

# Cottingham Parish Council



**ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**HELD AT THE PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE**  
**9 THE COTTAGES, MARKET GREEN, COTTINGHAM**  
**ON FRIDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2019 AT 1:30PM**

**MINUTES**

PRESENT: Cllrs: Abel, Green, Duke & Jump  
 Allotments Association Representatives: R Bromley and P Fulleylove  
 Deputy Clerk – N Pape

574 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY, PREJUDICIAL AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

Cllr Duke declared that as a plot holder he would have an interest in items 582,583,587 and 588. Cllr Duke left the room when these items were discussed

575 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

There were no apologies

576 TO ELECT A CHAIR

**Resolved: The Committee unanimously agreed that Cllr Abel be elected as Chair**

577 TO RECEIVE REPORT FROM THE ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

577.1 The following report was received from the Allotment Association

“Plots: a number of plots are in a poor condition and have not produced anything this year. We should be more pro-active with non-producing plots as we still have a considerable waiting list. Plot holders with half plots, if wishing to move to a full plot, should be vetted beforehand to see if their half plot has been kept up to the required standard.

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*Chairman: Councillor Ann Abel Tel: 01482 875489 Clerk: Matthew Kay*

We have, with the help of the PC obtaining road planings, been able to keep the site in better condition with most of the potholes in the approach road and the internal road being dealt with. The provision by the Allotment Association of a communal area for the burning of rubbish has resulted in far fewer individual bonfires thus lessening annoyance to other plot holders. Our monthly working parties are well supported by a number of members (usually 14-15) and the general tidying of the site by trimming vegetation and grass cutting has kept the site looking tidier. We are very pleased of the support and co-operation of the Parish Council and hope this will continue.”

577.2 Roger Bromley enquired how many people are currently on the waiting list for an allotment plot - Deputy Clerk Nicola Pape informed the Committee that 22 people are currently waiting for an allotment

#### 578 TO RECEIVE UPDATE ON BLACKTHORN HEDGE FOR NORTH EAST CORNER

578.1 Roger Bromley informed the Committee that 50 Blackthorn slips had been planted by the Allotment Association Volunteers and that these are doing well. However, the Allotment Association feel it would be useful to plant some more to fill in the gaps this winter. Cllr Green suggested that other species eg. Hazelnut bushes could be planted instead. Pete Fulleylove informed the Committee that the Allotment Association felt it would be best to keep planting blackthorns as these are fast growing and the local Wildlife Team were happy with these. Roger Bromley informed the Committee that it might be necessary for the Allotment Association to request funds from the Parish Council to purchase the additional required hedges if required

578.2 Roger Bromley informed the Committee that in regards to the eastern hedge which runs adjacent to the property of a local resident, the Allotment Association felt it would be prudent for the Parish Council to budget for this being cut every 2 years and recommended that the next cut takes place in the Spring of 2020. Cllr Duke informed the Committee that the eastern hedge overhangs his own allotment and enquired if he was able to work his plot right up to the hedge – Pete Fulleylove confirmed to Cllr Duke that it was his responsibility to maintain his plot up to the eastern hedge

#### 579 TO RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE APPROACH ROAD

Roger Bromley informed the Committee that the approach road will continue to be a problem without major expenditure. The Committee discussed that when a large sum of money was spent on the approach road 2/3 years ago, this did not result in the state of the road being improved. The Allotment Association are hopeful that the road can be kept in an acceptable condition for the time being with the use of planings and the help of their working party. Roger Bromley requested that Deputy Nicola Pape contact ERYC to request a delivery of 2 further loads of planings if possible

**Resolved: Deputy Clerk Nicola Pape to contact ERYC to request 2 loads of planings if possible**

## 580 TO RECEIVE UPDATE ON LOCKS

Pete Fulleylove informed the Committee that a minority of plot holders had not been happy with using a combination lock and that an anonymous party had indeed removed the lock. Pete also informed the Committee that old lock barrels from a previous lock had been fitted into a different lock at a cost of £60- this had resulted in a cost of £60 as opposed to purchasing a new lock at a cost of £240. The Allotment Association have also purchased a new lock for the green gate which they will maintain (the lock has also been welded onto a chain for security) - a spare key is also accessible for the grey gate as and when required

## 581 TO DISCUSS WATER USAGE AND COSTS

581.1 Pete Fulleylove informed the Committee that the water meter reading is taken on the first of the month when the plot inspections take place – the readings are passed onto the Parish Office. Pete informed the Committee that since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 250 tons of water have been used

581.2 Pete Fulleylove informed the Committee that a minority of plot holders are abusing the system and using hose pipes for direct watering. The Committee discussed that the Tenancy Agreement wording should be amended to state that tenants would not be allowed to use water for direct watering. A disclaimer should be added to state that if this was necessary, eg unable to lift, that a separate charge would be levied. The Committee discussed how this could be monitored and suggested that coloured stakes could be used to show which plots were paying for an additional water usage

