



Yeovil Town Council

**Town House
19 Union Street
Yeovil
Somerset
BA20 1PQ**

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The Meeting... **Grounds and General Maintenance Committee**

The Time... **7.00pm**

The Date... **Wednesday 13 May 2009**

The Place... **Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil**

If you need this information in large print, Braille, audio or another language, please ring 01935 382424



Alan Tawse

Alan Tawse
Town Clerk

6 May 2009

Please contact Sally Bing at the Town House for more information about this meeting

Grounds and General Maintenance Committee

To: All Members of Yeovil Town Council

J Vincent Chainey

Philip Chandler

John Cruddas

Clive Davis

Bridget Dollard

Tony Fife

Julian Freke

Dave Gooding

Pete Goodman

John Grana

David Greene

Peter Gubbins

John Hann

Steve Hawker

Simon Hester

Andrew Kendall

Ruth Kendall

Tony Lock

Ian Martin

Pat Martin

Tom Parsley

Wes Read

David Recardo

Alan Smith

Jon Trevett (co-opted non-voting)

A G E N D A

PUBLIC COMMENT (15 Minutes)

1. **MINUTES**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings held on 9 March and 11 May 2009.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

4. **CORRESPONDENCE**

5. **PLAY AND YOUTH FACILITIES UPDATE**

To consider a brief update from the Play and Youth Facilities Officer on the maintenance and improvement of sites managed by the Town Council (to follow).

6. **YEW TREE PARK REFURBISHMENT UPDATE**

To consider a brief update update from the Play and Youth Facilities Officer on Yew Tree Park Regeneration (to follow).

7. **SSDC ALLOTMENT WORK**

To consider the table by the Streetscene Coordinator on allotment works carried out at the Town Council's allotments (attached at page 3).

8. **REQUEST TO KEEP CHICKENS ON AN ALLOTMENT PLOT**

To consider the report by the Assistant Town Clerk attached at page 4 to 7.

9. **REQUEST FOR CHANGE OF USE OF DISUSED RECYCLING BAY AT MONKS DALE RECREATION AREA**

To consider the report by the Assistant Town Clerk attached at pages 8 to 9.

10. **BEST VALUE**

To consider the report of the Town Clerk attached at pages 10 to 12.

11. **FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

To receive the Financial Statement for the period 1 February to 31 March 2009. See attached at pages 13 to 20.

SB/JW
06/05/09

Yeovil Town Council Allotment Work 08/09

SD005305

NOTE hourly rate to be provided by Steve Fox (2008/09 £14.73 2.5% Increase)

Routine Allotment Work

Grasscutting		April		May		June		July		August		September		October		November		December		January		February		March		Total Hr	Total Value		
Location	rate	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Total Hr	Total Value		
St Georges	14.73	6.00	£88.38	6.00	£88.38		£0.00	6.00	£88.38	6	£88.38	6	£88.38		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	6.00	£88.38	42.00	£530.28		
Newtown	14.73	6.50	£95.75	6.50	£95.75		£0.00	9.00	£132.57	6.5	£95.75	6	£88.38		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	6.50	£95.75	47.50	£603.93		
Lizy Flats	14.73	5.50	£81.02	7.00	£103.11		£0.00	7.00	£103.11	7	£103.11	7	£103.11		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	4.00	£58.92	41.50	£552.38		
Sunningdale	14.73	10.00	£147.30	10.00	£147.30		£0.00	10.00	£147.30	10	£147.30	10	£147.30		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	6.00	£88.38	62.00	£824.88		
Hillcrest	14.73	1.00	£14.73	2.00	£29.46		£0.00	1.50	£22.10	1	£14.73	1	£14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	1.00	£14.73	8.50	£110.48		
Rustywell	14.73	2.00	£29.46	2.00	£29.46		£0.00	2.00	£29.46	2	£29.46	2	£29.46		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	2.00	£29.46	14.00	£176.76		
Turners Barn	14.73	4.00	£58.92	4.50	£66.29		£0.00	4.00	£58.92	4.5	£66.29	4	£58.92		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	4.50	£66.29	30.00	£375.62		
Larkhill	14.73	2.00	£29.46	3.00	£44.19		£0.00	2.00	£29.46	2	£29.46	2	£29.46		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	2.00	£29.46	15.00	£191.49		
Milford Dip (plot)	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.50	£7.37	1.00	£7.37		
Monksdale	14.73	1.50	£22.10	1.50	£22.10		£0.00	1.50	£22.10	1.5	£22.10	1.5	£22.10		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	1.50	£22.10	10.50	£132.57		
Goar Knapp	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	3.5	£51.56	4	£58.92		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	3.50	£51.56	14.50	£162.03		
Milford Dip (plot)	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.5	£7.37		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.50	£7.37		
Totals		38.50	567.11	42.50	626.03	0.00	0.00	43.00	633.39	44.50	655.49	43.50	640.76	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	37.50	552.38	287.00	3675.14
KH251 9300		6000005649 26.9.08											6000006985 26.3.09																

