

**HUGHENDEN PARISH COUNCIL
ALLOTMENT LIAISON SUBCOMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 10th May 2017
At the Council Offices commencing at 8.00 pm**

DRAFT

Present:

Cllr Hilda Stearn (Chairman)

Mark Booth (Louches Lane)

John Capel (Red Lion)

Bill Humphrey (Cryers Hill)

Angus Idle (Hughenden Valley)

Neil Fletcher (Walter's Ash)

Hugh McCarthy (Windmill Lane)

Les Saunders (Primrose Hill)

Cllr Stan Jones (Hughenden Community Support Trust)

Jill Armshaw (Deputy Clerk)

The meeting started at 8.00 pm

The Deputy Clerk welcomed everyone to the meeting and paid tribute to two members who had sadly passed away since the last meeting. Cllr Brian Swain who was Chairman of the committee passed away in February 2017 and Ian Williams who was representative for Primrose Hill Allotment Garden passed away in April 2017. Members acknowledged the contribution made by Brian and Ian to the development of the Allotment Liaison Subcommittee and paid tribute to them by joining in a minute of reflective silence.

The Deputy Clerk introduced Cllr Hilda Stearn as the new Chairman of the subcommittee.

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| 1 | <p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Peter Gieler, Cllr Kelly Gilmour, Neil McMinn (Walter's Ash).and Paul Cawte (Hughenden Valley).</p> |
| 2 | <p>Minutes of previous meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 14th September 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman.</p> |
| 3 | <p>Matters arising</p> <p>A member asked for an update concerning an offer from a home owner bordering Walters Ash Allotment Garden to share the cost of felling/reducing the height of trees bordering the site. The Deputy Clerk stated that she was unaware of any communication from the home owner. Neil Fletcher agreed to investigate.</p> |
| 4 | <p>Occupancy report</p> <p>The Deputy Clerk reported the following occupancy rates: Cryers Hill 95%, Hughenden Valley 91%, Louches Lane 67%, North Dean 91%, Primrose Hill 82%, Red Lion 98%, Walter's Ash 97%, Windmill Lane 98%, overall occupancy 90%.</p> <p>Cllr Stearn noted that while overall occupancy rate is 90%, this figure may conceal a</p> |

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| | <p>lower utilisation rate. The Deputy Clerk reported that allotment inspection will take place in early June and August. Tenants in breach of Allotment Regulations due to lack of cultivation will be contacted and overgrown vacant plots identified.</p> <p>Members discussed how to increase occupancy and utilisation particularly at Louches Lane Allotment Garden where there are 14 vacant plots.</p> <p>Members suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shorter time in terminating the agreement of tenants in breach of Regulations • Buddy system to support and encourage new tenants • Advice leaflet providing information for new tenants/link to NSALG.org.uk • Smaller starter/quarter plots for those unable to manage full or half sized plots • Community plots to be worked collectively and designed to support wildlife • Council maintaining vacant plots in a more user-friendly condition • Creating a questionnaire for new tenants to identify need for buddying, advice, support which may be provided by the allotment community <p>Cllr Stearn asked members to explore with fellow tenants how to maintain vacant plots and feedback to the Deputy Clerk or the next meeting with suggestions.</p> |
| 5 | <p>Transfer of allotment land update</p> <p>The Deputy Clerk reported that the transfer of land from Hughenden Parish Council to Hughenden Community Support Trust is on hold until the outcome of a tribunal to be held on 19th June 2017. The Council will keep tenants informed of new information. It is anticipated that for tenants there will be little if any change.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Annual allotment competition 2017</p> <p>The Deputy Clerk described provisional arrangements for the competition and invited feedback. It was felt that given growing conditions this year, the competition be held during the last week of July/first week of August (N.B. school holidays).</p> <p>It was agreed that judging evaluation criteria be posted on the Council website and allotment notice boards along with competition notices. Neil Fletcher asked whether the competition is judged per plot or per tenant and that this be clarified.</p> <p>It was agreed that to create balance two Councillors join the judging team.</p> <p>It was agreed that sponsorship be sought to promote the allotment competition and allotment activity in general perhaps by issuing a card to tenants to obtain discount at local suppliers.</p> <p>It was agreed to review the competition to maintain interest and keep a fresh and flexible approach. The purpose of the competition to be defined by Council.</p> |
| 7 | <p>Annual tenants meeting 2017</p> <p>The Deputy Clerk described the first annual tenants meeting held last October. Members agreed that it was a successful evening and worth repeating. It was agreed that a Friday evening was preferable when booking a venue.</p> |
| 8 | <p>Any other business</p> <p>Windmill Lane – Report of a few thefts from site and red legged partridges.</p> <p>Cryers Hill – Request to relocate the notice board to the bottom of the driveway. It was agreed that the Deputy Clerk action this request and that a sign be attached to the notice board discouraging school parking.</p> <p>Primrose Hill – Report of a wild boar sighting and dog fouling on the amenity area. The Deputy Clerk explained the grass cutting schedule at the amenity area.</p> |

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| | <p>Hughenden Valley – Report of missing and rotten plot markers. The Deputy Clerk explained that it is the responsibility of tenants to cut grass verges between plots. The Deputy Clerk agreed to have the water trough in Little Burnham Field checked. Report that drivers have difficulty safely turning from Burnham Road onto Coombe Lane. This report was noted to be forwarded for the attention of Council's Road Safety Working Group.</p> <p>Louches Lane – Report of a few thefts and people walking through the allotment and dog fouling. The issue was noted and tenants asked to feedback to Council with possible solutions.</p> <p>The Deputy Clerk reported that some allotment gardens have created an email group which improves on site communication and helps build community spirit.</p> <p>Cllr Stearn thanked members for attending and for their contributions to the meeting.</p> |
| 9 | Date of next meetings |
| | <p>Wednesday 12th July 2017</p> <p>Wednesday 13th September 2017</p> |
| | The meeting closed at 9.15 pm. |

Signed by the Chairman:

Date: