

Minutes of the meeting of the Leisure Committee held in The Sportsman Meeting Room, Birchwood Leisure Centre, Longmead, Hatfield AL10 0AN on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2011 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillor M. Clark - Chairman  
Councillor M. Alder  
Councillor S. Atkinson – Vice Chairman  
Councillor L. Clark  
Councillor H. Hall  
Councillor S. Laver-Walton

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS: Councillor G. Wiltshire

OFFICERS: C. A. Lloyd (Town Clerk)  
P. Widdicombe (Deputy Town Clerk)  
M. Speddy (Leisure Services Manager)

78. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor K. Langley.

79. QUESTION TIME

There were no questions.

80. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2011 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

81. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

82. STRATEGIC PLAN

Members considered the draft plan for Newgate Street Village Hall and Playing Fields, Grounds Maintenance and Allotments.

RESOLVED that the draft Strategic Plan for Newgate Street Village Hall and Playing Fields, Grounds Maintenance and Allotments be brought forward to Resources and Policy Committee in March 2011 for approval.

(Action: Clerk)

83. KERB AT LEMS FORD

Members considered the cost of the Council's handyman undertaking the work for £445.23 and RESOLVED that the work be progressed.

84. FENCING AT LEMS福德

Members noted the various options and the requirement by the Council's landlord that a 5 foot fence be erected.

Members were concerned that footballers would still climb a fence to try to retrieve their footballs and that a gate needed to be inserted into the fence to prevent damage to the new fence.

RESOLVED that the Clerk respond to the agents for the Brocket Will Trust Estate advising of this Council's concerns and obtain quotes for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.

(Action: Clerk)

85. REQUEST TO KEEP HENS

Members noted the request to keep hens and the draft guidelines for keeping hens on allotments.

RESOLVED that Mr Bowen be permitted to keep hens on his allotment plot no. 42 subject to the guidelines detailed below:

## **GUIDELINES FOR KEEPING HENS ON ALLOTMENTS**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

*Allotment Tenants may keep Hens on allotments, but not Cockerels as under the Allotments Act 1950. This is on the condition that they are not "kept in such a place or in such a manner as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance"*

### **2 REGISTRATION & INSPECTION**

2.1 Tenants are required to make an application to Hatfield Town Council to keep hens on their allotment plot. Details of the number of hens and size and location of henhouse and Outdoor Run must be given. Personal contact details must be provided as well as those of others who will be caring for your hens during holidays etc so that we may contact them if there is problem. Please see attached Request for Permission to Keep Hens on Allotments application form.

2.2 Tenants are responsible for the Hens welfare and must ensure they do not cause a nuisance to others. Please see your Allotment Tenancy Agreement.

2.3 The granting of permission is dependent on Hatfield Town Council's conditions being met and guidelines followed.

2.4 Representatives of Hatfield Town Council have the right to inspect the hens at any time. If the Council has cause to investigate complaints of

maltreatment, any costs incurred will be passed to the Tenant for payment.

2.5 The tenants Allotment Tenancy Agreement will be terminated in the instance of failure to adhere to these guidelines and thus in breaching their tenancy agreement.

### **3 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY**

#### **3.1 Housing**

3.1.1 Housing is key to ensuring the welfare of hens and should allow expression of natural behaviours

3.1.2 Both the Henhouse and Outdoor Run must be regularly maintained to a good, tidy standard and free from obvious faults that may cause injury.

3.1.3 The structures must be sited a minimum of 3 meters from adjacent boundaries abutting residential properties to minimize potential nuisance.

#### **3.1.4 Henhouse**

3.1.4.1 A fully enclosed shelter providing a minimum size of 2 square feet (0.2m<sup>2</sup>) per hen is required. The optimum permitted size will be 4 ft by 3ft. The maximum permitted size of building structure on an allotment is 6ft x 8ft and only one structure per allotment plot.

