

## HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich, Essex CO12 3DS

Tel: 01255 507211

email: [info@harwichtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:info@harwichtowncouncil.gov.uk)

### MINUTES of the Meeting of the ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

held on

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 7.00pm

at

The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich, Essex, CO12 3DS

<b>Present:</b>	Councillors Calver, Morrison, Powell, Richardson, Smith and Wade
<b>In the Chair:</b>	Councillor Todd
<b>Clerk:</b>	Ms Maree Ratcliffe – Assistant Clerk to the Council
<b>Also present:</b>	Site Representatives: Sue Meadows, Paul Gale, Agnes Chudy, Ben Chamberlain and Peter Day Yazmin Hornsby-Fry – Admin Assistant  Two members of the public present

#### PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:

The chair welcomed Paul Gale new Site Rep Abdy Avenue

<b>A036/25</b>	<b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b> Apologies received from Cllr Davidson
<b>A037/25</b>	<b><u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTEREST</u></b> None
<b>A038/25</b>	<b><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u></b> <b>RESOLVED:</b> The Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Allotments meeting held on 30 <sup>th</sup> October 2025 (previously circulated) were <b>APPROVED</b> by the committee and signed by the Chairman as a true record.
<b>A039/25</b>	<b><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</u></b> <b>MIN A029/25 Wildlife Friendly Fencing</b> The clerk updated members regarding wildlife friendly fencing. Contact was made with The National Allotment Society for advice. They did say that cattle fencing is a good option as a deterrent, however chicken wire to cover the picket fence would be sufficient. There have not been any other reported cases of any other wildlife being trapped in fencing. Site Representative Peter Day confirmed he would send photos of the fencing he has on his site to the Assistant Clerk.
<b>A040/25</b>	<b><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES</u></b> None
<b>A041/25</b>	<b><u>VACANT PLOTS/WAITING LIST/NOTICES TO QUIT</u></b> The Clerk advised members of the following:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 47 people on the waiting list (most are waiting for specific sites or plots)</li> <li>• 4 vacant plots currently – BC13A, BC42A and BC44, BC48A</li> <li>• No NTQ issued</li> </ul>																						
<b>A041/25</b>	<p><b><u>SITE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS</u></b></p> <p><b>Dunns Meadow</b> – It has been a very wet winter and there has been a little bit of minor flooding on a couple of plots. Very nice to see allotment holders on 14 plots this week due to the nice weather. Great to see the allotments come back to life after the winter period.</p> <p><b>The Redoubt</b> – It has been quiet on site because of the weather. There are some plots that need to be kept an eye on and also paths are quite muddy so they need to be avoided. Site Representative Ben Chamberlain said that members of the public have been seen walking through the allotments. Site Representative, Peter Day, said it has been very nice seeing more faces down the plots, and some are being worked really well. He asked that when requests are submitted from tenants to add a structure (e.g. fencing, shed, polytunnels etc) to their plot, could the site representatives be updated? Agreed that the Assistant Clerk would communicate any request to them.</p> <p><b>Abdy Avenue</b> – All fine at Abdy Avenue, all plots are being well attended.</p> <p><b>Kings Georges Avenue</b> – It has been very and is really wet. There have been a few people making a start on their plots after winter and have started sowing. Hopefully with the weather improving more tenants will be coming down to work their plots. KGA03 making good progress.</p>																						
<b>A042/25</b>	<p><b><u>BUDGET UPDATE</u></b></p> <p>Members noted a budget update from the Clerk in respect of financial activity during 2025/2026:</p> <table data-bbox="264 1133 1182 1592"> <tr> <td><b>Allotments Budget</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>£6,000</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><b>Expenditure to Date</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grounds Maintenance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£194.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Water Rates</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£4920.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management of vacant plots</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 447.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><b>Income to date</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Allotment Clearance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£1,420.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tenant rate and Water rates</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£8,581.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black plastic ground cover</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 124.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Misc</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 3.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Budget Remaining</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>£ 439.00</b></td> </tr> </table>	<b>Allotments Budget</b>	<b>£6,000</b>	<b>Expenditure to Date</b>		Grounds Maintenance	£194.00	Water Rates	£4920.00	Management of vacant plots	£ 447.00	<b>Income to date</b>		Allotment Clearance	£1,420.00	Tenant rate and Water rates	£8,581.00	Black plastic ground cover	£ 124.00	Misc	£ 3.00	<b>Budget Remaining</b>	<b>£ 439.00</b>
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<b>A042/25</b>	<p><b><u>MATTERS RECEIVED IN THE POST, TO BE REPORTED OR RAISED BY MEMBERS</u></b></p> <p><b>Article from the National Allotment Society – smaller allotment plots to fit in with modern life</b></p> <p>Members discussed the possibility of a way forward with allotments and their sizing. A document was sent to members from the NAS giving an overview of how allotments could be made smaller, e.g quarter plots and micro-plots. This would enable modern day families, older gardeners who are struggling with a larger plot or anyone new to growing. This would allow people to enjoy the benefits of gardening</p>																						

	without feeling overwhelmed. The consensus was that this was a very good idea and it was agreed to add this to the agenda for the next Allotments Committee meeting.
<b>A043/25</b>	<p><b><u>EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS</u></b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Pursuant to Sub-Section 2 of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the meeting was closed to the press and public for the transaction of the under-mentioned business:</p> <p>Update on Dunns Meadow Plot 3 and Plot 4 – Update on issues on site</p> <p>Cost Recovery Update – Provide update on recovery of costs</p>
<b>A043/25</b>	<p><b><u>TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></b></p> <p>The next meeting of the Allotments Committee is scheduled to be held at <b>7.00pm on Wednesday TBC at The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich.</b></p>

The Public part of the meeting was closed at 7.20pm

**CHAIRMAN:**

**DATE:**