



## **BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Allotment Committee Meeting** held in the Council Chamber at Arms Everytne House on Tuesday 17th December 2013 at 6.30pm

**Present:**

Councillors: R Parker (Chair), K Ellis (Vice-Chair), C Bruce, J R Potts and O Potts

**Officers:**

S E Rickitt - Town Clerk (Democratic Services)

S Robinson – Assets Officer

L Forsyth – Committee Clerk

**Allotment Holders:**

P Buckley and Anthony Raffell – Wensleydale

J Gilles – Newsham & New Delaval

N Jones – Delaval Gardens

G Newell – 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue

S Newell

J Newell

C Newell

## **017/13/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr J Reid, Cllr D Rutter and Cllr G Thompson.

## **018/13/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND GRANT OF ANY DISPENSATIONS**

The Committee was reminded of Cllr C Bruce's recurring dispensation as an allotment holder on the Bolam Avenue Site.

## **019/13/03 MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 3<sup>RD</sup> SEPTEMBER 2013**

Councillor J R Potts enquired as to whether there been any progress regarding potential to develop the site at Ninth Avenue. The Assets Officer commented that himself and the Committee Clerk had visited the site and that investigations still at the preliminary stage.

Councillor J R Potts also enquired as to whether there are any updates regarding the Ph.D. student conducting an investigation at the Bolam Avenue allotment site. The Assets Officer, Sean Robinson commented that work is still ongoing and that he will provide an update as and when received.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Committee held on the 3rd September 2013 were **AGREED** by the Committee and signed by the Chair.

## **020/13/04 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE WITH THE ALLOTMENT HOLDERS ON 3<sup>RD</sup> SEPTEMBER 2013**

The Minutes of the Meeting of Members of the Allotments Committee with the Allotment Holders held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2013 were **NOTED** by the Committee.

## **021/13/05 REPORT OF THE ASSETS OFFICER**

(Please find the report of the Assets Officer attached)

The Assets Officer provided the brief update in support of his report. Comments were made regarding issues with the locks of the Bolam Avenue site, concerns about the accuracy of the allotment waiting list and

the need to revamp the application forms for potential allotment holders to address changing data concerning areas such as age and disability.

The Mayor, Councillor R Parker noted that he was seeking to update the policy to remove those who no longer wish to be involved and provide greater accessibility for those registered disabled.

Regarding the allotment waiting lists, Councillor K Ellis commented that he was seeking an update on an annual basis in order to best manage the list. This was **AGREED** by the Committee.

The Assets Officer also noted that he is still awaiting the paperwork regarding potential developments on the Beatrice Avenue site from Northumberland County Council's legal department.

Regarding the drainage issues at the Newsham Side Club site, the Assets Officer informed those present that a quote had been achieved in order to place 12 m borehole at the site, however was still awaiting a date for this procedure to take place.

Discussion was then held regarding the mechanics of borehole and related plumbing issues.

The Assets Officer commented that regarding the site at 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue that further discussion is to be sought in order to complete the provision of raised beds at the site. It was also therefore noted that, Councillor J Reid is to use his small fund scheme to complete this development. Further discussion was held regarding the situation and Mrs G Newell commented that the allotment holders were still keen to provide support if required and applicable. Councillor R Parker commented that this issue is to be reported back at the next meeting of the Allotments Committee for information. **Action: SR**

Discussion was then held by the Committee regarding allotment charge increases. Concerns were expressed by Mr P Buckley regarding the increases, however, it was noted that these changes would not be implemented until 15th April 2015.

Councillor K Ellis commented that the rates charged by Blyth Town Council compare favourably to others within Northumberland.

The Assets Officer, Sean Robinson also noted that recently at the allotment officer conference that the average increase across the region was circa 20%, representing on average £10 per annum.

Councillor J R Potts enquired as to whether the proposal is for a £5 increase across the board. Councillor R Parker replied that the proposal was to be unilateral.

Councillor C Bruce enquired as to the progress regarding development of the site at Bolam Avenue in partnership with the Cyrenians. The Assets Officer, Sean Robinson commented that the Cyrenians have sought a quote for the fencing and are to source equipment from their own horticultural department, with the expected start date to be around February/March 2014.

Potential provision of raised beds akin to those proposed the 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue site was also discussed. Mr P Buckley commented that those on the Wensleydale allotment site - would hold no objections to such a development.

Mr P Buckley also enquired regarding toilets on the allotment sites. The Assets Officer commented that funding for facilities may be available via external sources.