3.1.4.2 The fully enclosed shelter must provide the following:

3.1.4.3 Protection from predators

3.1.4.4 Clean dry bedding material to absorb moisture and odour (eg wood shavings or straw)

3.1.4.5 Warmth during colder months and shade during summer. As a general guide the aim should be to achieve a temperature range of 10°C - 20°C.

3.1.4.6 Be draught free but have adequate ventilation

3.1.4.7 Perches for sleeping, approx. 305cm wide with rounded corners to enable them to grip.

3.1.4.8 Nest boxes for laying eggs

#### **3.1.5 Outdoor Run**

3.1.5.1 Fully enclosed caged run that provides a minimum size of 4 square feet (0.4m<sup>2</sup>) per hen, providing the hens with plenty of space to dig, dust themselves and flap their wings. The optimum size is 6ft x 8ft.

3.1.5.2 There should be an additional means of overhead shelter eg bushes (please refer to your Tenancy Agreement) to provide hens with protection from direct sunlight, strong wind and driving rain.

3.1.5.3 The structure must be allowed periods of rest to allow the ground to recover.

3.1.5.4 The total area of the henhouse and run should not exceed more than 10% of the total allotment plot area although the maximum permitted size will be 10ft x 12ft.

## **3.2 Food & Water**

3.2.1 Hens should have continuous and plentiful access to cool, clean and fresh water, feed appropriate to the age and species of hen and in sufficient quantities as well as insoluble grit to aid digestion

3.2.2 Foodstuffs must be stored so they are kept clean, tidy, and properly protected from rodents and other pests.

## **3.3 Health**

### **3.3.1 Welfare**

3.3.1.1 The Allotment Tenant is responsible for ensuring that their hens are free from distress, pain, injury and disease.

### **3.3.2 Preventative and/or veterinary treatment**

3.3.2.1 Hens must be vaccinated prior to arrival or at 6 weeks old.

3.3.2.2 Hens will need regular worming (twice a year) and clipping of claw nails to maintain them in a good healthy condition.

3.3.2.3 Hens must be checked regularly for lice and the houses treated for Red Mite.

3.3.2.4 Any health serious or longstanding or contagious problems must be reported to Hatfield Town Council immediately as well as details on the treatment being received and notification when the problem has cleared.

### **3.3.3 Sanitation**

3.3.3.1 The henhouse and run should be cleaned a minimum of once a week or more frequently as necessary.

3.3.3.2 Tenants are responsible for the removal of all arisings from the site. Soiled bedding must not be composted anywhere on the allotment site.

### 3.3.4 Number of Hens

3.3.4.1 Poultry need companionship and should be kept in groups of two.

3.3.4.2 The maximum number of hens permitted per allotment tenant should be 5 subject to optimum coup and run sizes detailed above.

### 3.4 **Nuisance to Neighbours & Cleanliness**

3.4.1.1 Provided the above guidelines on housing, food and water and health are followed, hens should not become a nuisance to others. (See Allotment Tenancy Agreement)

### 3.5 **Breeding & Profit**

3.5.1 Allotment Tenants are not permitted to breed hens on the allotment site nor profit from the sale of produce. (See Allotment Tenancy Agreement)

(Action: Clerk)

## 86. ALLOTMENT RENT

Members considered the draft Memorandum of Proposed Letting subject to contract as drafted by Smiths Gore on behalf of the Highways Agency.

It was noted that this was just the type of land which the community should be able to acquire under the Localism Bill once enacted.

Members were concerned that there was no clause giving the Council the right to break the Agreement with 3 months notice.

RESOLVED that the Clerk progress the Agreement subject to the inclusion of a break clause for the Council and the rent being fixed at £850 per annum for 5 years.

(Action: Clerk)

## 87. TREE BELT – ROE HILL HALL

Members noted the request by a solicitor acting for the purchaser of 96 Briars Lane.

It was noted that the coniferous tree at the front of the property which did not belong to the Town Council had been cut down.

The Council's tree contractor had advised reducing the crowns by 30% would manage the root spread of the trees without killing them.

A quote for £3,220 had been received and further quotes were being sought.

RESOLVED that the Clerk be authorised, following consultation with (and agreement by) the Chairman of the Leisure Committee, to approve the work required once further quotes have been received.

(Action: Clerk)

88. OUTDOOR GYM EQUIPMENT – CENTENARY PARK

Members noted the quotations received and RESOLVED that Caloo be engaged to supply the outdoor gym equipment in blue for £4,300.

(Action: Clerk)

89. SAFER ROUTES TO SCHOOL CONSULTATION

Members considered the request by Hertfordshire Highways to create access across recreation land to Countess Anne Primary School and The Ryde School.

Members expressed concern that the Ryde School proposal would require the felling of some trees in The Dell and that both proposals would lead to additional parking by parents in Old French Horn Lane (which was already badly congested from commuter parking) and Mount Pleasant Lane (which was a much narrower road than Pleasant Rise).

Members were also mindful of the additional cost on Hatfield Council Tax Payers for the additional litter picking and maintenance on the recreational land by the increased usage suggested by these schemes.

RESOLVED that the Council do not agree to recreation land at The Dell and St. Albans Road East Park being used for the Safer Routes to School proposal.

(Action: Clerk)

90. SIGN AT OXLEASE HOUSE

Members noted the request by the Evangelical Baptist Church but in view of the number of users of Oxlease House, were of the opinion that their request could not be agreed.

Members RESOLVED that the Clerk arrange for a Notice Board with lock to be put up at Oxlease House so that it is more noticeable to passing traffic and Hall users can advertise their classes and meetings.

(Action: Clerk)

91. PLAY AREA – DE HAVILLAND ESTATE

Members considered the request for a sign to be put on the play area adjacent to Barlow Close. Whilst sympathetic towards the local resident having young adults being noisy in the play area at 2am, Members did not think that a sign would deter them.

RESOLVED that the resident be requested to log all anti-social incidents with the police so that they were aware of this type of behaviour and that a written diary be maintained as well.

(Action: Clerk)

92. CAPITAL PURCHASE

Members considered the purchase of a 50" television for the Sportsman meeting room for use by hirers and the playscheme.

RESOLVED that £699 be spent from the 2011/12 Capital Programme for a new TV in the Sportsman Room.

(Action: Leisure Services Manager)

93. BIRCHWOOD SPORTS HALL FLOOR

Members considered the report of officers and RESOLVED that;

- (i) consultation be carried out with the existing user groups on the existing floor surface, the reasons for change and the suggested choice of surfaces available;
- (ii) consultation be carried out with potential new users on a suggested choice of surface;
- (iii) consultation be carried out with the National Governing Bodies of our existing and potential sports users on their preferred choice of surface.
- (iv) any funding opportunities available be ascertained;
- (v) visits to other leisure centres that have had upgraded sports flooring in the last 2 years be carried out; and
- (vi) report back to a future meeting of the Leisure Committee with the result of the consultations with full costings if applicable

(Action: Deputy Clerk)

94. FUNZONE – NEW EQUIPMENT

Members considered a quote for new equipment to be put into the space currently used as Party Room A.

RESOLVED that officers report back to the Committee on whole replacement of the structure including the viability of creating 2 separate areas to let out to 2 different exclusive use hirers and with potential to let out for adult parties.

95. FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2010 TO 30<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2011

Members noted the detailed Financial Statement as circulated.

96. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business;

- (i) Roe Hill Hall Bar
- (ii) Funzone Update
- (iii) Birchwood Kitchen
- (iv) Bar Trading accounts

97. ROE HILL HALL BAR

Members considered the report of officers and RESOLVED that bottled beer rather than draft beer be offered at Roe Hill Hall.

At 8.35pm Cllr Atkinson left the meeting.

98. FUNZONE UPDATE

Members noted the positive figures detailed at the meeting.

99. BIRCHWOOD KITCHEN

Members noted the report of officers and RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Committee receive an update on responses to the advert in Community News.

100. BAR TRADING ACCOUNTS

Members noted the Bar Trading Accounts.

Closure: 20:45

Chairman