

Minutes of an Additional meeting of Aslockton Parish Council held in the Thomas Cranmer Centre on Monday 15th February 2010 at 7.30pm to discuss the Allotment site.

PRESENT AT THE MEETING: Cllr's B Crawford (in the Chair), D Rowe, D Sharpe, K Auckland, M Barker, N Broomham,

In attendance:

15 Members of the public

9.176 DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

None

9.177 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Cllr D Bendall and County Councillor Martin Suthers

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders for the Open Session

9.178 OPEN SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC – Allotment Holders

The Chairman opened the public session by explaining the purpose of the meeting and asked the allotment holders to raise any questions, concerns they may have and also any ideas to improve the Abbey Road Allotment site.

Questions/comments raised are listed below:

- The agreement that is currently in place only explains what the tenant can do and not what the Parish Council responsibilities are.
- Could an allotment be kept in a good state by the PC, when it is unused long-term.
- If Network Rail clears any vegetation can it not be left on the allotments.
- Ensure that unauthorised dogs are not allowed onto the allotment site.
- Keep vandals out
- Is it the responsibility of the Parish Council to maintain the central track?.
- The Parish Council should be responsible and be pro-active to care for the wildlife
- It should be clearer in the Tenancy agreement what the definition of an allotment garden is.
- The central track should not be obstructed
- Would the Council consider providing an area for tenants to deposit rubbish.
- The Parish Council should ensure that they make a time and a date to visit an allotment in advance.
- Do not want the Council to move tenants about, as they are happy where they are.
- Covering letter invited Tenants to a meeting to discuss issues regarding the allotments, what issues?
- What was the present arrangement with the water supply.
- Could the Parish Council's obligations be spelt out.
- The gate had dropped again and was very difficult to open.
- When it rains the road area floods and the horse manure runs into the road area. Would it be possible to have some stone put down to make it hard standing
- Everybody seems pretty happy, especially as it gives people the opportunity to extend their interest.
- The bonfires weren't considered to be a serious matter.
- It was suggested that maybe old railway sleepers could be used to make a contained area for the horse manure to stop it running into the path when it rains.
- Thom Thomas explained that he tries to fill the water butts up from his home water supply with a hose, however it is very time consuming and cannot be left.
- It was felt that the water butts were unsafe and needed a more solid base.

The Chairman explained what the Parish Council could do to address some of the above comments;

- Cut back the hedge along the railway side
- Put hard standing on the left hand side as you go through the gate
- Display a sign on the gate to say that only dogs with allotments holders were permitted onto this site. He also suggested that if anyone saw a dog on there without an allotment tenant then they should report it to the Dog Warden.
- The definition of an allotment was an area where they should practice good husbandry and be kept in a tidy state.
- It was suggested that the gate could be hung the opposite way to make it easier to park.
- With regard to the rubbish, it was suggested that as much as possible should be composted. The Chair had also spoken to the Environment Agency regarding fires and they confirmed that whilst it was not illegal to have a bonfire, consideration should be given to the wind on that day because of the neighbouring houses. The Environment Agency also clarified that if they became a nuisance then they could take action. If you have rubbish that is not suitable for compost then it will either need to go to the tip of your green bin at home.
- Have an annual meeting with allotment holders and an annual review of the allotment site.
- The Parish Council have no intentions to move people from the plot that they have at present.
- The Chair explained that the water supply had been looked into a few years ago and the cost then was around £1000. It was also considered that it would difficult to gauge how much each allotment holder was using and if it was metered then the bill would be split require splitting between all tenants. The comment was made that most allotment sites have a water supply and would it be possible to have a pay as you go coin meter. The Chair suggested that the Parish Council look into the options available and costs. It was considered that a coin system would be best because of the security implications.
- Councillor Barker asked, if tenants park on the central driveway was it necessary to provide a hard standing area by the gate. Could it be used instead for a bonfire area / horse manure. It was considered that a turning point would be useful by the gate.
- The chair agreed that he could provide 8 x 4ft sleepers and 4 x 10ft sleepers for containment of the manure and also to site the water butts.

The Chairman re-instated Standing Orders.

9.179 Allotment Boundaries

Cllr Diane Sharpe who is the Allotment representative for the Parish Council read out her observations after visiting the allotment site earlier in the week.

It was explained that the allotment boundaries were all in place up to plots 18, 19 and 20. Plot 18 and 19 had no boundary fencing but had the original posts; plot 20 didn't have either fencing or posts.

It was recommended that the posts should remain in 18 and 19 until the tenant gives up the allotment at which point the fence should be re-instated. This allotment agreement has been in place for many years with the tenant.

With regard to the boundary fence relating to plot 20, the Chair read out an email from the new owners of the property that relates to plot 20. Councillors agreed with the proposals from the owners and they would be contacted to discuss it further.

It was also agreed that all allotments should be clearly numbered and the Parish Council would arrange this.

9.180 Maintenance of the Allotment site

It was agreed that:

- The Parish Council would write to Network Rail to ask if the maintenance of the hedge along the allotment side nearest the railway could be added to their annual maintenance schedule.
- Mr Burton had given a quote for maintenance work which would be finalised and approved at the meeting on the 29th March 2010.

9.181 Revision of Tenancy Agreement

It was agreed to make the following amendments:

- Take out 1b from the PC agreement with the Tenant and replace with 5b and 5C from the RBC with PC agreement
- It was added to 1h a sentence regarding the burning of rubbish
- 1i (ii) - was amended to read *to a width of 12 inches and 5ft in height and also no new hedges or trees should be planted without written consent from the Council*
- 1i (IV) – was amended to read *with written consent*
- 1q was added to say *The Council will conduct an annual review on March 1st*
- 5h was included from RBC tenancy agreement into the PC agreement with the tenant at 2b
- 1r was added to the agreement to read *The Parish Council has Public Liability Insurance which is inclusive of the Allotment Site at Abbey Road*

The Chair suspended standing orders

The observation was made by an allotment holder that the water butts leaked and also that there was too much horse manure delivered for the amount of allotments. It was confirmed that the vehicle used to deliver was flexible and that plot 1 could be used for the manure, parking area and for turning once the gate had been hung the opposite way and some hard standing had been put down.

The Chairman re-instated standing orders

The chairman thanked all the allotment holders for coming to the meeting and confirmed that the minutes and agreement would be displayed on the notice board and each Tenant would be sent a new copy of the agreement for signing on the 1st of April 2010.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.05pm

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