Councillor J R Potts discussed the logistics of access and install of the boxing in of the taps at the allotment sites and whether this may incur future expenditure for the Committee.

## **022/13/06 BUDGET FOR 2014/2015**

The Committee held discussion regarding the planned budget for 2014/2015. From these discussions, please find the attached proposals, which were generated as an appendix.

## **023/13/07 ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND ITEMS FOR URGENT ATTENTION**

The Assets Officer sought support from Blyth Town Council and its allotment holders to host the Allotment Officers conference in the forthcoming year. This was **AGREED** by the Committee.

An outline was also provided by the Assets Officer regarding grit bins and the provision within the Town following an enquiry from a residents group. It was noted that a further investigation is to be conducted regarding this issue which is to be addressed at the upcoming meeting of the Finance Committee held on 9 January 2014 in order to guard against the potential snowballing of responsibility.

## **024/13/09 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

It was **AGREED** that the next Meeting of the Allotment Committee is to be held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber at Arms Everytne House.

**NB:** It was **AGREED** that instead of the previous format of separate meetings for Allotment Holders and the Allotments Committee, a joint meeting is to take place.

**MEETING CLOSED AT 8.15 PM.**

## **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:**

### **Councillors :**

R Parker (Chair/Mayor)

K Ellis ( Vice-Chair)

C Bruce

J R Potts

O Potts

J Reid

L Rickerby

D Rutter

G Thompson

**Date:**

**Signed:**

CODE	BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL PERIOD 2014-15			
		Budget 2014/15	Budget 2013/14	Notes
600	<b>ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE</b>			
601	Bolam Avenue - Water Rates	3,000.00	3,000.00	
602	Bolam Avenue - Ongoing Maintenance	500.00	500.00	
603	Bolam Avenue - Other Projects			
	Bolam Avenue sub-total	<b>3,500.00</b>		
611	Twentieth Avenue - Water Rates	1,000.00	1,000.00	
612	Twentieth Avenue - Ongoing Maintenance	500.00	500.00	
613	Twentieth Avenue - Other Projects			
	Twentieth Avenue sub-total	<b>1,500.00</b>		
621	South View - Water Rates	900.00	900.00	
622	South View - Ongoing Maintenance	500.00	500.00	
623	South View - Other Projects			
	South View sub-total			
631	Newsham - Water Rates	1,300.00	1,300.00	
632	Newsham Ongoing Maintenance	500.00	500.00	
633	Newsham - Other Projects			
	Newsham sub-total	<b>1,800.00</b>		
641	Beatrice Avenue - Water Rates	1,000.00	800.00	INCREASED - 17/12
642	Beatrice Avenue - Ongoing Maintenance	500.00	500.00	
643	Beatrice Avenue - Other Projects	48,000.00		NEW - 17/12
	Beatrice Avenue sub-total	<b>1,500.00</b>		
651	Tenth Avenue - Water Rates	350.00	350.00	
652	Tenth Avenue - Ongoing Maintenance	500.00	500.00	
653	Tenth Avenue - Other Projects			
	Tenth Avenue sub-total	<b>850.00</b>		
661	Delaval - Water Rates	600.00	600.00	
662	Delaval - Ongoing Maintenance	500.00	500.00	
663	Delaval - Other Projects			
	Delaval sub-total	<b>1,100.00</b>		
671	Laverock - Water Rates	350.00	0.00	NEW - 17/12
672	Laverock - Ongoing Maintenance	500.00	500.00	
673	Laverock - Other Projects			
	Laverock sub-total	<b>850.00</b>		
681	Bebside - Water Rates	1,000.00	650.00	INCREASED - 17/12
682	Bebside - Ongoing Maintenance	500.00	500.00	
683	Bebside - Other Projects			
	Bebside sub-total	<b>1,500.00</b>		
691	Wensleydale - Water Rates	3,000.00	3,400.00	REDUCED - 17/12
692	Wensleydale - Ongoing Maintenance	500.00	500.00	
693	Wensleydale - Other Projects			
	Wensleydale sub-total	<b>3,500.00</b>		
697	Site Surveys and Investigations	14,500.00		NEW - 17/12
698	Emergency & Non-Site Specific Work	14,500.00		NEW - 17/12
699	Contingencies	500.00		Changed - 17/12
	Sub-total for water rates	12,500.00		
	Sub-total for ongoing maintenance	5,000.00		
	Sub-total for Other Projects	48,000.00		
	<b>ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE TOTAL</b>	<b>95,000.00</b>	17,000.00	