

**ALTON TOWN COUNCIL  
ALLOTMENTS ADVISORY SUB COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 7 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 9:30AM**

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Present:	Councillor Mrs Sharon Cullen	-	Chairman
	Councillor Mrs Pam Jones		
	Mrs Alexandra Bond	-	Grounds Administrator
	Mrs Samantha Brown	-	Allotments Officer
	Mr John Pritchard	-	Alton Allotment Association
	Mrs Pat Harding	-	Site Rep - Borovere
	Mrs Marion Morgans	-	Site Rep - Hawthorns
	Mrs Yvonne Thorne	-	Site Rep - Wooteys

In attendance: Councillor Dean-Paul Phillips for item 3 only

1 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mrs Nancy Clarke, Site Rep - Whitedown, Mr Steve Herbert, Site Rep - Spitalfields and Mr Ty Smith, Grounds Manager.

2 **Minutes of meeting held on 15 June 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 15 June 2017 were accepted. Councillor Mrs Jones did acknowledge that she and Councillor Mrs Cullen had not had an opportunity to meet with Mrs Morgans at Hawthorns to look at the proposed wildflower planting and agreed a date would be arranged after the Sub Committee when Councillor Mrs Cullen returns from leave.

3 **Parking at Spitalfields/Wooteys**

Councillor Phillips joined the Sub Committee for this item only. Councillor Phillips had attended the Allotment Association's Harvest Show on the 2 September and discussed this with Mr Pritchard. Councillor Phillips confirmed he had a site visit with East Hampshire District Council Officers in respect of the footpath that runs alongside the Spitalfields site and Anstey Junior School from Spitalfields Road to Edward Road and also discussed the possible area for parking. He advised that the footpath is due to be widened and a quote for £5,000 has been received for solar lighting through the footpath.

He advised the relinquishing of the land is not the biggest hurdle and confirmed that East Hampshire District Council will not be building on the land. The problem is that the site is complicated; it has various grounds levels and the process has to be carefully thought out. Students from Alton College may use it for additional free parking and there is the cost implication of developing a car park where would that come from? Councillor Mrs Cullen asked if Radian had been involved, Councillor Phillips confirmed they had and Radian are also contributing toward the footpath. Mrs Harding asked that with the footpath being made wider would it be accessible for vehicles and Councillor Phillips responded saying it was "not practical".

Mr Pritchard raised that as the Town Council own the allotment site would it not be more beneficial to the Town Council to have a more suitable access to the site. Councillor Mrs Cullen suggested that access to the site and any proposed change of use for parking could be submitted as a budget request.

The Allotments Advisory Sub Committee thanked Councillor Phillips for his attendance and update.

#### **4 Bees on Allotments**

Following the previous Allotments Advisory Sub Committee it was agreed to consult all ploholders on the possibility of having bee hives on the sites. Mrs Brown wrote to all ploholders resulting in 110 ploholders responding to the consultation. Out of the 110 only nine were against having bee hives on the allotment sites.

It was noted that concerns were raised on the number of hives and that, if approved, the hives should not be located on an individual plot but a designated area within the sites. There is already a fenced area at the top of Hawthorns which has two hives and an area at the top of Wooteys which is no longer used for a hive.

The Sub Committee were in favour of bees on the allotment sites and it was agreed that improvements would need to be made at Wooteys and also see if any improvements would be needed at Hawthorns to increase the number of hives. It was also agreed that there would be a limit to the number of hives and also nearby residents would also need to be consulted.

#### **5 Allotment Inspections**

Mrs Bond informed the meeting that the routine inspections for the season have run smoothly so far. She confirmed that the Town Council's Grounds Team have strimmed vacant plots to enable re-letting. Letters have been sent to ploholders following the inspections and as a result tenancies have been terminated and plots re-allocated.

Mrs Bond also raised her concern about the amount of wasted produce on the plots. Mr Pritchard advised that he has had conversations with the Food Bank but as the produce if fresh they are unable to receive the donations. Councillor Mrs Jones asked if the Allotment Association considered approaching the Harvest Church to have a produce table for visitors to the Church can help themselves. Mrs Harding advised that excess produce from the Borovere site is donated to the Borovere Care Home.

#### **6 Waiting List**

Mrs Brown reported that the current waiting list is 11 for the following sites broken down as:- Borovere eight, Hawthorns two, Spitalfields three, Whitedown two and Wooteys three. Out of the 11 people on the waiting list four of those have put their name down for more than one site. The longest person on the waiting list is for Borovere who joined the list in September 2014 and the newest for either Borovere or Whitedown in August 2017.

Mr Pritchard advised that the Alton Allotment Association, during National Allotment Week, promoted the public's attention to allotments. He asked what the Town Council does to promote allotments. Mrs Brown responded that there is a dedicated page of the website and general awareness within the town and its residents.

Councillor Mrs Jones asked Mr Pritchard if the Alton Allotments Association would be producing a press release following the Harvest Show to be submitted to the Alton Herald as this could produce an increase awareness of allotments.

## 7 **Budget Requests**

Mrs Brown informed the Sub Committee that the Town Council will be holding its annual Budget Workshop on 6 December and for the Allotment Association to provide any requests by the 17 November for consideration.

The Sub Committee wished to submit the following requests to the Budget Workshop:-

- Car parking provision at Spitalfields/Wooteys
- Fencing at Wooteys
- Plot Markers
- Tidying up area for bees on the Wooteys site
- Tree works on sites

## 8 **Rent Renewals**

Mrs Brown advised the Sub Committee that the Town Clerk has confirmed that there will be no annual rent increase and the rent would remain at £23 for 2018. These will be sent out at the end of October/beginning of November and will include the £5 Allotment Association's membership as in previous years.

## 9 **Any other business**

Councillor Mrs Jones thanked Mrs Brown for producing the Town Council's version of the Plotters Handbook. Mrs Brown confirmed that the Handbook had been given to Site Representatives to distribute to plotters and the Handbook was also available for plotters to collect from the Town Hall.

Mr Pritchard asked if the council had considered ¼ size plots and it was agreed that this would be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Mr Pritchard informed the meeting that Sara Thomson who had a plot at Whitedown had won the Alton Town Council Shield at the Alton Allotments Association's Harvest Show held on the 2 September.

Councillors Mrs Jones and Mrs Cullen agreed to meet Mrs Morgans at Hawthorns to discuss the flower meadow and they may consult the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.

Mrs Brown asked Mr Pritchard when the Alton Allotments Association Handbook would be available to plotters. Mr Pritchard advised that he had been too busy to reproduce the Handbook and it was not available.

10 **Date of next meeting**

The date of next meeting is 2 November 2017 at 9:30am.

The meeting closed at 10:26am.

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