



**Minutes of Crediton Town Council's Property & Allotments Committee Meeting,
held on Tuesday, 9th May 2017, at 6.00 pm, at the Council Chamber, Market Street, Crediton**

Present: Cllrs Miss J Harris (Committee Chairman), Mr M Szabo and Mr A Wyer

In Attendance: Mrs Emma Anderson, Assistant Clerk
Ms Penni Tearle, Chair of Boniface Allotments Association

91. To receive and accept apologies

No apologies were received.

92. Declarations of Interest

None declared.

93. Public Question Time

There were no members of the public present.

94. Order of Business

There were no changes to the order of business.

95. Chairman's and Clerk's Announcements

None.

96. Property & Allotments Committee Minutes – To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Property & Allotments Committee Meeting held on 14th March 2017. Copies had been circulated with the agenda. It was **resolved** to approve, and sign, the minutes of the Property & Allotments Committee Meeting held on 14th March 2017, as a correct record. (Proposed by Cllr Szabo)

97. Matters Arising

No matters arising.

98. Allotments [CTC Allotments](#)

a) To consider the following issues and agree a course of action:

➤ **Vacant plots, Non-cultivation Notices and Notices To Quit.** The Assistant Clerk confirmed there are currently no vacant plots. The Town Clerk and Ms Tearle have carried out two allotment inspections. Following these a handful of care and cultivation letters were sent, however these issues have been addressed.

b) To consider matters raised by the Boniface Allotments Association and agree a course of action. None raised.

c) To consider matters and issues raised by allotment tenants and agree a course of action. A letter received from an allotment tenant was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting.

SA -

Ms Tearle advised members that she had consulted the Boniface Allotments Association (BAA) Committee as well as other plot holders regarding the issues raised. A copy of the responses received are attached as Appendix One.

Ms Tearle highlighted that the Allotment Rules specifically discourage the use of hose pipes and other allotment holders do not support putting a hosepipe ban in place as they are so rarely used.

The issues raised regarding access at the Barnfield allotment site were also discussed. Ms Tearle highlighted that members of the Committee and other allotment holders did not share the opinion that access was causing an issue.

Members agreed to discuss concerns regarding allotment ponds under item 'e' below.

It was **resolved** to send a letter to the allotment holder advising her that the Committee agreed that a hosepipe ban was not necessary and that access is not deemed an issue at Barnfield Allotment site. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

- d) **To receive an update on making the Exhibition Road allotment site more accessible and agree any actions.** The Assistant Clerk confirmed it was taking longer than anticipated to identify possible funding options for the project, however it is still progressing.
- e) **To consider whether the Town Council will allow ponds on allotment plots and agree a course of action.** During an inspection carried out by the Town Clerk and Ms Tearle, it was noted that one plot holder had installed a pond. This has highlighted the fact that this is not covered within the Allotment Rules.

Ms Tearle advised members that all BAA Committee members and all plot holders asked were in support of allowing ponds on the allotment sites.

The Town Clerk had spoken to the Council's insurance providers and they advised that, if the Council were to allow ponds, it would be necessary to carry out a risk assessment for each case and ensure warning signs are erected.

It was **resolved** to amend the allotment rules to allow for ponds on allotment plots, with the following conditions:

- Allotment holders must request permission from the Town Clerk.
- Each request must be followed up by a site visit and risk assessment.
- Ponds must not exceed a depth of 20 cm and length and width of 40 cm.
- Ponds must be sited a minimum of 1 metre away from all allotment plot boundaries.
- The Allotment Holder must provide and erect an A4 sized warning sign in the proximity of the pond.

