



Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

67 Elm Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1SP - Tel: 01702 716288
council@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk www.essexinfo.net/leigh-on-sea

Chairman: Cllr. Pat Holden
Vice Chairman: Cllr. Carole Mulroney
Town Clerk: Paul Beckerson



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25th MAY 2011 AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, 67 ELM ROAD, LEIGH-ON-SEA

Present: Cllrs: Paul Lawrence (Chairman), Jerry Holden, Pat Holden, Carole Mulroney, Patsy Ryan, plus Ron Bates, Andrew Lewin, Anne Scobie, Martin Scott and David Hammond.

In attendance: Cllr Donald Fraser, Paul Beckerson (Town Clerk), Members of MDAS

The meeting opened at 8.03pm

2. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed members and the public to the meeting and thanked former Cllr Jean Roswell for her term of office the previous year. Cllr Fraser would be attending the Allotments meetings instead of Cllr Margaret Cotgrove due to a permanent diary clash. He said he had been round the sites and had noted that a lot of plots did not have numbers on, and that this had to be addressed; also people had been using hose pipes to syphon water from the tanks to containers on their plot and stated this needed looking into.

3. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Cllr Jerry Holden was elected Vice-Chairman

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Mark Bromfield and John Wren, plus John Longhurst (LOSALGA)

5. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Cllrs Jerry and Pat Holden and Paul Lawrence, each declared a personal interest as plot holders on the Manchester Drive site.

6. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minutes of the meeting of 27th April and the 11th May 2011 were agreed and signed by the Chairman. The minutes of the 27th April 2011 were amended to delete in minute 102 "Cllr Lawrence undertook to site and cement in the bollards" and in minute 104 change "1 abstention to 2 abstentions".

7. MEMBERSHIP OF WORKING PARTIES

- a) **Infrastructure Working Party**, Cllrs Paul Lawrence, Pat Holden, one vacancy, plus one representative from each Allotment Society, MDAS and LOSALGA
- b) **Disputes Working Party**, Chairman and Vice Chairman of Allotments Committee with Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council as alternatives in case of unavailability or involvement in the dispute.

- c) **Open Day Working Party**, Cllr Jerry Holden put a proposal to cease to hold an Annual Open Day and that the allotment societies be encouraged to hold their own events to raise funds if this was their wish. This was **RESOLVED**.

8. CONSIDER A DATE FOR THE OPEN DAY

Due to the resolution in minute 6(c) this was not considered.

9. REPORT FROM BEE HIVE WORKING PARTY – (Appendix 1)

The Committee **noted** the report and would bring back any comments to the next meeting.

10. INSTALLATION OF FENCE IN RANDOLPH CLOSE – Report 1896/Allot (Attached as Appendix 1 to the Agenda)

Members discussed the options set out in the report and **RESOLVED the following:**

- i) **Leigh-on-Sea Town Council to fund the installation of the fence**
- ii) **To seek the permission of Southend Borough Council as the Highway Authority to site the fence on the road side of the trees**
- iii) **To lodge a planning application with Southend Borough Council**
- iv) **To obtain 3 estimates from contractors to undertake the work**

In reply to a question Cllr Jerry Holden stated that it was still a priority of the Council to fence the entire north and south boundaries of the site when the funds were available.

11. FELLING OF OAK TREE IN MARSHALL CLOSE – Report 1897/RM (Appendix 2 to the agenda)

It was **RESOLVED that a further quotation be obtained**. A contractor would be visiting the site on Saturday 28th May 2011.

12. WRITTEN REPORTS FROM SITE REPRESENTATIVES ON ITEMS NOT COVERED ABOVE

The content of the written reports were noted subject to the following additional comments.

- a) **Marshall Close** – Anne Scobie stated that plot 8b was still not being worked
- b) **Leigh Site** – No report due to John Longhurst giving apologies. Andrew Lewin spoke on behalf of LOSALGA and said that the Club House was doing well and that the roadways were in reasonable condition although some areas may need attention.
- c) **Manchester Drive** – Martin Scott raised two issues of concern:
 - 1. Does the Committee endorse the Opening Remarks of the outgoing Chairman at the April meeting?
It was made clear that this had been addressed at the Annual Council Meeting on the 11th May in minute 18(e)
 - 2. Does the Committee endorse the letter dated 23rd May 2011 regarding the planning application for the storage container?
The decision of the Planning Committee was made as a corporate body and as such was not the decision of individual members of the Allotments Committee.
- d) **Orchard** – (Appendix 3 to the agenda) The report was **noted**

13. CORRESPONDENCE – (Appendix 2)

A letter had been received from Sheila Brazier regarding the former Chairman's opening comments at the April meeting (addressed above) and whether individual members of the committee had a prejudicial interest when a vote was taken. Having taken advice the Town Clerk will respond to the letter stating that the interest was not prejudicial due to the small amount of gain or loss that would be incurred.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm



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Leigh Town Council Policy for Keeping Bees on Allotment Sites

This policy follows the best practise guidelines from National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) & the British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA).

Owing to the size of the sites, only two colonies will be permitted on the Manchester Drive Allotment site and one on the Leigh site.

Representatives of Leigh Town Council have the right to arrange an inspection of hives if they have cause to investigate complaints of poor management or maltreatment; the cost of control or other official inspections will be passed on to the tenant for payment.

The handling bees should be avoided when there is no-one else on site in case of emergency.

CONDITIONS FOR KEEPING BEES ON LEIGH TOWN COUNCIL ALLOTMENT SITES

1. A beekeeper must be a fully paid-up, plot-holder and have signed a tenancy agreement.

1.1 Emergency phone numbers must be provided to Leigh Town Council and MDAS or LOSALGA committee as appropriate.

1.2 A person wanting to keep bees on an allotment must be a member of the BBKA, membership of which provides public and product liability insurance cover up to £5 million. Proof of membership must be produced each year.

1.3 Beekeepers must have a recognised qualification such as the BBKA Basic exam, be reasonably competent and have at least one year's experience of keeping bees.

1.4 No hive shall be kept on an allotment site with out the prior consent of Leigh Town Council. Each application will be considered individually, including suitability of the potential siting.

1.5 If Leigh Town Council believes that the keeping of bees causes annoyance, the owner of the responsible bees will be required to remove them from the site.

2. Management

2.1 The beekeeper may have no more than one permanent hive, plus one temporary hive, if needed, for a limited time during the swarming season.

2.2 A source of easily accessible water must always be provided for the bees and be in place before the bees are established; otherwise bees may congregate around taps or any open water.

2.3 A person keeping bees on an allotment must satisfy Leigh Town Council that they have made adequate arrangements to ensure that, in their absence, any problems caused by their bees will be resolved by a nominated person for whom the Council has contact details.

2.4 There are effective methods of swarm control and the beekeeper should practise these, carrying out a regular inspection at least once a week during the swarming season.

2.5 The hives must be registered with BeeBase and open to inspection by the Regional Bee Inspector.

2.6 The beekeeper should, as far as he is able, ensure that the strain of bees used is gentle, for example by using a queen from a docile strain.

2.7 Bees should not be handled when other people are working in the immediate vicinity.

2.8 A sign "Beekeeper at work" should be placed prominently while the beekeeper is working, and for around half an hour after, to ensure that no one accidentally walks too near.

3. Siting of Hives

3.1 Hives must be carefully placed away from neighbouring plots, footpaths and direct thoroughfares.

3.2 Ensure that bees are encouraged to rise at least 6 feet before leaving the plot by the use of screening, which could be natural hedging, wooden fencing or fine plastic/wire mesh screening. The screening also serves to avoid drawing the attention of potential vandals to the hives.

Failure to abide by the conditions of this agreement may result in the termination of your tenancy.

In my own right.

34, Leigh Hall Road,
Leigh on Sea

Essex SS9 1RN

10.5.2011



Dear Mr. Paul Beckerson, Town Clerk

Re: Allotment Committee Meeting 27th April 2011.

Chairman Councillor Jean Rowswell's opening remarks at the above meeting criticized Manchester Drive Allotment Society and its election of its committee. She also compared Leigh Town Councillors, who give up their time and do not claim expenses to the Manchester Drive Allotment Society volunteers. What she failed to mention was Leigh Town Council employs 3/4 staff and councillors have support of office facilities; paid for by the Leigh tax payers. I wonder why this was allowed to continue?

Councillor Rowswell stopped Mr. Martin Sutt in responding and later at the meeting she questioned a fellow councillor concerning his disability which seems inappropriate at a public meeting, especially from a council that has gained 'quality status'.

I did not hear at this meeting a declaration of interest disclosure.

On the agenda item concerning the change of allotment buildings proposed by the chairman I believe 4 councillors voted for a fee, 2 against. I would like it clarified that

'members who have an actual or potential conflict of interest should participate in discussions or vote on matters affecting financial transaction between the organization and the other group.'

With 3 councillors with plots at Manchester Drive Allotments able to participate it would be seemed as unfair if those same councillors had voted against. Is this with Law?

1 councillor later abstained when a price was proposed.

Yours faithfully

Shirley Brazier

PLT no 95B.



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Mrs Sheila Brazier
34 Leigh Hall Road
Leigh-on-Sea
Essex
SS9 1RN

27th May 2011

Dear Mrs Brazier

RE: Allotments Committee Meeting 27th April 2011

As regards former Cllr Mrs Jean Rowswell's opening remarks at the meeting this has been addressed by the Annual Council Meeting motion in minute 18(e). These were her personal comments and as I was not present I cannot comment further.

In minute 99 of the meeting of the 27th April 2011 there were personal declarations of interest from 3 Councillors who are also plot holders and members of MDAS.

In reference to your assertion that a prejudicial interest should have been declared by those Councillors taking part in the vote in minute 104 I have received the following advice from the Monitoring Officer.

To have a prejudicial interest it is not relevant if a gain or a loss is made but the fact they have a financial interest. Secondly in order for the interest to be deemed prejudicial it has to be significant, in this case it would not be as any membership fee adjustment would be below £5 in total. So the Councillors concerned were right when they declared just a personal interest.

Hope this is a satisfactory response.

Yours sincerely

Paul Beckerson
Town Clerk