

HUGHENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Allotment Liaison Committee held on

Wednesday 18th June 2014 at the Council Offices commencing at 8.00 pm

UNCONFIRMED

Present: Cllr. James Perkins (Hughenden Parish Council, Chairman of Meeting) Jill Armshaw (Hughenden Parish Council, minutes) Mark Booth (Louches Lane Allotment) Arrived at 8.30 pm John Capell (Red Lion Allotment) Paul Cawte (Whitfield Road Allotment) Bill Humphrey (Cryers Hill Allotment) Neil McMinn (Walters Ash Allotment) Mr Saunders (Primrose Hill Allotment) Cllr. Brian Swain (Hughenden Parish Council) Ian Williams (Primrose Hill Allotment)	
1	Apologies for Absence There were no apologies for absence and no representatives for North Dean or Windmill Lane Allotments.
2	Minutes of the Previous Meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 5 th June 2014 were approved as an accurate record with one correction – minute reference AM003 nominated allotment representatives to include Whitfield Road, Hughenden Valley - Paul Cawte.
3	Matters Arising None
4	Terms of Reference (Appendix 1) The Chairman circulated a draft Terms of Reference document which had not yet been discussed or approved by the Hughenden Parish Council and explained that the purpose of the Allotment Liaison Committee is to enhance communication between Hughenden Parish Council and allotment holders and to assist with provision and management. The Chairman advised members that the Allotment Liaison Committee has no power to make decisions itself. Results of discussions held at the Liaison Committee will be passed to the Environment and Services Subcommittee for consideration before being referred to Full Council for resolution. The meeting discussed the document. Decision: It was agreed to accept the Terms of Reference subject to this being accepted and approved by Hughenden Parish Council with one amendment to item 8, that in addition to distribution to all members and placed on allotment noticeboards, minutes should also be posted on Hughenden Parish Council website if approved by Hughenden Parish Council. Action: The Clerk and his staff.
5	SSE Electricity Cable Jill Armshaw reported that she had contacted SSE earlier that day concerning a possible electricity cable running through Walters Ash Allotment. SSE have raised a

	<p>job number and agreed to send an engineer to the site as soon as possible to firstly establish any safety issues and then to consider erection of signs to mark the route of the cable. Cllr. Perkins stated that there may also be an unmarked underground electricity cable at Primrose Hill Allotments. Cllr. Swain suggested that a risk assessment be conducted on all allotments to assess the impact of any electrical, gas or water supplies.</p> <p>Decision: The meeting discussed the issues involved and agreed that a risk assessment be conducted on all allotments by Hughenden Parish Council and that plot holders be made aware of any potential issues.</p> <p>Action: Hughenden Parish Council Environment and Services Committee to be requested to consider whether a risk assessment of mains supplies be conducted at all allotments.</p> <p>Action: Jill Armshaw agreed to monitor investigations made by SSE at the Walters Ash Allotment and keep the Committee informed.</p>
6	<p>Review of Allotment Contract (Appendix 2)</p> <p>The meeting discussed the allotment contract and some concerns were expressed concerning the security of sheds. The Chairman informed the meeting that Hughenden Parish Council spends approximately £18,000 per annum on allotments and receives an annual income of approximately £2,000. Members asked for a breakdown of costs and the Chairman stated that the most significant cost was payment to contractors for hedge cutting and strimming. Grass is cut eleven times per year.</p> <p>Decision: It was agreed to accept the terms of the contract.</p>
7	<p>Non-worked Plots</p> <p>Hughenden Parish Council has identified 60 plots which currently appear to be non-worked. The Chairman explained that Council policy is to send a letter cautioning these plot holders that if their plot remains non-worked then their contract may be terminated.</p> <p>Decision: Members urged caution and sensitivity in this approach and suggested a policy of positively promoting use of allotments among existing plot holders. To lead by example and encouragement rather than a strategy of 'policing'. It was agreed that in some cases it may be helpful for allotment representatives to inform the Council where plots are obviously non-worked for a period of time.</p>
8	<p>Vacant Plots</p> <p>Cllr. Swain asked members to suggest positive actions which Hughenden Parish Council might consider regarding vacant plots.</p> <p>Suggestions: Social/seating areas, childrens area, to rename the allotments as 'community gardens', to dedicate a section of the Council website to allotments, to create an advice sheet for new plot holders with tips on how to get started, to advertise vacant plots on Council noticeboards, ward newsletters and on the Council website, to promote half and shared plots and to write an article for inclusion in all ward newsletters about the benefits of having an allotment.</p>
9	<p>Sites Used for Dumping Rubbish</p> <p>The Chairman asked for suggestions to help remove rubbish from allotment sites. The Chairman also reminded members of the importance of maintaining a three metre border to allow for hedge trimming. Members reported that many of the wooden stakes which mark plots have rotted and disappeared and that a better method of marking out plots might be found. Members agreed that a map of each allotment would be helpful and might be posted on the Council website. The Chairman informed the meeting that allotment maps are currently being updated.</p> <p>Decision: Members supported the suggestion that a skip be provided for one month</p>