(Proposed by Cllr Wyer)

Ms Tearle left the meeting at 6.20 pm

SA

99. To receive an update from the Assistant Clerk on the following:

- **Various stonework**
The Assistant Clerk confirmed the works have been completed and inspected.
- **Various paintwork**
The Assistant Clerk confirmed the works have been completed and inspected.
- **St Boniface Statue stonework**
The Assistant Clerk confirmed that works have been completed and inspected.
- **St Saviours Way Car Park sign**
The Assistant Clerk confirmed one sign has been erected and inspected, however a sign had not been erected on the Charlesworth Nicholl building as Listed Building Consent is required. Members requested for the Assistant Clerk to look into whether a sign could be attached to the Silbury Place road sign.

Cllr Szabo had received a complaint from one member of the public who thought the car park sign was encouraging vehicles to turn into Silbury Place to access the car park. Members agreed that a pedestrian stick man symbol would be more appropriate than the blue parking 'P'.

It was **resolved** to ask Touchwood Signs to print a pedestrian stick man symbol that could be used to cover over the blue 'P'. (Proposed by Cllr Wyer)

100. To discuss the Committee's future aims and objectives in order for them to be included in Crediton Town Council's 5 Year Strategic Plan. No further items were suggested.

101. Business brought forward

Cllr Szabo reported that there are large weeds growing at the Fulda Crescent Play Area and these need spraying.

PART TWO

102. It was **resolved** that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items as it involves the likely disclosure of sensitive and confidential information. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

103. To consider correspondence received in relation to the land at Stonypark. Due to the confidential nature of this item no further information can be disclosed at this time.

104. Close

The meeting closed at 6.39 pm

Signed
Chairman

Dated..... 11-2-17.....

Response re issues raised by a tenant**1. Ponds:**

There is no mention of ponds in our insurance, though 'negligence is noted' so anyone with a pond would need to be asked to comply with some form of signage, fencing, depth or similar.

Plot holders who were asked about having a pond were unanimously in support that this should be allowed. Reasons given were:

- a) To attract beneficial wildlife which would help pest control, (many people garden organically, but this point was made by everyone I asked).
- b) Currently the rules don't say ponds are not allowed so where has this come from?
- c) Popular with children. Eg 'My daughter in particular was desperate to have a pond to attract wildlife and study what happens to it. We deliberately kept the pond small to make it as safe as possible for young children.'
- d) Several people noted the need to keep a pond small and shallow and to be well signed/have some mini 'fencing' round it. It would seem this is important for our insurance as well so the plot holder is not deemed 'negligent'

2. Hose pipes and water conservation

Plot holders are strongly discouraged from hosepipe use (see rule 12) and there are specific rules about their use. Nationally it seems sites are quite divided about whether or not hosepipes are allowed with several allowing them just for filling water butts. At present there is virtually no hosepipe use on Barnfield, partly perhaps as the main tap is 'push down'. However, there is one tenant who lives right next door to his plot and regularly uses a hosepipe from his own water supply.

When asked about banning hosepipes no tenant believed we should go this far. It was noted:

- a) Hard to enforce
- b) No need when hosepipes are so rarely used
- c) Difficult situation with the one person who does use a hose pipe but from his own water source. All agreed this could not be stopped.
- d) We can put something in the annual Newsletter to further discourage use of hosepipes.

3. Access

There was little resonance with this comment and also we have an excellent source of manure where people can go and collect it for free and put it in bags or trailer etc. Exhibition Road has no vehicle access nor does Moffat's where access is quite challenging. Nationally the picture seems to be quite varied.

- a) Several people have recently and with no difficulty brought a car with trailer onto the site to drop off manure
- b) Barnfield has 3 gates and most people have reasonable access from at least one of these. Exhibition Road also has 3 gates, is flat and currently good access for disabled people is hopefully 'coming soon'.
- c) Tractors have got bigger! The main area of 'danger' is in fact at the entrance to Barnfield which has not been impacted on at all by tenants, just a difficult slope, in particular in bad weather. Tractors are therefore not allowed on site.
- d) There is a turning area on one plot along the main path which was cleared a couple of years ago when there were some issues with it.
- e) One tenant was asked to take down a 6 inch high fence at the end of their plot which was felt to be intruding onto the main path and this was done.

JH -