

Hughenden Parish Council

Minutes of the Allotment Liaison Committee

Wednesday 27th May 2015 at the Council Offices commencing at 8.00pm

Unconfirmed

1.

Present:

Cllr Brian Swain, Acting Chairman
Cllr Dennis Hackling
Mark Booth (Louches Lane Allotment)
John Capell (Red Lion Allotment)
Paul Cawte (Whitfield Road Allotment)
Mike Cooke (Windmill Lane Allotment)
Bill Humphrey (Cryers Hill Allotment)
Neil McMinn (Walters Ash Allotment)
Ian Williams (Primrose Hill Allotment)
Jill Armshaw Hughenden Parish Deputy Clerk
Cllr Peter Williams HPC Chairman
Cllr Simon Kearey

2.

Apologies for Absence

None

3.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 28th January 2015 were approved as an accurate record.

4.

Matters arising

Several matters that arose were discussed at this point relating to updating information

- a. The lease on the allotments were still under discussion as soon as any information is available members will be notified.
- b. Clarification had been sort regarding polytunnels, sheds, and greenhouses on the allotment. JA had done a considerable amount of research on this which was shared with the committee. It was decided to recommend to the council that the following be adopted. Sheds to be 6ft x 4ft x 6ft 6in high, polytunnels 8ft x 6ft x 6ft 6in high, Green houses could be a similar size. Where allotment holders already had such item already existing, the council would be asked to look at these individually as a special case.
- c. The gate to the Hughenden allotment had been fixed and the council thanked.

5.

Allotment occupancy report

J A gave everyone a copy of the latest rates of occupancy. A brief discussion was held to see what could be done to let parishioners know what is available.

P W was to look into improving the website and including a method of contacting members by e-mail.

A comment was made regarding a contractor damaging the water pipe on the Red Lion allotment. The damage resulted in a much higher charge due to the leakage. It was suggested that the contractor involved should contribute to the cost of water and the cost of the subsequent repair.

6.

Allotment competition 2015

This was submitted by J A

Several suggestions were put forward to try to make the competition a more interesting and a family day.

Amongst the ideas mentioned was a Junior Cup, best decorated object such as a wheelbarrow or scarecrow competition, BBQ. Representatives from the allotment fraternity do, or assist in judging, etc. It was felt that whilst some good ideas arose from the discussions it was too late to start work on any of these ideas as time was of the essence, however these matters could be discussed and proposals brought forward for next year. Forms are available to help anyone involved in the judging.

7.

Allotment webpage

(See notes above No5) J A showed a copy of the new website page and layout, members were invited to comment. HPC has also purchased a new dedicated allotment computer package which it hope will substantially improve management of all 250 plots

8.

Review of Policy on Sheds, Greenhouses and Polytunnels

See under matters arising.

9

Consideration of policy for management of uncultivated plots.

Visits to the allotments will be made within the next few weeks. Owners of plots not being kept in reasonable order (not Working) will be informed and if necessary may lose their plots. Some members would like to see stronger action against those involved unless a good reason exists. A suggestion was put forward to introduce a "key payment" which would be forfeited on default with the money collected used to prepare the site for new occupier. Suggestions were made to purchase a Brush Cutter to help keep such sites in order, however this was considered to be unworkable due to the H & S responsibility on the Council. Individual Plot owners are however able to trim areas as long as they did not interfere with other working plots.

10

Consideration of waste removal.

It was considered to expensive for the council to supply skips to each allotment as each would cost around £200. However in one special case it was agreed to recommend as a one off lorry collection for Flint to be removed from one site as it was considered a “special case”

11.

Consideration of rent policy.

The rent applicable from 2017 will be £25 (from £21) for a full plot and £15 (from £10) for a half plot. These prices must be reviewed before September for notification on future increases, At this time consideration should undertaken on possible initial “key payment”

12

Update on SSE cables on allotments.

SSE has agreed to put up warning signs for underground cables. J A would be contacting them to ensure this is done. In the case of a lack of action it was agreed that the council should purchase and will erect signs. B S also suggested putting paving slabs over the areas involved to further protect against possible accident as the cables are not buried to any great depth. SAFETY FIRST.

13.

Offer of water Butts

Ones on Primrose Hill site are cracked, but also very old. The butts on offer will be tried.

14.

Improving communications.

See under various headings above.

15.

A O B

Lots of comments regarding dog fouling, dogs worrying sheep etc. The National Trust will be announcing that all dogs on their land will need to be on a leash. A request was made for notices to be erected at all entrances to allotments stating that dogs entering must be kept on a leash. During visits planned, J A will look at what poles/ available points any such notices could be fixed.

A discussion was had regarding bonfires. These should only be used to dispose of diseased plants. However many complaints have been made about inappropriate burning. It was recommended that all bonfires be banned and rubbish removed from site by the allotment holder.

16

Next Meeting

The next meeting to be held on Wednesday the 23rd September

The meeting closed at approximately 9.40 pm.

Signed by the Chairman:

Date: