

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT
SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT GROVE HOUSE ON 1st DECEMBER 2014**

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 8.25 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Clive Darke (Chairman), Roger Bailey, Cyril King and Clive Webb

IN ATTENDANCE: Rob Thurston (Grounds Manager) and Jennifer Lawley (Committee Officer), Allotment Representatives: George Raines, Mike Phillips, Clive Wall, Mike Tansley, Cheryl Puttman and Kevin Pearce together with Rose Hughes (Allotment Club Secretary)

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| 269. | <p>Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes</p> <p>No apologies for absence were received. .</p> |
| 270. | <p>To receive and record Declarations of Interest</p> <p>No declarations of interest were received.</p> |
| 271. | <p>To consider and approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 26th June 2014</p> <p>The minutes had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>There were no comments or amendments and the minutes were duly approved.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Clive Webb SECONDED BY: Councillor Clive Darke</p> <p>RESOLVED that: The Minutes be accepted and signed as a true record by the Chairman.</p> |
| | <p><i>Councillor Roger Bailey joined the meeting at 7.01 pm</i></p> |
| 272. | <p>Chairman's report</p> <p>The Chairman advised that he did not have a great deal to report himself and would hand over to the Grounds Manager to update Members on issues under the main items on the agenda.</p> <p>In brief, the Grounds Manager informed of a year of challenges and successes. Hutton Moor had been the major challenge with the problem of the badger sett, the main entrance and subsidence which was ongoing. Redpits had also raised issues with boundaries. Old Mill had, however, made recent progress with new fencing around the main drive being completed and a track around the perimeter due to be completed soon.</p> |
| | <p><i>Councillor Cyril King joined the meeting at 7.04 pm</i></p> |

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| 273. | <p>Hutton Moor</p> <p>The Grounds Manager updated members in detail on the situation to date with the badger sett at Hutton Moor Allotments and the actions taken.</p> <p>Restricted road access had been maintained and there had been no further obvious deterioration, to-date. There was, however, a need to continue with the weight and width restriction; the greater good being to maintain continued access albeit limited</p> <p>There were two options favoured by the Surveyor of the options suggested by the Badger Specialist to resolve the badger problem and subsidence of the main entrance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exclude badgers and drive metal sheet piles at least 2.5 metres long alongside each side of the track. The surface of the track would need to be excavated and then compacted to avoid collapse as the ground settles. 2. Excavate the surface of the track and lay a reinforced track the whole length of the access. <p>The Surveyor advised that costs could range between £20k and £50k depending on the option. All options would cause some disruption to Allotment holders as the road would need complete closure for a limited period. A further Licence would be required from Natural England as the initial Licence only enabled immediate emergency works to re-open the road. Trial holes and soil investigations would need to be commissioned to establish engineering data for load bearing capacity of the ground. The need to establish the size and type of vehicles that would be allowed to use the access road would impact on cost and specification.</p> <p>Timescale for works were driven by several factors: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Licence application timescale 2. Budget availability 3. Allotment holders preferred period for minimising disruption 4. Allotment Holder Consultation <p>The Allotment Club had been requested to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider and respond with their preferred timing for the works to take place (realistically after July 2015). 2. Consider and respond with their views on whether it is possible for heavy lorries not to enter the site (particularly Brandon Trust and Skip Lorries) <p>The Allotment Club informed that a small pickup truck was now being used by the Brandon Trust to empty the toilet tank rather than a heavy lorry. The small pickup truck fell within the acceptable load bearing weight for the access road. The problem was the large skip lorries and in response to the question whether skips were necessary, it was suggested that the next time the skip and rubbish were removed, it be the final occasion. Rubbish/waste could be personally disposed of by allotment holders; for example, taken home or used as compost (annual weeds can go on the compost) with a provision to burn between October and April. The skip cannot, however, be moved at the moment due to the weight of the lorry collecting the skip. It was suggested that the skip could either be pulled across or in fact emptied first. It really needed to be resolved. The drive was owned by the Town Council but the bridge was owned by British Rail which raised the question as</p> |
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| | <p>to whether British Rail could have some input. However, the badgers had damaged the drive's left hand side which was actually North Somerset Council ground. In trying to identify a resolution in moving the skip, it was recognised that this still did not alleviate the problem of damage caused by the badger sett. The accepted load bearing limit currently was set at 3 tons. Ambulances and paramedics with cars would still require access. Timescales and budget were issues needing resolutions. Budgets would not be available until April and this was currently a subject of debate. Members were advised that the best time and only time for the work to be undertaken would be in January as this was a quiet time for allotments. This would, however, breach the Licensing laws for badgers and invited a hefty fine. The committee were reminded that this would need to go through Town Council. The Grounds Manager advised that the process was driven by Natural England and would require procurement with a full tender process. He would approach Adrian Coward the Badger Specialist for professional advice.</p> <p>RESOLVED that: The Grounds Manager would contact the Badger Specialist to seek his professional advice on the way forward with Natural England and the badgers.</p> <p>Timescales and costs had invited a difficult debate which prompted the Chairman to ask whether an alternative entrance could be developed if North Somerset Council agreed, referring to access from Hutton Moor playing fields. The Grounds Manager advised of the Town Clerks previous attempt to consult with North Somerset Council for the development of an alternative entrance which at that time had been rebuffed. However, the Chairman wished to revisit this topic. It was proposed that a site visit be scheduled with North Somerset Council in order to obtain a direct answer.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Cyril King SECONDED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey</p> <p>RESOLVED that: Alternative access to Hutton Moor Allotments from Hutton Moor playing fields be explored and that a site visit and meeting be set up between the Town Council and North Somerset Council.</p> <p>It was reported that fencing at Hutton Moor was falling into the rhyne. The fence had been in place for 15 years. It was a boundary fence and, therefore, the responsibility of the Town Council. The Grounds Manager advised that this would need to be prioritised against other maintenance needs</p> <p>RESOLVED that: If the condition of the fence deteriorates further the Chairman of the Allotment Club is to contact the Grounds Manager so a site meeting can be arranged.</p> |
| | <p><i>Councillor Cyril King left the meeting at 7.47 pm.</i></p> |
| 274. | <p>Redpits To receive a verbal report from the Grounds Manager.</p> <p>A number of boundary maintenance complaints had been received from Wayside and Spring Hill residents this year. The Town Council's Grounds Team have had to attend on a number of occasions to resolve boundary complaints that should ideally have been dealt with by the Allotment Club site representative. In response to the site representative's update on boundary maintenance issues, the Grounds Manager proposed that a site meeting be scheduled between himself and the site representative to ascertain the position</p> |

