

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ALLOTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE OF
BEAUMARIS TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 31 JULY 2017 AT 7.30 PM IN THE TOWN HALL**

PRESENT: The Town Mayor Councillor F R Carr
The Deputy Mayor Councillor C M Brimecombe
Councillor J Carr
Councillor D W Gallichan
Councillor M Jones
Councillor R J Parry

Allotments Association:

Mr K Anker
Mr A Dixon
Mr M Gravestock
Ms Stroma Pallett

The Town Clerk was in attendance

APOLOGIES: Mrs J Anker

The Deputy Mayor took the Chair

1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

2.0 TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR

It was proposed, seconded and carried unanimously that Councillor R J Parry be elected as Chairman.

Councillor Parry took the Chair

3.0 TO ELECT A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR

It was proposed, seconded and carried unanimously that Councillor J Carr be elected Deputy Chair for the forthcoming year

Ms Pallett said she wished to thank the Town Council for the offer of the free use of a marquee for the Allotments Barbeque. She apologised for the fact that the barbeque had been postponed, but hoped that it could be held later in the summer. She also asked if it would be possible for the marquee to be reserved for 7 and 8 July 2018 when the National Gardens Scheme would be visiting. This was an organisation that raised money for charities. She thanked the Town Council for the continuing good relationship with the Allotments Association, and for buying materials to help maintain the fences around the plots.

4.0 UPDATE OF TENANCY AGREEMENTS

4.1 The Town Clerk advised that all allotments had been paid for for the coming season. Mr Anker said that at present there were 62 allotment holders, and 6 of these were looking to upgrade from half allotments to full ones. There were two people on the waiting list.

4.2 Mr Anker said that the present tenancy agreements were satisfactory but there was a need to include a system for dealing with plot holders who do not keep their plots up to a satisfactory standard. An objective rather than a subjective approach was needed to deal with such tenants.

5.0 CONDITION OF ALLOTMENTS

5.1 The Town Clerk read out an anonymous letter that had been sent to the Town Council complaining about one of the plot holders. It was agreed that this letter should be ignored since it had been sent anonymously.

5.2 Mr Anker said that a new system was needed to ensure the plot holders kept their allotments up to standard. In the past the Chairman, with members of the Allotments Association Committee, would speak to a person whose plot was not up to standard and issue a warning that unless it was improved they would lose their plot or a whole plot would be reduced to a half plot. Subsequently, if there was no improvement, the Council was asked to deal with the matter and end the tenancy. That system had not always worked smoothly, and a scheme had then been put in place whereby the plot holder was given a list of what needed to be done and a timescale in which to complete the work. Mr Gravestock said that the old system had always been kept informal – often a quiet word with the individual concerned worked satisfactorily. However when it did not work, some people had threatened to go to the newspapers, claiming there had been discrimination against them.

The Allotments Association was now suggesting a new system with a three-phase approach. Initially there would be an informal discussion with the tenant, informing him that it was considered his plot was not up to standard and suggesting improvements were needed. If there was no response, in phase two, a 'Completion of Improvement' notice would be issued. This would list the work that was needed to bring the plot up to standard. The Association asked if the Town Council would sign these notices. In phase three, if there was still no response or no improvement to the plot, then the Council would be asked to give notice to quit. In addition, if three 'Completion of Improvement' notices had to be issued in three years, tenants would be given notice to vacate their plot.

A new form had been produced for inspections of all plots. This would provide a paper trail in case of any complaints of victimisation. The new form would list the requirements of the Council and it would give a marking against the level of achievement. On the back of the form a list of the characteristics of a well cultivated plot would be outlined. The Allotments Association asked if these guidelines could be referred to in new Tenancy Agreements, and they asked for the agreement of Council to carry out the plot inspection process.

Recommendation to Council:

The recommendations of the Allotments Association be accepted in respect of adopting an inspection process, recording the findings on forms and the subsequent process to ensure that improvements were made to plots.

5.3 Representatives of the Allotments Association said that an inspection of plots had been carried out, and three plots had been identified for which they wished to issue notices. They asked if the Town Council would sign these. In all cases, plot holders had been given time to deal with the problems noted with their plots. The plots were 5, 44a and 48.

It was proposed, seconded and carried unanimously that the letters be signed.

5.4 **Mr Anker asked if there had been any progress with the request to remove asbestos from one of the plots.**

The Town Clerk said that he had approached several local companies. One company was due to provide a quote, and others he was expecting to return his telephone calls. Mr Anker offered to provide contact details for another local company that deals with agricultural asbestos waste. It was noted that one company had given an approximate price but said that the work would not be completed before September.

There was no other business and the Chairman declared the meeting closed.