

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Minutes

of the meeting of the Amenities Committee held at the Council Offices, Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth at 20.00 hrs. on **Monday 09 February 2015**.

Those present

Cllr Angela Alder
Cllr Pat Coysten
Cllr Derek Filler
Cllr Ruth Buckmaster

Cllr Tom Reeks
Cllr Spencer Richards
Cllr Joyce Vincent
Cllr Eric Buckmaster

In attendance:

R Bowran - Town Clerk

Joanne Kenny – Projects Manager

A14/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

A14/12 PUBLIC FORUM

To receive representations from members of the public on matters within the remit of the Amenities Committee.

There were none.

A14/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any Declarations of Interest by Members.

There were none.

A14/14 MINUTES

Resolved: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting held on 07 July 2014 (A01)

[prop Cllr R Buckmaster; secd Cllr Vincent]

Noted: The record of the inquorate meeting scheduled for 13 October 2014 (A02)

A14/15 ALLOTMENTS

To report on matters relating to Allotments

- Allotment Association. Meetings continue to be held with the officers of the allotments associations.
- Water supplies. The additional tap in the Southbrook site to assist a less able tenant has not yet been installed.
- Bullfields. No particular issues at present.
- Southbrook. Some issues with request for unacceptable large constructions which have been refused.
- Vantorts. Issues with garden waste being deposited on the site. Solution is probably better housekeeping and the use of a chipper which will be purchased next year.
- Bellmead. Issue with a sycamore tree which will be removed when we have sufficient funds. Better housekeeping regime will be instituted this year. A tougher regime is needed over plots not kept under cultivation.
- Waiting list. Currently stands at 13, but will be virtually eliminated when the spring allocations are made. There may well be surplus allotments on Bullfields by the spring of 2015.
- Rents. It was agreed that the clerk should notify tenants that

rents will increase by 10% (to £3 a pole) with effect from October 2016. Also that rents should be increased each year to cover more of the costs of maintaining the sites.

The contribution made by Laura Carter to regularising the administration of the allotments was acknowledged by Members.

A14/16 CEMETERY

To report on matters relating to the Town Cemetery

- Inspections. Continue to be carried out on a regular basis.
- Vandalism. The police have had reported to them an incident of alleged theft and vandalism on a plot.
- Trees. We have commissioned a contractor to attend to the row of trees separating the original boundary of the cemetery from the first extension.

A14/17 OPEN SPACES & FOOTPATHS

To report on matters relating to Footpaths and Open Spaces.

- Bullfields
 - Inspection and maintenance carried out. There are continuing instances of vandalism and graffiti.
- West Road
 - Inspection and maintenance carried out. The General Hand is to be trained in playground inspections.
- Other areas
 - Bell Street flower beds have been replanted from time to time. Berberis noted as seeming healthy.
 - London Road flower beds are scheduled for a complete makeover this Spring. Under planting to take place Spring 2015 and overplanting possibly a year later. Suggested that community volunteers be recruited to maintain the planters.
 - The London Plane tree in that planter has been removed by Hertfordshire Highways and the roots have been poisoned.
- Town Green
 - Further consideration has been given to the development of the Town Green and we have met with the District Council's Landscape Architect and Arboriculture Officer.
 - Recommendation that we should commission a topographical survey and a tree survey was agreed.
- Rivers Heritage Site and Orchard
 - Maintenance days continue with the logistic assistance of the council.
 - The council carried out the Risk Assessments for the January Wassail day.
 - STC will purchase the required new tools from the funding that has been set aside for the site.
- Footpaths
 - General state is said to be good although there is rapid growth at edges.
 - Co-operative works are now taking place in association with Herts Highways and worth EHDC.

A14/18 CIVIC AMENITIES

To report on matters relating to Civic Amenities

- Ranger Activities
 - Steve Parrish continues to be a valuable asset. Better use will be made of his time on market days to offer an allotment clearance service.
- Farmers Market
 - Report on markets since May. Attendance is declining and there is a need to rebrand the market as a community event rather than a food outlet.
 - Projects manager is in discussions with EHDC for advice on how the market can change identity to meet today's needs.
 - A survey is being constructed to go out in the next newsletter to find what people think of the market and the town's offerings in general.
- Floral Displays
 - Display for 2015. All baskets are on display, this year again sponsored by Oakridge Nursery. Plant specifications are needed with some urgency.
- Bell Street Conveniences
 - A meeting with EHDC had revealed that they have now come up with a design of their own for a refurbishment of the facility.
 - The importance of minimising maintenance costs, which would be borne by the town council, do not appear to have been high on the specification.
 - It was agreed that the project would be brought to council for approval and that if the key revenue criteria were not acceptable then the council will not proceed with the project.

Meeting ended at 21:30