

HUGHENDEN PARISH COUNCIL
ALLOTMENT LIAISON SUBCOMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 13th September 2017
At the Council Offices commencing at 8.00 pm

DRAFT

Present: Cllr Hilda Stearn (Chairman) Cllr Stan Jones (Hughenden Community Support Trust) Mark Booth (Louches Lane) Bill Humphrey (Cryers Hill) John Capel (Red Lion) Paul Cawte (Hughenden Valley) Les Saunders (Primrose Hill) Neil McMinn (Walter's Ash & Hughenden Community Support Trust) Jill Armshaw (Deputy Clerk) The meeting started at 8.00 pm	
1	Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Kelly Gilmour & Hugh McCarthy (Windmill Lane).
2	Minutes of previous meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 12 th July 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman.
3	Matters arising There were none.
4	Occupancy report Allotment rent letters to be sent to tenants week commencing 18 th September 2017. Rent Day is 29 th September each year. Average allotment occupancy is approximately 90% however there is usually a degree of variance during October and November following Rent Day.
5	Ownership of allotment land update Cllr Jones stated that the issue concerned ownership rather than transfer of land. Ownership of the land is currently held by the Official Custodian. The matter to be decided is whether the land is owned by Hughenden Parish Council or Hughenden Community Support Trust. A tribunal decided in July 2017 that the land is owned by Hughenden Community Support Trust. It is anticipated that a parishioner may appeal to the next tier of tribunal against the decision on technical grounds. The case may be regarded as a test case and may take some time to be determined. In the interim, Hughenden Parish Council and Hughenden Community Support Trust have agreed to meet to progress matters. Cllr Stearn will attend the next meeting to represent the Allotment Liaison Subcommittee.

6	<p>Annual allotment competition & meeting</p> <p>Annual Allotment Meeting - 7.00 pm, Friday 29th September 2017 in Great Kingshill Village Hall. Presentation of allotment competition cups and talk by Frank Parge on Allotment Gardening & The Allotment Movement, followed by Q&A session.</p> <p>Annual Allotment Competition - It was agreed that next year the aim will be to simplify the judging criteria. Judges will meet in early March 2018 to agree judging criteria which will be posted on allotment notice boards by 31st March 2018. Cllr Stearn stated that overall the competition was a success and that the aim of the competition is to encourage and positively engage with tenants.</p> <p>It was noted that special attention may be required at North Dean allotment to encourage higher occupancy and a higher standard of cultivation.</p> <p>Action (Cllr Stearn & Deputy Clerk) To discuss with the Services Committee (31st October 2017) whether vacant plots may be offered to neighbouring councils to increase occupancy and encourage a higher standard of cultivation.</p>
7	<p>Council & Services Committee meetings - feedback</p> <p>a) Recommendation – Allotment Liaison Subcommittee (12th July 2017) That an Allotment Management Policy be resolved by Full Council to be effective by 1st March 2018. The Allotment Management Policy to include budget, process and power delegated to the Clerk to fully and effectively implement the policy.</p> <p>RESOLVED - Services Committee (15th August 2017) 17S050 That an Allotment Management Policy be resolved by Full Council to be effective by 1st March 2018. The Allotment Management Policy to include budget, process and power delegated to the Clerk to fully and effectively implement the policy. Responsibility: Cllr Stearn, Cllr Gilmour & Deputy Clerk.</p> <p>b) Recommendation – Allotment Liaison Subcommittee (12th July 2017) That allotment fees be increased from September 2018 to £50 for a whole plot and £30 for a half plot and that notice be given to tenants in writing in September 2017. That the increase in fees be effectively communicated to tenants and changes be made in line with Allotment Law and delivered in conjunction with a proper Allotment Management Policy.</p> <p>RESOLVED – Services Committee (15th August 2017) & Full Council (12th Sept 2017) 17S051 That written notification to tenants of an increase in allotment fees be deferred until September 2018. Any change in fees to be resolved following a review of winter allotment maintenance, income and expenditure. It was noted that as of 30th September 2017 fees will increase from £25 to £35 for a whole plot and from £13 to £23 for a half plot as per Full Council resolution 16664 (September 2016).</p> <p>c) Recommendation – Allotment Liaison Subcommittee (12th July 2017) Revision of Terms of Reference – That tenants wishing to become Allotment Representative or Deputy must apply in writing to the Clerk who will hold an election if more than one candidate. Only tenants of that allotment garden may stand for the position and vote in any election.</p> <p>Resolved – Services Committee (15th August 2017) 17S052 That the Allotment Liaison Subcommittee Terms of Reference be revised to include the following: 'that a tenant wishing to become Allotment Representative or Deputy must apply in writing to the Clerk who will hold a fair election if more than one candidate. Only tenants of that allotment garden may stand for the position and vote in any election'.</p>