	per year to aid with plot clearance.
10	Condition of Allotments Handed Over to New Tenants Decision: Members agreed that Hughenden Parish Council should be requested to consider rotavating, strimming and preparing all plots to be handed over to new tenants. Hughenden Parish Council to consider whether this additional work may require a higher starting charge for new tenants. New tenants should also be given a 'Getting Started' sheet containing information, advice and tips for success.
11	Consideration of Toilets on Allotment Sites The Chairman informed the meeting that the Council has been asked to consider whether toilets facilities may be made available at the Red Lion Allotment. The request has been made on behalf of a charity for children and adults with disabilities who have recently become plot holders. Decision: It was agreed that the request was a special case and generally members thought there was no requirement for toilet facilities.
12	Date of 2014 Allotment Competition The Chairman asked for suggestions as to when is the best time to hold the annual Allotment Competition. Decision: It was agreed that mid-July is the optimum time and members suggested that while visiting the allotment sites, Councillors may also note any plots in poor condition.
13	Any Other Business Paul Cawte informed the meeting that he was concerned about safety around the access gate to the Whitfield Road Allotment in Hughenden Valley. There is a footpath immediately behind the gate which is frequently used by walkers and playing children. The gate is often left open for access to the allotment and vehicles entering may pose a risk especially to children. Paul suggests that Hughenden Parish Council erect a sign saying, 'Dead Slow – Children' or similar message. Also that the sign be sited following discussion with local residents to agree the best location and that the hedge adjacent to the access gate be cut back to improve visibility. Action: Hughenden Parish Council to be asked to investigate.
14	Dates of Future Meetings Wednesday 17 th September 2014 at 8.00 pm. Wednesday 12 th November 2014 at 8.00 pm.
15	There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

Signed by the Chairman:

Date:

Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference

Appendix 2 – Allotment Contract

Appendix 1

HUGHENDEN PARISH ALLOTMENT LIAISON COMMITTEE

TERMS of REFERENCE

The purpose of the Allotment Liaison Committee is to enhance communication between the Hughenden Parish Council and the allotment holders to assist with the provision and management of allotments to the residents of Hughenden Parish.

1. Membership: Two members to represent the Parish Council neither of whom should be allotment holders to ensure no conflict of interest.
Eight allotment holders in total, one member to represent each of the eight allotment sites:

Red Lion Allotment, Gt. Kingshill ward
Cryers Hill Allotment, Gt. Kingshill ward
North Dean Allotment, Hughenden Valley ward
Whitfield Road Allotment, Hughenden Valley ward
Louches Lane Allotment, Naphill ward
Walters Ash Allotment, Naphill ward
Windmill Lane Allotment, Widmer End ward
Primrose Hill Allotment, Widmer End ward

2. Substitutes for any member are permitted but only the nominated representative or their substitute will attend meetings, not both.
3. A review of representatives will take place each year to see if others would like to stand as the main and substitute for each allotment site. In the event that more than two wish to stand for an allotment site then a formal election will take place to be organised by the allotment holders and approved by the Parish Council.
4. The Allotment Liaison Committee has no power to make decisions itself. Results of discussions held at the Liaison Committee will be passed to the Environment and Services Sub-committee for consideration before being referred to Full Council for resolution.
5. Meetings will be held three times per year to coincide with alternate Environment and Services Sub-committee meetings.
6. Quorum: At least one Parish Councillor and three allotment representatives must be present for the meeting to proceed.
7. Chairman: The Chairman to be a Parish Council representative.
8. Minutes should be taken at each meeting by a representative of the Parish Council and distributed to all members by email, posted on all allotment notice boards and posted on Hughenden Parish Council website.

Hughenden Parish Council

Allotment Agreement

1. The **HUGHENDEN PARISH COUNCIL** (by Mr Peter Wetherman, as Clerk of the Council) (“the Council”) offers to let you, as a yearly tenant, from the day of **2014** at the yearly rent of £ the Allotment Plot(s) numbered in the Register of Allotment Plots for the Allotment Garden known as subject to the exceptions and reservations contained in the lease (if any) under which the Council holds the land.
2. The offer of a tenancy is subject to the Allotment Rules made from time to time by the Council, and the Allotments Acts 1908 to 1950. Any addition, deletion or alteration to the Allotment Rules made subsequently to the signing of this offer would be deemed to be incorporated in the tenancy, subject to the Tenant being sent 28 days prior notice to their last known address.
3. The rent shall be payable on the TWENTY NINTH of SEPTEMBER in each year.
4.
 - a) The tenancy would terminate on the rent day next after the death of the Tenant.
 - b) The tenancy shall terminate whenever the tenancy or right of occupation of the Council terminates.
 - c) The tenancy can be terminated by the Council by re-entry after one month’s notice:-
 - IF the rent is in arrears for not less than forty days; or
 - IF the conditions of the tenancy are not being observed; or
 - IF the Tenant resides more than one mile outside the area of the Council.
 - d) The tenancy would be terminable by the Council by three month’s previous notice in writing expiring on the TWENTY NINTH of SEPTEMBER in any year or by the Tenant informing the Council after renewal notices have been sent out, that it is the Tenant’s intention not to renew the agreement for the coming year, commencing on the THIRTIETH DAY of SEPTEMBER in any year.
5. Please indicate your acceptance of this offer by signing and returning to the Council, the accompanying duplicate, within fourteen days of the date of the offer. If the acceptance is not received within this time limit, the offer will be withdrawn without further notice to yourself.

I accept the above offer.

Signed:-
.....
TENANT

Signed:-

DEPUTY CLERK

The Allotment Rules are set out overleaf.
Last updated: October 2005

ALLOTMENT RULES OF HUGHENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

To the Tenant:-

1. You shall keep your allotment plot clean and in a good state of cultivation and fertility and in good condition. If the plot remains uncultivated after the 1st of May in any one year, it will be strimmed without notice.
2. You shall not cause any nuisance or annoyance to the occupier of any other allotment plot, or the public, or occupiers of property adjacent to the Allotment Garden Area, or obstruct any path set out by the Council for the use of occupiers of the Allotment Garden.
3. You shall not under-let, assign, share, or part with the possession of, your allotment plot, or any part of it, without the written consent of the Council. (Note:- A person sharing an allotment plot with you, by prior agreement with the Council, has no right to the allotment plot when your tenancy expires.)
4. You are permitted to plant a maximum of two **fruit** trees per plot. They must be of a dwarf variety and not grow to more than 6 feet and thereafter maintained as such, or be removed by the Council.
5. You shall not, without the written consent of the Council, cut or prune any timber or other trees or take or sell or carry away any mineral, gravel, sand or clay.
6. Footpaths between allotment plots will be kept mown by the tenants. A 3 metre boundary pathway shall be kept clear to be mown between the edge of the allotment plot and any boundary of the garden.
7. You shall not erect any building or structure on the allotment garden.
8. You shall not use barbed wire or erect any fences on the allotment garden.
9. You shall, as regards the allotment garden, observe and perform all conditions and covenants contained in the lease (if any) under which the Council holds the land.
10. Any member or officer of the Council shall be entitled to enter and inspect your plot at any time.
11. The allotment plot shall not be treated as a market garden.
12. You shall not, on determination of the tenancy, be entitled to receive from the Council any compensation whatsoever, including compensation for the loss of plants or for any improvement made to the allotment plot by yourself.
13. You may remove any plant planted by yourself before the termination of the tenancy, but you must level the surface of the land and restore the same to a proper state and condition and make good any damage caused by the removal.
14. You may, at your own risk, keep your allotment tools in a wooden box whose size is not greater than 6 feet long by 3 feet deep by 3 feet high. The box may be locked and must be dark green or brown.

15. Watering of allotments by means of a hosepipe attached to the standpipes is **NOT** permitted, but small water butts may be used at allotments to alleviate the carrying of many cans of water at a time when watering of seed beds is necessary.
16. Dogs **MUST** be kept on a lead and be tethered and **MUST NOT** be allowed to wander around the allotment gardens. Any excrement **MUST** be removed by the dogs' owner.
17. Bonfires will be permitted on the tenants' own plot, **only** for the purposes of the destruction of diseased material. These must only be lit when there is no nuisance caused to neighbouring properties and must be tended at all times. **NO** other bonfires will be permitted on allotment land and any organic material must be composted by the tenant on the tenants' own allotment plot. Any other material must be removed and disposed of by the tenant.
18. These regulations override any previous regulations and the Council reserve the right to make alterations to these regulations from time to time subject to the tenant being sent 28 days prior notice to their last known address.

Last updated: October 2005

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