

Allotment Committee meeting held on 8th November 2007 at 7.30

Public Session

8 members of the Allotment tenants attended and raised the following issues:

- Plot maintenance and Uncultivated plots not being followed up
- Concern over new plots created next to main road
- Length of time on waiting list
- Asking for skips to remove need for burning spoil
- Pot holes in tracks needed gravel or plainings not tarmac
- Manure not good quality and brings in more weeds

Councillors listened to the concerns and the clerk informed the allotment holders that over 20 letters had been sent out to tenants of uncultivated plots since the summer. It was also confirmed that Councillors now inspected the allotments on a monthly basis and reported back to the Committee meetings.

The Chair of the Committee closed the public session. The public remained.

1. Present at meeting – Cllrs Richmond, Taylor, Habgood and Stephens
2. There were no apologies
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 8th October were noted and the following amendments put forward

Item 6 point 4 – Cllr Taylor recommended that the Committee ask the full parish council for a sum of £1200 to write off the overspend and to ask for a £500 sum from the precept for the next financial year.

New paragraph

Cllr Richmond indicated that he would seek a meeting with the Chair of the Council to release contingency.

Item 6 point 5 it was agreed that a strip of land from the “ragwort field” would be measured into plots, size to be dependent on wishes of new tenants, in January 2008.

Item 8 point 4. Cllr Richmond believed that the water pipe would not be under the new track.

The minutes were now agreed as a true record and signed.

4. Motion of no confidence was proposed by Cllr Taylor who stated that It is with great sadness that I proposed this vote of no confidence in Councillor Richmond but unfortunately his continued refusal to tackle the current financial situation, caused solely by significant unplanned and unbudgeted expense earlier in the year and in direct conflict with the Parish Council's wishes that the Allotments are self-funding, has left me with no alternative. The Committees' suggested remedy to the situation has been ignored and Councillor Richmond has continued to pursue his own course of action that will not secure the funds necessary to finance the allotments on an ongoing basis. The Clerk has reiterated on several occasions that the Chair of the Parish Council does not, on their own authority, have the power to release any monies in a contingency fund to this committee without a motion being carried at Full Council
All efforts by the Committee to assist in putting such a motion before full Council have been ignored by Councillor Richmond. The motion was seconded by Cllr Habgood.
Cllr Richmond stated that he disagreed profoundly with their version of events and stated that the committee would see later that he had taken steps to address the matter.
Cllr Stephens asked for the discussion to take place now. Cllr Richmond stated that he would not discuss the matter in public. Clerk informed committee that the discussions declared confidential in full parish council meeting under standing orders needed to remain confidential but decisions made and minuted could be spoken of.
A vote was taken and the majority of 3 to 1 agreed the motion of no confidence in Cllr Richmond as Chair of the Committee
Cllr Taylor called on Cllr Richmond to resign.
Cllr Richmond refused to resign
5. The election of a Vice-Chair was undertaken and Cllr Habgood was proposed by Cllr Taylor and seconded by Cllr Stephens. A vote was taken and the majority of 3 to 1 agreed. The motion was carried.
6. Cllr Taylor then informed the Committee that he had an urgent meeting to attend. Cllrs Stephens and Habgood left the meeting at the same time.
7. The meeting was then called non-quorum and closed at 8pm.

Signed

dated.

Footnote:

The members of the public asked for more information as to what had happened and why. The Clerk stated that only information in the minutes of the full parish Council meetings and the Allotment Committee minutes could be made available and informed the public that the information was available in the Parish Office, Website and Library should members of the public wish to see the minutes.

Allotment Committee financial report

Year to date expenditure to 31/10/07	£3183
Predicted to 31/3/08	722

Total expenditure for year	£3905
Total income for year	£2200

Overspend at 31/3/08	(£1705)
Proposed income due Sept 08 after Rent increase	£3386
Balance available to spend to 31/3/09	<u>£1681</u>
Committed Expenditure for 08/09 (rents out and utilities)	(£2325)
Overspend before any maintenance/repairs	£644

Therefore the Allotments will be not viable during 08/09 unless the Full Parish Council agree to one of the following three options

- a) Vire overspend from contingency funds £1705 with effect from December 2007
- b) Allow Allotment committee to raise a minimum sum of £644 from precept budget in 08/09
- c) Allow Allotment committee to set a realistic budget

For 08/09 to allow for committed and budgeted costs including repairs, maintenance. The sum predicted as realistic is £2169