

# KENDAL TOWN COUNCIL

## Allotments Committee

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 7.00 pm  
in The Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Kendal**

- PRESENT** Councillors John Veevers (Chair), Richard Sutton (Vice Chair), Giles Archibald, Carol Hardy and Jon Robinson.
- Site Reps: Eric Ashton (Coley Barn Allotments) and Deborah Allison (Canal Head Allotments)
- APOLOGIES** Councillor Clare Feeney-Johnson
- OFFICERS** Janine Holt (Assistant to the Town Clerk), John Belshaw (Town Handyperson) and Nicky King (Council Secretary)
- Also in attendance was the tenant of Plot 27 Sedbergh Road allotments for item 5 on the agenda (Application to Keep Bees).
- 827/15/16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- None.
- 828/15/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- The Chair, Councillor Veevers, declared an interest in any item relating to the Wattsfield site due to the fact that he holds an allotment tenancy on that site.
- Councillor J Robinson, declared an interest in any item relating to the Greenside site due to the fact that he holds an allotment tenancy on that site.
- The site representatives declared an interest in any item relating to the site where their own allotment plot is held.
- 829/15/16 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2016**
- The Chair presented the minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016, which had been approved by full Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016.
- RESOLVED** That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016 be accepted as a correct record.
- MATTERS ARISING** (Not on Agenda)
- 830/15/16 Terms of Reference** (Minute 401/15/16)
- Janine Holt confirmed that she had amended the first paragraph of the Terms of Reference relating to recommendations to Council, as per the resolution previously agreed. The Chair remarked that the situation may have changed following a subsequent Council meeting. Janine Holt to speak to the Town Clerk to seek clarification.

**RESOLVED** That Janine Holt speak to the Town Clerk to clarify the position with regard to recommendations to Council.

**831/15/16 Wattsfield – Horse’s Tail (Minute 404/15/16)**

It had been agreed at the previous meeting that Janine Holt would investigate the possibility of the Town Council holding a spraying licence of their own. She advised that there was a course run by Westmorland County Agricultural Society. The foundation course cost £125 plus VAT and there was a module relating to spraying and weed killing at a cost of £280. Total cost £405 plus VAT. Councillor J Robinson queried whether there would be a requirement to renew the licence periodically. It was agreed that Janine Holt would clarify the renewal terms of the licence.

**RESOLVED** That Janine Holt clarify the renewal terms of the spraying licence with Westmorland County Agricultural Society.

**832/15/16 Future Sites for Allotments (Ref 403/15/16)**

Councillor J Robinson advised that he had spoken briefly to Dan Hudson regarding future sites for allotments. He would speak to him further on the matter.

**RESOLVED** That Councillor J Robinson speak to Dan Hudson further regarding future sites for allotments.

**833/15/16 APPLICATION TO KEEP BEES**

Janine Holt reported that an application had been received to keep a bee hive/s on Plot 27 Sedbergh Road allotments.

She explained, by way of background, that for the past 18 months the KIB Committee had been trying to support a bee project in Kendal and had been looking for a suitable site to house bees. A number of sites had been identified but they proved to be unsuitable for a number of reasons.

Following receipt of the application from the tenant of Plot 27 Sedbergh Road, advice was sought from Kendal Beekeepers. Their recommendation was to consult with all the tenants on Sedbergh Road. Notices were displayed last summer for 8 weeks informing all allotment holders on site of the proposal to keep bees. No objections were received and three letters of support were submitted. Janine Holt advised that the proposed site is ideally positioned, being tucked away and not on a public pathway, this being desirable for the wellbeing of the bees. The bee keeper would personally cover all associated costs and train as a bee keeper.

Janine Holt stated that she would like to fully support the application. Councillor J Robinson also expressed his support for the proposal and agreed that it was a very good site for the hive/s.

The tenant of the plot in question was present and confirmed that he would cover all costs and train as a bee keeper. He would also join a bee keeping club in order to obtain the appropriate insurance cover. He informed Members that the Bee Keeping Association's recommendation was to start with 2 hives and a nucleus (a very small hive) and this was what he proposed.

Councillor J Robinson queried whether acceptance of the proposal would go outside the terms of the tenancy agreement. Janine Holt said that there would be a need to review the tenancy agreement.

Councillor J Robinson proposed that the tenant be allowed to keep a bee hive/s on the Sedbergh Road allotments on a permanent basis. This was seconded by Councillor Sutton and carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED**

That the tenant of Plot 27 Sedbergh Road allotments be allowed to keep a bee hive/s on a permanent basis.

**834/15/16****FLOOD DAMAGE TO COLEY BARN ALLOTMENTS**

Eric Ashton advised that there had been extensive flood damage to a lane at Coley Barn allotments (running beside the bungalow at the site). There was uncertainty over ownership/responsibility of the lane. Eric Ashton believed it was owned by KTC, however the Town Clerk understood KTC had rights of access across the lane only. Members discussed the matter and it was agreed that Janine Holt would ask the Town Clerk to investigate who owns the land. If it was found to be under KTC ownership then approach should be made to the owner of the bungalow for a contribution towards the repairs, as they used the lane for access.

**RESOLVED**

That Janine Holt ask the Town Clerk to investigate who owns the land damaged by flooding at Coley Barn allotments.

**835/15/16****ALLOTMENT SOFTWARE**

Janine Holt advised Members that the database system she used for allotments had been set up approximately 9 years ago. Following previous discussions she had investigated more intuitive systems which would provide an electronic billing facility, amongst other things. There had been big variations in costs, however the preferred option would cost £583 for the first year and an ongoing operational cost of £113 per annum. At the Budget Council meeting in November it had been decided that the cost should come specifically from the Allotments Committee budget.

The Chair considered that the software was an administration tool which would speed up the work carried out by Janine Holt on allotments and the cost should therefore come from the General Fund.

There was a general debate regarding where the money should come from to fund the purchase of the software. Councillor Archibald queried whether funds could be found in the Allotments budget. The Chair replied that there were no funds left in the budget for this item.

Janine Holt explained that the proposed software was specific to the work of allotments. A big advantage would be the facility for electronic billing which was a very cumbersome task with the current system.

Councillor J Robinson commented that the software would also assist with the general management of allotments holders etc. He remarked that there was a general dislike for systems developed by individual members of staff as opposed to specifically designed software and the Council had pulled back on such systems in recent times. He also made the point that any future handover of the post would be smoother with a specifically designed system. Councillor J Robinson declared that he would strongly support the purchase of the software in principle.

Councillor Archibald proposed that the allotment software package be purchased from the Allotments budget at the cost of £583, with the ongoing maintenance cost of £113 per annum built into future budgets. This was seconded by Councillor J Robinson and carried.

## **RESOLVED**

That the allotment software package be purchased from the Allotments budget at the cost of £583, with the ongoing maintenance cost of £113 per annum built into future budgets

## **836/15/16**

### **PROJECT UPDATE/ALLOTMENTS JOBS LIST**

Janine Holt advised Members that there are currently 26 vacant plots. There is a waiting list of 76 people, of which 25 require a plot on the Greenside site only.

The Town Handyperson, John Belshaw, had prepared and circulated a list of jobs completed on allotments over the last couple of months and highlighted the following:

#### **Sandylands**

Asbestos cleared and fencing finished. A gate had been made for a vacant plot on the site following issues with tipping. Clearing of the plot would take place by the Town Handyperson and photographic record of a clear plot taken. Legal action may have to be pursued to resolve the issue if it continued.

#### **Coley Barn, Town View, Haggs and Underley Hill**

Work was being carried out on vacant plots in readiness to let those plots in the Spring.

#### **Town View and Underley**

Work to pathways.

Councillor Veevers asked who had installed the 5 bar gate on the Natland Road site and queried whether this was KTC. Janine Holt advised that this had been installed by NPS who were experiencing problems with land being churned up by vehicles. She advised that she had spoken to Tony Naylor about the matter and was waiting for email confirmation of the code for the gate. Councillor Veevers

remarked that the situation was not acceptable as there was no access for deliveries. Janine Holt commented that she considered it to be an oversight on NPS's part and it was agreed that Janine Holt and John Belshaw would follow up the matter with NPS and agree a solution for access.

**RESOLVED**

That Janine Holt and John Belshaw follow up the matter of the gate installed on the Natland Road site with NPS and agree a solution for access.

**837/15/16****SITE MAINTENANCE ISSUES**

Deborah Allison mentioned that the public footpath running through the middle of the Canal Head site was extremely muddy. She asked what course of action should be taken to get something done about it. Councillor Archibald suggested that the Environment & Highways Committee be requested to review the problem and consider the matter as footpath repair. This was agreed.