Additional Allotment Work

		April		May		June		July		August		September		October		November		December		January		February		March		Total Hr	Total Value
Location	Rate	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Total Hr	Total Value
Newtown (spray)	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	1.50	£22.10	3.00	£22.10
Milford Dip	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00	£0.00
Sunningdale (sp)	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	1.00	£14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	2.50	£36.83	6.00	£51.56
Hillcrest (spray)	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.50	£7.37	1.00	£7.37
St Georges (spray)	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	1.00	£14.73	2.00	£14.73
Larkhill	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	1.00	£14.73	2.00	£14.73
Monksdale	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	77.00	£1,134.21		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.50	£7.37	78.00	£1,141.58
Rustywell	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00	£0.00
Turners Barn	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	2.00	£29.46	4.00	£29.46
Goar Knapp (spray)	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00	£0.00
Lizy Flats (spray)	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	1.50	£22.10	3.00	£22.10
Totals		0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	1.00	£14.73	77.00	£1,134.21	0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	10.50	£154.67	88.50	£1303.61
KH251 9300		6000005649 26.9.08											6000006985 26.3.09														

Allotment Rotavation

		April		May		June		July		August		September		October		November		December		January		February		March		Total Hr	Total Value
Location	Rate	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Hrs	Value	Total Hr	Total Value
Milford Dip	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.0	£0.00
Sunningdale	14.73	1.00	£14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	1.0	£14.73
Newtown	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	2.00	£29.46		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	2.0	£29.46
St Georges	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.0	£0.00
Monksdale	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.0	£0.00
Goar Knapp	14.73	1.00	£14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	1.0	£14.73
Hillcrest	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.0	£0.00
Lizy Flats	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.0	£0.00
Rustywell	14.73		£0.00		£22.10		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	1.5	£22.10
Goldcroft	14.73		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	1.50	£22.10		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	1.50	£22.10
Totals		2.00	29.46	1.50	22.10	0.00	£0.00	1.50	22.10	0.00	£0.00	2.00	29.46	0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	7.00	103.11
KH251 9300		06000005649 26.09.08											6000006985 26.3.09														

FURTHER REQUEST TO KEEP CHICKENS ON AN ALLOTMENT PLOT

A request has been received by an existing allotment tenant to keep chickens on an allotment plot at Elizabeth Flats allotment site.

The Allotment Tenancy Agreement includes the following clauses relevant to consideration of the application:

The Tenant hereby agrees with the Council as follows:-

- (g) not without the prior consent in writing of the Council to erect any building on the allotment garden which must be no larger than 8ft x 6ft AND in regard to any building for which consent has been granted to erect the same in accordance with plans or specifications (and of materials specified therein) submitted to the Council by the Tenant;
- (l) not normally to keep any animals or livestock without the prior consent in writing from the Town Council

An application was considered at the last Grounds and General Maintenance Committee meeting for a tenant to keep chickens on an allotment plot at Sunningdale allotment site.

The Environmental Health Officer (SSDC) was consulted on the application and raised no objection to chickens, but advised a restriction against cockerels due to the potential noise. The application was therefore approved with the following conditions:

that the application to keep no more than 10 chickens on the allotment plot let to Mr and Mrs Smith be granted subject to conditions set out by the Assistant Town Clerk including:

- (a) *no cockerels;*
- (b) *the chicken house and run not to exceed ¼ of the allotment plot;*
- (c) *the chicken wire be inserted sufficiently beneath the ground to prevent foxes and other vermin from digging underneath to obtain access to the chickens;*
- (d) *that all surplus food be cleared to avoid attracting vermin;*
- (e) *that the chicken house and run be cleaned at regular intervals; and*
- (f) *that the tenants register that they are keepers of chickens with DEFRA and Animal Health at County Council.*

It was also resolved that any further requests to keep chickens on an allotment plot be referred to Grounds and General Maintenance Committee for consideration.

The second request is to keep no more than 6 hens on an allotment plot at Elizabeth Flats allotment site and includes the following information:

“The plot is situated deep within the site and I feel that in order to combat threats of vandalism and prevent unwarranted intrusion by rats, cats, foxes, dogs etc, a small pen and low profile house taking up no more than a quarter of the plot, for sustainable ground and bird health would be the best option if I am to make a venture of the process and minimise the impact both on the plot and the view of the whole site from both the bottom of Chelston Avenue and Longcroft Road. There is already hedging and other screening trees at the Longcroft Road end of the plot and I can screen the northern end with annual crops and soft fruit to reduce the view from the gate onto the site.”

The applicant also explained that the existing secure shed on the plot would be suitable for storage of feed, etc, and that she would register the birds with her veterinary practice.

A suggested set of conditions for keeping chickens on an allotment plot is attached.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to consider this second request and if minded to grant permission, consider adopting a policy on the permission of keeping chickens on allotment plots and the inclusion of any relevant conditions.

(Sally Bing, Assistant Town Clerk – 01935 382424)



YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

KEEPING CHICKENS ON ALLOTMENT PLOTS

The following terms and conditions apply if you wish to keep chickens on your allotment plot:-

- (i) only one chicken house/run to be erected per plot.
- (ii) any chicken house/run to be without a concrete base.
- (iii) no chicken house/run to exceed one quarter of each allotment plot without express consent of the Council.
- (iv) no chicken house/run to house more than 10 chickens without express consent of the council. Strictly NO cockerels.
- (v) any chicken house/run to be of sound construction and to be properly maintained at all times with chicken wire located sufficiently below ground to deter foxes, rodents and other animals. Chicken wire should be flexible, galvanized, 1 inch diameter maximum and between 19 and 22 gauge.
- (vi) any chicken house/run should be sited a safe distance from pathways and be sufficiently secured to the ground.
- (vii) the allotment holder is responsible for ascertaining whether planning permission is required and for obtaining such permission, if so.
- (viii) all floors should be kept clean and fresh bedding materials supplied regularly.
- (ix) nest boxes, roosting areas and perches should not be so high above floor level that birds have difficulty in using them.
- (x) house conditions should at all times be adequate to provide sufficient fresh air, but care should be taken to protect confined birds from draughts in cold conditions.
- (xi) chickens should have easy access to adequate, nutritious and hygienic feed each day, and to adequate fresh water at all times. Surplus feed must be removed to avoid attraction of vermin.
- (xii) chickens should have continuous daytime access to pen air runs, these runs should be moved regularly to avoid fowl sick or muddy conditions which could lead to ill health or discomfort of the birds.
- (xiii) precautions should be taken to protect the birds from and avoid disturbances by foxes, rodents and other animals.
- (xiv) there should be care not to leave any type of material on a plot which may attract rodents.
- (xv) a tenant must ensure that the chickens do not cause any nuisance to other ploholders or to local residents.
- (xvi) the tenants must inspect the birds at least once daily and injured or dead birds should be removed promptly. Dead birds must be disposed of off site.

- (xvii) ailing birds, and any birds suffering from injury such as open wounds or fractures, or prolapse of the vent should be segregated and treated, or if necessary, be humanely killed without delay.
- (xviii) the allotment holder is responsible for removing the chicken house/run from the site and restoring the ground to a fit state for cultivation upon his/her vacation of the plot.
- (xix) the allotment holder must register that they are keeping chickens with both DEFRA and County Council Animal Health.
- (xx) The allotment holder must comply with the conditions set out in the code of recommendations for the welfare of livestock by DEFRA (available on request or at www.defra.gov.uk or 0845 955 6000).
- (xxi) Yeovil Town Council may insist on the immediate removal of any structure on an allotment plot deemed by a Town Council Officer to be unsafe.
- (xxii) Yeovil Town Council reserves the right not to allow fowl on any allotment plot and to arrange for inspection of the birds by the appropriate authority should any concern of their health be raised.
- (xxiii) the allotment holder agrees that the Yeovil Town Council accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage which might be caused to the chicken house/run or the contents thereof by others.
- (xxiv) that the above conditions be adhered to whether the allotment tenant erected the structure, or by agreement, inherited the structure from the previous allotment tenant.

I have read and understand the above terms and conditions and I agree to abide by them.

Signature of Allotment Holder

Date

Allotment Site

Plot No.

(Please sign both copies of the agreement, retain one copy for your records and return one copy to Yeovil Town Council.)

REQUEST FOR CHANGE OF USE OF DISUSED RECYCLING BAY AT MONKS DALE RECREATION AREA

A request has been received from Lark Community Association for the change of use and alterations to a disused recycling area adjacent to Monks Dale Recreation Ground.

The request is to move four panels of fencing to the opposite side of the old recycling area and provide fixed seating (such as tree stumps) and a notice board for Lark Community Association.



The area is indicated on the attached plan.

The Play and Youth Facilities Officer has been consulted on the request and indicated that Monksdale Play Area will be one of the next play areas considered for refurbishment, which may result in a change to the site layout. He has also suggested that the Committee consider the implications of creating a seating/congregation area in this location. He supports the erection of a vandal proof notice board on the site, but feels that it would be advisable to consider the best location for a seating area when planning changes to the site as a whole.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to consider the request.

