

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE, HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, 14TH SEPTEMBER 2011, IN THE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE,
KING'S HOUSE, THETFORD, STARTING AT 10 A.M.

Present:

Councillors:
Mrs S J Armes
T J Lamb
D Crawford
M G Spencer (Chair)

In attendance: Representatives of the Thetford Garden & Allotment Club,
Mundford Road Allotments Association and other allotment holders.

208/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor S J Armes declared a personal interest as a member of the Thetford Garden and Allotment Club.

209/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology was received from Councillor Quadling.

210/11 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Committee's meeting held on 13th July 2011, as received by the Council at its meeting on 26th July 2011 under minute 139/11(c), albeit subject to amendments agreed then be confirmed as a true record and signed/initialled by the Chairman.

211/11 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED BELOW

a) Members of the Committee and members of the public expressed dismay at the lack of progress on six recommendations made by the committee at the last two committee meetings and ratified by Council.

RECOMMENDED that the a report on the progress of the six recommendations be requested from the Town Clerk. They included Bury Road fencing, additional plots on Mundford Road, signage for fly tipping and dog fouling, London Road entrance, Mundford Road roadways and toilet provision on sites.

b) Allotment Representatives. It was agreed that The Allotment Clubs would provide names of persons who were willing to fulfil the role for each site. Guidance on their role would be provided by the Council together with a list of contacts including the Police.

c) Bonfires on Guy Fawkes Night. A request was made by a member of Mundford Road Allotment Club that the Council give permission for a

traditional bonfire on allotment land on Guy Fawkes Night. The Finance Manager agreed to look into the insurance and health and safety aspects of this to enable the Council to take a view on this.

- d) Work carried out by allotment holders on Council Land. A number of allotment holders asked if they were allowed to carry out work at the allotment site. They had been informed they were unable to provide help in a community spirit way due to health and safety and insurance reasons. The Finance Manager agreed to contact the Council's insurers to clarify the position.

212/11 INSPECTION REPORT

Breach of tenancy agreements by tenants

It was reported that 22 letters would be sent to tenants re tenancy breaches as a result of the inspection carried out the previous day including 6 Notice to Quit letters. The intention to issue a Notice to Quit (for one of their allotments) for a tenant holding 4 plots was brought to the Committee's attention.

213/11 REQUESTS FOR PLOTS FROM PEOPLE NOT ON WAITING LIST

- a) Resident in Arlington Way in the Parish of Brettenham
The resident had been helping an allotment holder on London Road and wished to take on her plot when she relinquished it. However as he is not a resident of Thetford his wish to be added to the waiting list had been declined. He had appealed against this decision.

RESOLVED that although, the Committee acknowledged that the person involved had a long association with the Thetford Garden and Allotment Club, he was not a resident of Thetford. He, therefore, could not be added to the waiting list without an amendment to the Allotment Terms and Conditions that would allow non residents on the waiting list. As the allotments are subsidised by the residents of Thetford through Council Tax it was not deemed fair to amend the Terms and Conditions for this purpose. His appeal was therefore rejected.

- b) Resident of Ulfkell Road
The resident had health problems and wished to jump to the top of the waiting list as his medical advisers had indicated that having an allotment would be "therapeutically beneficial" to his health. A letter to this effect from his Psychological Therapist had been submitted with his request.

RESOLVED that although the Committee was sympathetic to the resident's health problems he could not be granted special status and therefore must wait 'his turn' on the waiting list. However, it was suggested the Council recommend the resident contact Riversdale who may have areas requiring gardening that would provide a mutual benefit to both.

214/11 APPEALS AGAINST NOTICES TO QUIT

12 Notice to Quits had been issued in July subsequent to the Inspection. There were two appeals:

- 1) L028 - Councillor Armes met the allotment holder who had spent a week working on their plot to improve it after receiving the notice. Councillor Armes was happy with the progress made and the subsequent inspection recently showed an overall improvement in the plot.

RESOLVED to withdraw the Notice to Quit on LO28.

- 2) MR13B – Members of the Committee reviewed this half plot during their September inspection and improvement was noted

RESOLVED to withdraw the Notice to Quit on MR13B

NB. The requirement for a full Appeals Committee consisting of non Allotment Committee members was not deemed necessary for these routine appeals. The Appeals Committee would be called for non routine appeals where an independent arbitrator would be more appropriate.

215/11 DATE OF NEXT INSPECTION AND MEETING

Wednesday 7th December was agreed as the date for the next committee meeting.

The next inspection would be Tuesday 13th March followed by a Committee meeting on Wednesday 14th March 2012 at 10.00am.

Chairman