

HUGHENDEN PARISH COUNCIL
ALLOTMENT LIAISON COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 13th January 2016

At the Council Offices commencing at 8.00 pm

UNCONFIRMED

Present:	
<p>Cllr. Brian Swain (Hughenden Parish Council, Chairman of Meeting) Bill Humphrey (Cryers Hill Allotment) Angus Idle (Hughenden Valley Allotment) Neil McMinn (Walters Ash Allotment) Hugh McCarthy (Windmill Lane Allotment) Ian Williams (Primrose Hill Allotment) Jill Armshaw (Hughenden Parish Council, Deputy Clerk)</p> <p>The meeting started at 8.00 pm</p>	
1	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Mark Booth (Louches Lane Allotment), Brian Broadbelt (Louches Lane Allotment), Paul Cawte (Hughenden Valley Allotment) and Cllr. Dennis Hackling.</p>
2	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd September 2015 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.</p>
3	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Cllr. Swain enquired about water pipe leakage at Red Lion Allotment. The Deputy Clerk reported that no leak had been observed. The water bill would be monitored to check for hidden leakage.</p>
4	<p>Committee Membership</p> <p>a) The Deputy Clerk reported that Mike Cooke had resigned as representative for Windmill Lane Allotments and that Hugh McCarthy had kindly agreed to take his place. b) The Deputy Clerk circulated an updated committee membership list and it was agreed that email addresses be added.</p>
5	<p>Allotment Occupancy Report</p> <p>The Deputy Clerk reported the following occupancy rates: Cryers Hill 61%, Hughenden Valley 89%, Louches Lane 74%, North Dean 50%, Primrose Hill 94%, Red Lion 88%, Walter's Ash 100% and Windmill Lane 88%. This represents an overall occupancy rate of 84% and is in keeping with seasonal variation in occupancy, which tends to decrease in the autumn and increase in the spring and summer months.</p> <p>In order to increase occupancy, the Deputy Clerk agreed to place adverts in parish ward magazines, post notices at all allotment sites with vacancies, distribute flyers and if necessary contact WDC to offer vacant plots to non-parishioners.</p>
6	<p>Transfer of Land Update</p> <p>A press release for community information issued by Hughenden Parish Council and Hughenden Community Support Trust (HCST formerly known as AfLP) was circulated to Members. The Chairman reported that the Scheme proposed by the Charity Commission is being reviewed by first tier tribunal following an appeal against it from a member of the public. In practise, this means that Hughenden Parish Council and HCST will await the outcome of the tribunal before proceeding with the transfer of land. The Chairman stated that the Council is acting to preserve the use of the land as allotments.</p> <p>A question was asked about the length of the lease from a local farmer of the land at Cryers Hill Allotment. The Deputy Clerk agreed to report back to Members on this matter.</p>

7	<p>Review of Fee Policy</p> <p>The Deputy Clerk outlined current policy and fees (full plot £25.00, half plot £13.00). Allotment holders must be given 12 months' notice of substantive change to their Allotment Agreement therefore any changes to fee policy will apply in October 2017.</p> <p>After consideration, it was agreed that allotments represent good value for money and that it be recommended to Council that the fees be increased by small yearly increments, perhaps by £5.00 per annum until the fees are within a range relative to national allotment charges. It was also agreed that it be recommended that an administrative charge of £10.00 be levied when tenants apply to erect a shed/greenhouse/polytunnel or request to relocate to a different plot.</p> <p>The Deputy Clerk reminded Members that it had already been resolved by Council that a deposit be paid by all allotment tenants in September 2016.</p>
8	<p>Electric Cables (Walter's Ash) Update</p> <p>All buried electric cable warning signs have been installed. Cllr. Swain to write a risk assessment.</p>
9	<p>Allotment Talk</p> <p>Members agreed that the proposed talk to allotment tenants by Frank Parge be delayed until early autumn in order to reduce workload on office staff while the Clerk is on extended leave during February and March 2016. It was suggested that the allotment competition cups be presented at this talk in mid-October.</p>
10	<p>Allotment Competition 2016</p> <p>It was agreed that 1st, 2nd and 3rd winners be reinstated at all eight allotment garden sites, otherwise, the competition categories remain as per 2015. It was also agreed that ideally three independent judges be found to include representatives of parish organisations.</p>
11	<p>Improving Communications</p> <p>There were no items.</p>
12	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>a) Cryers Hill Allotment Report that trees and hedges are still presenting problems to tenants due to shading and dispersion of seeds. Tenants are carrying out work to keep the hedge in check.</p> <p>b) Walter's Ash Allotment Report that the wayleave/lease with SSE for substations may have expired. Deputy Clerk agreed to investigate and report back to Members.</p> <p>c) Windmill Lane Allotment Report that several marker posts are broken or missing. It was agreed that this issue affects all allotment sites. The Deputy Clerk reported that the issue is being investigated and a survey would be conducted to establish how many posts require replacement and then suitable posts found and installed.</p> <p>d) Regulation concerning trees on allotments Allotment Regulation 4 states that tenants may plant a maximum of two fruit trees per plot, which must be dwarf variety and not grow more than 6 feet or be removed by the Council. After discussion it was agreed that this regulation should remain and common sense prevail.</p> <p>e) Bee Keeping Currently there are no applications from tenants to keep bees on allotments. It was agreed that each application be considered on an individual basis in consultation with neighbouring tenants.</p>
13	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 13th April 2016 at 8.00 pm.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9.05 pm</p>

Signed by the Chairman:

Date: