

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Allotments Committee** held on 28th October 2013 at the Parish Centre, Warboys.

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs J E Tavener, Chairman

Councillors Mrs M P Bucknell, P Clarke, Mrs M H Harlock, P S Potts, Mrs S A Pryke, G C M Willis and Mrs A R Wyatt.

Mrs W Catlow and Mr M Willington (Allotments Association).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs J M Cole and T R Huggins.

07/13 MINUTES

Upon being moved by Councillor Willis and seconded by Councillor Potts, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3rd June 2013 were signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

08/13 MEMBERS INTERESTS

Councillor Mrs A R Wyatt declared an 'other' interest in the proceedings of the Committee as she was related to an allotment tenant but had already received a dispensation from the Committee to speak and vote on matters affecting the allotments (Minute No. 04/13 refers).

9/13 MATTERS ARISING

The Committee considered the following matters arising from the Minutes of its meeting held on 3rd July 2013:-

(a) Track on Eastern Boundary

Further to Minute No. 05/13(c), the Clerk reported that the Handymen had erected a sign on the track on the eastern boundary of the allotments pointing out that this was not a public right of way. However the sign had been removed on each occasion within a short space of time by members of the public.

Under the circumstances, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Clerk be requested to erect further signs and take photographic evidence of them on site; and
- (b) that a suitable article be included in the Warboys Diary explaining that the track is not a public right of way.

(b) Various

Further to Minute No. 06/13, the Clerk reported that the fruit trees on plot 32 had been planted prior to the change in the conditions of tenancy prohibiting the planting of trees at the allotments.

Members were informed that the County Council's local Highways Officer had accepted that the County Council was responsible for the ditch outside the southern boundary fence at the allotments and that the Clerk had asked that the work be undertaken in the near future to avoid further complaints from the tenant of plot 1 about the ditch being waterlogged following the recent onset of wet weather.

The Clerk also reported that the vehicle that had been parked at the entrance of the allotments had been moved shortly after the last meeting had taken place.

10/13 HALLGATE ALLOTMENTS

The Clerk reported that one of the plots currently was available to let. However there were only two persons on the waiting list, both of whom had been offered plots earlier in the year which they had refused for personal reasons but had expressed a wish to remain on the list. Under the circumstances, an article had been included in the latest edition of the Diary inviting people who wished to rent an allotment to contact the Clerk.

Councillor Mrs Wyatt suggested that many people who had moved to the village recently were unaware of the existence of the allotments and the Clerk referred to the dwindling interest in allotments following the great upsurge of people who wished to rent an allotment some 3 or 4 years previously.

On behalf of the allotment tenants, Mr Willington drew attention to the problems of rabbits at the allotments which the Clerk indicated he would speak to the Handymen about to ascertain whether a solution could be found.

Arising from a comment by Mrs Catlow about the condition of the access track through the allotments which was becoming impassable again in the recent wet weather, the Clerk indicated that he would arrange for the Handymen to place a barrier across the entrance to prevent its use until weather conditions improved. The possibility of obtaining some aggregate to fill in the pot holes in the track would also be investigated.

Mrs Catlow suggested that it would be helpful if the e-mail addresses of tenants could be forwarded to her so that the association could distribute information. However the Clerk pointed out that the Data Protection Act prevented the Council from releasing personal information, although all new tenants were provided with Mrs Catlow's contact details

with her permission so they could get in touch with her if they wished to join the association.

Following the break-in at the former railway carriage at the allotments during the summer, the Clerk reported that some of the stolen equipment had been recovered nearby and that there fortunately had not been a recurrence of the incident.

11/13 BUDGET 2014/15

(Councillor Mrs Pryke arrived at the meeting during the course of discussion on the following item.)

The Committee considered a summary of income and expenditure for Hallgate Allotments for 2012/13 and a forecast for both the current year and 2014/15.

The Clerk reported that water consumption at the allotments in the current year had increased significantly as a result of the hot, dry summer and an amount was now being included in the budget for the first time towards the cost of administering the allotments. Income had increased in the current year as a result of the increase in allotment fees for 2013/14 and a wayleave payment of £230 had been received from UK Power Networks to cover the period 2013 to 2018.

Members were informed that the anticipated balance to be carried forward at the end of the current year was £755 and that, if rents remained unaltered, income was forecast to be only slightly less than expenditure with a balance at the end of 2014/15 of £672.

As rents had been increased for the current year, it was therefore

RESOLVED

that no change be made to allotment rents for 2014/15.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed.

Chairman.