



CHILTON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Allotment meeting of Chilton Town Council
Held at Hutton House, Durham Road, Chilton, Co. Durham on
Thursday 16th January 2020 at 10.30am

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cllr Peter Davies (Chair); Cllr Alan Bruce; Cllr Elizabeth Bruce; Cllr Lily Dixon

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms. Pauline Cant (Town Clerk)

4 Allotment Holders namely Pam Herbert; Malcolm Ray; Kevin Tracey; John Wardle

AC 16/1/20/01 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr. David Allanson

AC 16/1/20/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

AC 16/1/20/03 DISPENSATIONS

None received.

AC 16/1/20/04 CHAIRMANS REPORT

The Chairman gave a brief report, advising that David Banks had been unable to attend the Council meeting in January but that he had confirmed his attendance at the Council Meeting on February 11th 2020. He also advised that the situation regarding the water usage on sites appeared to have settled and was working well.

IT was AGREED to receive and note the Chairman's report

AC 16/1/20/05 TENANT PARTICIPATION

Pam Herbert reported that the lock had been sawn off between plots 109 and 110 on her site, and that the allotment had been left open but there appeared to be no theft and damage. The Town Clerk asked whether the Police Allotment Watch Initiative had been rolled out in Chilton and advised that all matters of criminal damage were reported to the police via the non emergency number as "hot spots" would appear on the police crime recording system and patrols by the neighbourhood team would be more prevalent.

The Town Clerk also advised the meeting that she would raise this with the police at the PACT meeting that night.

Kevin Tracy raised the issue of where all the rental income from allotments went in terms of the Town Council, as it did not seem to be re-invested in allotments.

The issue of dog fouling was raised and the Town Clerk advised that anyone observing an owner not picking up should report it to Durham County Council as the more reports that were made, the more likely it would be that an environmental warden would patrol the area.

Concerns were also raised about the implementation of the new charging regime based on plot size, following discussion it was accepted that when the Town Council brought the scheme in, there would be both winners and losers, as those with very large plots would pay more and those with very small plots would pay less but it would be a lot fairer.

The tenants present expressed some concern over other tenants who appeared to be operating a business from their allotment, the issue of fires and some allotment holders who were behaving in a verbally aggressive manner.

The Town Clerk advised that written complaints in the form of statement(s) setting out the dates and times of any incidents would need to be submitted to the Council and that such behaviour, as well as potentially being a breach of the allotment tenancy agreement could be a criminal offence under the Public Order Act (using threatening words and behaviour).

IT was AGREED to note the concerns, raised and monitor the situation, taking into consideration the advice of the Town Clerk.

AC16/1/20/06 REPORT ON ALLOTMENT MEASURING

The Chairman reiterated his remarks made in his report, advising that David Banks would be in attendance at the Council meeting in February. The Town Clerk explained to the meeting how a Town Council that she had previously worked for had implemented a variable rent system based on the actual plot size.

It was AGREED to note matters and await the attendance of David Banks.

AC 16/1/20/08 INSPECTIONS

Following discussions around suitable dates for allotment inspections **It was AGREED** that the dates for the inspection of allotments be agreed as 20th May 2020 and 17th June 2020, and that the Town Clerk would attend as an observer.

AC 16/1/20/09 CORRESPONDENCE

None received.

AC 16/1/20/10 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

IT was AGREED that in accordance with Paragraph 1(2) of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public shall be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the remaining items on the Agenda on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

AC 16/1/20/10 ALLOCATION OF ALLOTMENTS

IT was AGREED that any vacant allotments would be allocated in accordance with the usual procedure via the Office Manager.

Signed

Date