Eric Ashton reported damage to fencing on plot 2 at the Wattsfield allotments. The Town Handyperson had inspected the damage and it was suspected that this had been caused by kids. It was agreed to monitor the situation.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the Environment & Highways Committee be requested to review the problem of the muddy public footpath running through the middle of Canal Head allotments and consider the matter as footpath repair.
2. That the problem of damaged fencing at the Wattsfield allotments be monitored.

**838/15/16****ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER**

Janine Holt advised that there would be an article in the next edition of the newsletter due for issue at the beginning of March.

**839/15/16****FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The financial statement to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015 had been circulated to the Committee. Members considered the statement and noted the contents.

Councillor Archibald noted that there was a surplus identified in the statement and asked whether this was likely to be spent before the year end. A general discussion then ensued and Members considered possible expenditure that could be funded by the surplus.

One suggestion by Councillor J Robinson was that the cost of the pesticide training discussed earlier in the meeting be covered by the surplus.

The Town Handyperson had previously requested a new pole hedge cutter and lawn mower. He was now mowing rather than strimming allotments and a new lawn mower would speed up the job considerably.

Councillor Archibald proposed that both items of equipment for the Town Handyperson be purchased. Also that the spraying licence/pesticide training be arranged. This was seconded by Councillor J Robinson and carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED**

That a pole hedge cutter and lawn mower be purchased for the Town Handyperson. Also that the spraying licence/pesticide training be arranged.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS****840/15/16****Annual Meeting**

Janine Holt informed Members that the Annual Meeting would be held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016 in the Assembly Room at the Town Hall. She was working with site reps on the format of the meeting and commented that more representation from the Committee would be welcome.

**841/15/16****Kendal in Bloom**

Janine Holt confirmed that there would be a 'best plot' category with 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> positions for those interested in taking part.

Site reps had requested a photographic competition with entries to be submitted over the summer. The theme would be the harvest. This would be similar to the Countryfile competition.

Janine Holt mentioned that she would be looking for a Member of the Committee to volunteer to assist with judging the allotments 'best plot'. Councillor Sutton volunteered to help.

**842/15/16****DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held in the Mayor's Parlour on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8.37pm.

**Summary of Information, Resolutions and Recommendations to Council**

<b>Min</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Information/Resolution/Recommendation to Council</b>	
<b>830</b>	Terms of Reference	<b>RES</b>	That Janine Holt speak to the Town Clerk to clarify the position with regard to recommendations to Council.
<b>831</b>	Wattsfield – Horse's Tail	<b>RES</b>	That Janine Holt clarify the renewal terms of the spraying licence with Westmorland County Agricultural Society.
<b>832</b>	Future Sites for Allotments	<b>RES</b>	That Councillor J Robinson speak to Dan Hudson further regarding future sites for allotments.
<b>833</b>	Application to Keep Bees	<b>RES</b>	That the tenant of Plot 27 Sedbergh Road allotments be allowed to keep a bee hive/s on a permanent basis.
<b>834</b>	Flood Damage to Coley Barn Allotments	<b>RES</b>	That Janine Holt ask the Town Clerk to investigate who owns the land damaged by flooding at Coley Barn allotments.
<b>835</b>	Allotment Software	<b>RES</b>	That the allotment software package be purchased from the Allotments budget at the cost of £583, with the ongoing maintenance cost of £113 per annum built into future budgets
<b>836</b>	Project Update/Allotments Jobs List	<b>RES</b>	That Janine Holt and John Belshaw follow up the matter of the gate installed on the Natland Road site with NPS and agree a solution for access.
<b>837</b>	Site Maintenance Issues	<b>RES</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Environment &amp; Highways Committee be requested to review the problem of the muddy public footpath running through the middle of Canal Head allotments and consider the matter as footpath repair.</li> <li>2. That the problem of damaged fencing at the Wattsfield allotments be monitored.</li> </ol>
<b>839</b>	Financial Statement	<b>RES</b>	That a pole hedge cutter and lawn mower be purchased for the Town Handyperson. Also that the spraying licence/pesticide training be arranged.
<b>842</b>	Date of Next Meeting	<b>INFO</b>	The next meeting would be held in the Mayor's Parlour on Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2016 at 7pm.