## 582 TO DISCUSS LATE PAYERS/NON RENEWING PLOT HOLDERS

Deputy Clerk Nicola Pape informed the Committee that all fees were paid on time in 2019 and that she has a robust system in place to contact plot holders who have not paid by the beginning of January

## 583 TO DISCUSS 2020 RENT REVIEW

583.1 The Committee agreed that the rent would be increased to £36 commencing January 2020 and discussed the possibility of a further increase to £39 in 2022. The Committee agreed to discuss the rent fee for 2022 at a future meeting

**Resolved: Rent to be increased to £36 in January 2020**

583.2 Roger Bromley enquired as to how much budget was annually allocated to the Allotments – Cllr Abel informed the Committee that the budget is currently £1500. Pete Fulleylove requested a breakdown of income/expenditure. Deputy Clerk Nicola Pape informed the Committee that the office accounting system provides an overall figure as opposed to an itemised breakdown of income/expenses. The Committee requested that the Parish Office set up a spreadsheet with itemised income/expenditure

**Resolved: Parish Office to set up spreadsheet**

583.3 The Committee discussed that if a tenant relinquishes their plot and their deposit is forfeited due to the poor condition of the plot, whether these funds could be used to help clear the plot for the new tenant

583.4 The Committee discussed that if a new tenant shows no sign of activity on their plot within a month of signing their tenancy agreement, the Allotment Association will speak to the plot holder regarding circumstances

## 584 TO DISCUSS ROAD PLANINGS

**Resolved: As per Agenda item 579, Deputy Clerk Nicola Pape to request 2 loads of road planings from ERYC**

## 585 TO DISCUSS PLOT MARKERS

Cllr Abel informed the Committee that when she conducts her inspections of the allotment plots, she has difficulty in seeing some of the plot markers due to the markers being obscured by nettles etc. Pete Fulleylove informed the Committee that paint and brushes were ready for the markers to be improved and that this work will be undertaken by members of the Allotment Association

**Resolved: The Allotment Association to apply fresh paint to the plot markers**

## 586 TO DISCUSS SKIP HIRE

The Committee agreed that the Parish Council will continue to pay for the skip hire during even years (ie. 2018/2020 etc) and the Allotment Association will pay for the skip hire during odd years (ie. 2019/2021 etc). The Parish Office will order the skip hire each year. Pete Fulleylove requested that a skip be hired for Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 and for this to be placed at the top of the road near the Poly Tunnel

**Resolved: Deputy Clerk to place an order for skip hire on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019**

## 587 TO DISCUSS CURRENT SCORING SYSTEM FOR PLOT INSPECTIONS

587.1 The Committee looked at the current scoring grid – Pete Fulleylove informed the Committee that this was used as a guide and was not intended to quantify an absolute measure of the quality of a plot – the grid had been produced to offer guidance to whichever member of the Allotment Committee was inspecting the plot, to promote consistency of scoring

587.2 Cllr Abel informed the Committee that following her plot inspections she informs the Parish Office if a warning/eviction letter is to be issued to a plot holder

587.3 Cllr Jump suggested that if a plot is showing a continuing decline in scores, that the Allotment Association holds a discussion with the plot holder to discuss the way forward

**Resolved: If a plot is showing a continuing decline in monthly scores, a member of the Allotment Association will speak to the plot holder and also put details of the conversation in writing – this will be signed by both the plot holder and Allotment Association member as confirmation of the conversation**

588 TO DISCUSS WORDING OF THE TENANCY AGREEMENT SECTION 17/ISSUES ARISING FROM INITIAL DEPOSIT

588.1 Cllr Abel read out to the Committee comments made in a statement by Cllr Duke, who after declaring an interest in 4 agenda items had to leave the meeting. However, the context of this statement was dealt with in many of the other agenda items discussed

588.2 The Committee discussed the required wording and alterations – Cllr Jump informed the Committee that she will make the amendments and forward the updated copy to the Parish Office

**Resolved: Cllr Jump to amend the Tenancy Agreement and forward the updated copy to the Parish Office**

589 MEMBERS POINTS OF INFORMATION AND ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING (DISCUSSION ITEMS ONLY)

589.1 The Committee discussed the possibility in the future of finding a borehole to access water

589.2 The Committee agreed on amendments to be made in the warning/eviction letters issued from the Parish Office

**Resolved: Parish Office to make amendments to the wording in the warning/eviction letters**

Next meeting: **February 2020 – date to be confirmed**

There was no other business and the Chairman closed the meeting at 4:05pm.

Signed .....  
Chairman of the Parish Council