(Sally Bing, Assistant Town Clerk – 01935 382424)

Land at Monks Dale, Yeovil



BEST VALUE

Unlike their county and district counterparts, town councils are free to choose their own performance indicators as part of the Best Value process. These play an important part in the Best Value regime, as they are the yardsticks by which the targets set are measured.

To make sure indicators chosen give a balanced view of performance, the Government has suggested using five dimensions of performance:

- Strategic Objectives
- Cost/Efficiency
- Service Delivery Outcomes
- Quality
- Fair Access

The Council has set corporate health performance indicators as well as setting additional ones for each service. The Policy, Resources and Finance Committee has adopted a list of corporate performance indicators compiled from the mandatory list that all principal councils must adopt. Achievements against targets set will be reported to that Committee later this month.

Service related indicators are just as important. The Council has agreed that these are best chosen by the Service Committees - who are already responsible for monitoring and reviewing the services within their purview. Last year, all the Service Committees were asked to put forward a performance indicator for each of the major services/functions under their control.

As far as this Committee is concerned, the major services are the management of allotments and open spaces. It is suggested that, as far as possible, performance indicators should be chosen which measure activities/services within the control of the Council.

Allotments

The Council manages a total of 12 allotment sites (including the redundant Goldcroft Site for which disposal has been granted by the Secretary of State and the Town Council has accordingly agreed to sell). Vacant allotment plots fall to the Council to maintain and, until they are re-let, do not yield any rental. Clearly, it is in everyone's interest that plots becoming available should be re-allocated as quickly as possible. This ensures that those seeking plots have speedy access to a desirable leisure facility, and that rental income is maximised - to help offset the cost of service provision.

The Committee agreed that an appropriate yardstick for continuous improvement is to seek an increase each year in the overall number of lettings.

Last year, the Committee set itself a target of maintaining the letting rate at 80%. In actual fact, the letting rate has been maintained well above this figure - at a highly creditable rate of 100%.

There is no doubt that the Council's pro-active and flexible approach to allotment management has helped achieve this commendable result.

The Committee will recall the substantial in-depth review of allotment maintenance previously undertaken by the former Allotments Working Party, which was aimed at making allotments more appealing in the future. The Working Party recognised that preparing plots for re-letting and the future general maintenance of sites played a key role in attracting new tenants, and they spent a considerable amount of time looking at ways of improving take-up.

To ensure that the views of ploholders were taken into account, each site has been invited to elect a representative to serve on the successor Allotment Tenants' Working Group, and these representatives work hard, with elected members of the Council, to come up with a range of flexible and responsive ways of carrying out future maintenance work. A fresh round of elections will be carried out in the next two months.

These include giving ploholders a bigger say in deciding *what* work is carried out on their site, *when* it will be done and the *standard* to which it will be undertaken. To help secure improvements, additional funds were included in the allotment maintenance budget. All of these proposals were introduced in April 2001 and have been successfully implemented.

Although the Working Party now operates independently of the Town Council, it is still pursuing these aims and objectives, and the Council is providing ongoing support to ensure that this continues to be the case.

Examples of initiatives put in place during the current year include

- The hiring of skips by tenants themselves to clear rubbish
- Completion of the upgrade of the water supply at St George's Allotment Site
- The invitation of bids from tenant representatives to re-allocate the unspent non-corporate allotment maintenance budget

Clearly all of these efforts have paid dividends, and it is pleasing that the letting rate has continued to be maintained at well over 80%.

Given the fact that the transfer of allotment tenancies and the time involved in their re-letting will always be a factor in measuring lettings, it is suggested that next year we continue to aim to consolidate the substantial increase in lettings achieved in recent years.

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Committee notes this year's achievement, and sets a target of maintaining *next* year's lettings at 80% occupancy rate.

Open Spaces

The Committee manages 16 play areas on behalf of the District Council. The quality of service provision is important in this area of activity, and the public's perception of the level of cleanliness and maintenance of these sites is a key way of measuring whether these facilities are being managed in an effective manner.

To evaluate this, the Committee has agreed that a customer satisfaction survey be carried out, and that a satisfaction rate of 80% be set. This survey will be carried out over the coming months as the weather improves, and the results will be reported to the next meeting.

Over the past year, work has continued on the design and implementation of a major planned upgrade to the play area at Yew Tree Park. This follows an extensive consultation exercise undertaken with the assistance of local residents in the Yew Tree Park area - to find out what long-term improvements and enhancements local people would like to see put in place when the proposed major upgrade is implemented.

All the necessary funding is now in place and the final designs agreed by the Steering Group set up to oversee the delivery of the project, and the major funding partners.

The work will shortly be put out to tender, with the aim of completing the works in late July/early August 2009.

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the matter be noted and the outcome of the planned survey be awaited.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk - 01935 382424)