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| | <p>so far. This would be a constructive approach.</p> <p>RESOLVED that: The Grounds Manager and the Site Representative meet at Redpits Allotments to assess the boundary maintenance issues raised by local residents.</p> |
| 275. | <p>Old Mill Way To receive a verbal update from the Grounds Manager</p> <p>The Committee were informed that the Grounds Manager had been advised that fencing improvement works had been completed and the main drive largely completed. However, the Allotment Club Chairman informed that only 90% of the track had been completed.</p> <p>North Somerset Council had asked for access to the Nature Reserve. It was thought that this was to facilitate the maintenance of the bat and bird boxes. The impression of the site representative was, however, that the Allotment Club had responsibility for the site including the bat and bird boxes.</p> <p>The Grounds Manager noted the up-to-date information.</p> |
| 276. | <p>Big Lottery Bid by Alliance Homes – Bournville Allotments To receive a verbal update from the Grounds Manager</p> <p>To remind committee members, the Grounds Manager informed that a resolution had been passed on the 26th June 2014 that: Alliance Homes be contacted for more information regarding the students/learners who participate in the ‘growing together on three sites’ project, including age group.</p> <p>An update was not currently available as the Amenities Officer had been on long term sick leave and Alliance Homes had not yet been contacted as a consequence</p> <p>RESOLVED that: The resolution be carried forward to the next meeting.</p> |
| 277. | <p>To receive verbal reports from Allotment Site Representatives</p> <p>Members were informed that:</p> <p>277.1 Rectors Way – Clive Wall <i>Clarks Field (Rectors Way) Drove Road and between Rectors Way and Newland Road.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three plots empty. • Road resurfaced. • Trees need attention in car park. <p>277.2 Redpits – Mike Tansley <i>Near Spring Hill and along Church Road.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new strimmer and metal shed were required. • Few plots in new year. • Clearing site. <p>277.3 Kewstoke – Mike Phillips <i>Near Kewstoke Road and along Castle Road.</i></p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The gate had dropped and no further adjustment was available. It was suggested that a larger bolt be purchased. • One plot was a tip and a letter had been sent. The allotment holder could be billed if no action was taken. <p>277.4 Hutton Moor – George Raines <i>Between Herluin Way and Hutton Moor Road.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were two vacancies, one of which was due to the death of an elderly plot holder. <p>277.5 Bournville – Cheryl Puttman <i>Lonsdale Avenue and Windwhistle Circle.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two plots were available and prospective tenants were going to view the plots on Thursday. • An award had been received from Weston Civic Society. Land that had been used for rubble dumping had been cleared by members and turned into an orchard. The article appeared in the Mercury newspaper. <p>277.6 Old Mill Way – George Raines <i>Locking Castle</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing further to report other than already stated in minute no: 275. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>278.</p> | <p>To receive and consider details of the current Allotment Waiting List</p> <p>Total requests at 1st December 2014 were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual residents requesting plots: 16 • Total plot requests: 64 <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Hutton Moor</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding-right: 20px;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Rectors Way (<i>Clarkes</i>)</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding-right: 20px;">23</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Redpits</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding-right: 20px;">9</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Kewstoke</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding-right: 20px;">9</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Bournville</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding-right: 20px;">13</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Old Mill Way (<i>Locking Castle</i>)</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding-right: 20px;">8</td> </tr> </table> <p>RESOLVED that: The number of individual residents requesting allotment plots be noted.</p> | Hutton Moor | 2 | Rectors Way (<i>Clarkes</i>) | 23 | Redpits | 9 | Kewstoke | 9 | Bournville | 13 | Old Mill Way (<i>Locking Castle</i>) | 8 |
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| | <p>The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 4th February at 7.00 pm and there being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.25 pm</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Signed.....
Chairman

Dated.....