthcoming year. Contd/..

15627. **DUCKMORE LANE ALLOTMENTS/Contd.**

- (ii) Regarding Plot 86, the evidence presented by letter was not considered adequate excuse for the plot's poor maintenance. The decision of the Committee was to dismiss the appeal and require the occupant to down-size to half a plot. Regarding Plot 76, the Committee upheld the appeal on the basis that the plot was well-cultivated and pest-free. However the holder was asked to review the type and quantity of the flowers planted there.
- (iii) The Town Warden had met contractors on site to discuss cutting the hedges along Duckmore Lane and Aylesbury Road, which had not been done for two years. The Committee decided the only economic option was to flail; and authorised the Clerk to choose from at least two quotations. Barbara Kazer volunteered to advise on the final choice of work to be carried out.
- (iv) In view of some recent events the Committee agreed to an addition to the Protocol, as follows: 'Mechanical devices other than small personal cultivators may not be used on any allotment plot. No topsoil may be removed from one allotment to another'.

15628. **DUCKMORE LANE COMPOST TOILET PROPOSALS**

- (i) Rupert Wallis reported that, at the forthcoming Allotments Association AGM, there would be a proposal not to go ahead with the compost toilet. In view of the Council's inability to provide the administration to support the project, and the small numbers benefiting from it, the AA could not justify carrying on with it.
- (ii) The Chairman had proposed moving the site of the toilet to adjacent to the car park, to enable Plot 54 to be brought back into use. The AA had no objection to this, especially as the toilet project would almost certainly be abandoned anyway.

15629. **ALLOTMENTS RENT REVIEW**

In view of rising costs of water, maintenance and administration the Committee **RESOLVED** that the annual rent for plots at both Duckmore Lane and Bulbourne allotment sites from 1st October 2011 be £4 per pole (£40 per average plot), with £3.50 per pole (£35 per average plot) for those over 60 years of age or who held a Dacorum Card. The allotment holders would be informed of the new rates by 1st October 2010.

15630. **MEMORIAL GARDEN**

Following the meeting on site with DBC officers on 16th June 2010 a number of tasks had been completed or started: DBC had prepared two flower beds for grassing over; Sunnyside Rural Trust (this Council's contractors) had redesigned the planting of the Council's two remaining beds and would start planting this month; the Town Warden had oiled the gates; and DBC was still pursuing the refurbishment of the pond and the plaques. Following some general pruning by DBC the whole Garden looked much tidier.

15631. **PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHIP**

- (i) HCC had paid over the £1,000 grant for 2010/11; which would in turn be made over to DBC as it had completed the work on the Town Council's behalf.
- (ii) Following several suggestions, and consultation with DBC's Rights of Way Officer, it was decided to make an application for 2011/12 for replacement of stiles with kissing gates on F32a (two, at the junctions with Byway 34 and at West Leith); and possibly on F11, at its junction with F9. If enough money remained, it was suggested it be used to construct some 'squeezes' to prevent equestrian access at other stiles which will be removed altogether. The Clerk would consult with DBC's RoW Officer before submitting the application.

15632. **TOWN COUNCIL PLAY AREAS – SAFETY INSPECTION**

RESOLVED: to accept and note the report on the Council's play areas for 2010 from Play Safety Ltd. Some welding repairs would be made to the Skateboard Park equipment. All other equipment remained in good condition. However there had been recent vandalism to the surface beneath the climbing frame in Pond Close (N) Play area. The matter would be reported to the police; and the Town Warden had effected a repair. If the surface deteriorated again, a full reinstatement would be done and the cost claimed from insurance.

15633. **PLAYBUILDER**

The Government had withdrawn funding for all Playbuilder schemes which had not been physically started. The scheme at Mortimer Hill Playing Field fell into this category. The Committee felt that, although regrettable, there was nothing to be gained from making any representations.

15634. **BUDGET 2011/12**

It was decided that the Duckmore Lane car park might need some attention next year; and that the money released from not proceeding with the compost toilet should be ring-fenced for allotment work.

15635. **REPORTS FROM CO-OPTED MEMBERS**

Rupert Wallis reported that young people were driving on to the DL allotments and sitting there, intimidating plot holders. The Town Warden would follow this up with the police; but it was stressed that plot holders should report this as it happened. Mr Wallis also informed the Committee of the AA AGM to be held on Wednesday 6th October 2010 at 7.45 p.m. at the Red Cross Hall, Frogmore Street. The Deputy Clerk asked that she be provided with any letters the AA would like distributed to those renewing their allotment rents. Greta Brown reported the submission of the Woodland Trust's HLF bid for work to Tring Park. She noticed a lot of additional signage was proposed, and hoped it would be sympathetic. She thanked the Town Warden for strimming adjacent to F32 on the DL allotments. Barbara Kazer said she continued to plant wild flowers around the Temperance Hall.

15636. **CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The following brochures/papers were available for perusal in the Clerk's office:

- (i) *Wendover Arm News* Summer 2010
- (ii) *Cycle Digest* Issues 62 & 63
- (iii) Three CPRE publications: *Yearbook 2010*; *Fieldwork* August 2010; and *Countryside Voice* Summer 2010
- (iv) *Chiltern News* September 2010
- (v) *Special Trees and Woods of the Chilterns* – final report
- (vi) Various reports of Problems affecting Rights of Way from John Savage to DBC
- (vii) HCC *The Future of Hertfordshire's Waste* – latest report
- (viii) HCC's *Traffic and Transport Data Report 2009*

The meeting ended at 10.14 p.m.

Chairman