	<p>d) Recommendation – Allotment Liaison Subcommittee (12th July 2017) That action be taken as part of the proposed Allotment Management Policy or as part of a proper tree survey to assess the safety of overhanging trees and impact of trees causing significant overshadowing of allotment plots.</p> <p>Resolved – Services Committee (15th August 2017) 17S053 That action be taken as part of the proposed Allotment Management Policy or as part of a proper tree survey to assess the safety of overhanging trees and impact of trees causing significant overshadowing of allotment plots.</p> <p>In consideration of the above resolutions and feedback from Services Committee meeting held on 15th August 2017 and Full Council meeting held on 12th September 2017 it was Agreed</p> <p>a) That Cllr Stearn propose to the Services Committee the formation of an Allotment Working Group to develop an Allotment Management Policy by 1st March 2018. Membership may include Cllr Stearn, Cllr Gilmour, Neil McMinn, John Capel, Paul Cawte and the Deputy Clerk.</p> <p>b) That Cllr Stearn and the Deputy Clerk meet with each representative at their allotment site to discuss issues and identify possible solutions.</p> <p>c) That water taps be replaced/refurbished as soon as practically possible to ensure compliance with health & safety requirements.</p> <p>d) That information concerning the Allotment Liaison Committee be sent to tenants with the rent reminder letter. Information to include name of allotment representatives, Terms of Reference and an invitation to tenants to stand as representative or deputy.</p>
8	<p>Access & egress at allotment sites</p> <p>Cllr Stearn reported possible risk to people walking on the Right of Way at Hughenden Valley Allotment. The path follows a route which crosses the vehicle access gate with high hedges on either side. The vehicle gate has a sign stating that the gate be kept shut at all times. It was noted that at other allotment sites vehicle gates are kept shut and at some sites the gate is padlocked.</p> <p>It was proposed that this concern be addressed as part of the Allotment Management Policy and consideration be given to including a clause in the Allotment Agreement requiring tenants to close the gate on entry and egress.</p> <p>Agreed That Cllr Stearn, Paul Cawte and the Deputy Clerk meet on site to consider possible actions which may be included in the Allotment Management Policy.</p>
9	<p>Public access at Primrose Hill</p> <p>Concern has been expressed concerning dogs running off lead on the allotment at Primrose Hill. There was discussion as to whether members of the public be dissuaded from entering and walking dogs on allotment sites.</p> <p>Agreed That Cllr Stearn, Les Saunders and the Deputy Clerk meet on site to consider possible actions which may be included in the Allotment Management Policy.</p>
10	<p>Any other business</p>
	<p>Hughenden Valley</p> <p>a) A successful tenants social event took place during the August Bank Holiday weekend with more than 20 people attending.</p>

	<p>b) Paul Cawte reported that he has planted bee friendly/pollinator plants on his plot. It was noted that tenants should seek permission/inform the office of any plots left to encourage pollinators so that they are not mistaken as overgrown and strimmed by contractors. It was also suggested that signs be erected for clarity.</p> <p>c) It was reported that tenants are burning waste on bonfires. The Deputy Clerk stated that Allotment Regulations do not permit bonfires. Action – Deputy Clerk to send an email to tenants at Hughenden Valley allotment reminding them that bonfires are not permitted.</p> <p>Primrose Hill Report of anti-social behaviour and damage caused to allotments. Action – Deputy Clerk to contact police to report incident.</p> <p>Cryers Hill Allotment hedges to be cut end of October/early November.</p> <p>Wycombe Sound Radio Cllr Stearn will be a guest on the radio station next week discussing allotment gardening in Hughenden Parish.</p> <p>Allotment signage It was noted that the sign on the gate at some allotments has the old council email address. Action – Deputy Clerk to check all allotment gate signs and take appropriate action if required.</p>
11	<p>Date of next meetings</p> <p>Wednesday 17th January 2018 Wednesday 14th March 2018 Wednesday 13th June 2018 Wednesday 12th September 2018</p>
	<p>The meeting closed at 9.45pm.</p>

Signed by the Chairman:

Date: