

**Minutes** of the Meeting of the Heckington Allotment Management Committee on Monday 10 March 2025 at 7.30pm  
in the Heckington Parish Council Chambers, St Andrews Street, Heckington

**1. Election of a Chair**

Councillor O'Connor proposed Mr Steve Wright as Chair of the Allotment Management Committee. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Davison and the motion was passed by unanimous resolution of the Committee.

**2. Chair's Welcome & Safety Announcements**

The Chair, Mr Wright (hereafter referred to as the Chair) welcomed councillors and members of the public to the meeting. The Chair delivered the usual health and safety announcements and asked those present to silence their mobile phones.

**3. Statement from the Allotment Association Chair**

The Chair explained that the Allotment Management Committee will be comprised of the two Councillors and the four Allotment Association Members. He expressed his thanks to Ms Weston, Secretary for organising the highly successful coffee morning on Saturday 8 March 2025. She in turn expressed her thanks to all the volunteers for their assistance. Mr Foard, Treasurer will be able to give an update on funds raised later in the meeting.

The Chair explained that the Allotment Association is still in place but the Management Committee is required to take some of the responsibility away from the Parish Council; the Management Committee has a degree of autonomy in terms of spending.

The Chair opened the public forum. There were 11 members of the public present.

**4. Public Forum**

The Chair opened the public forum. There were 11 members of the public present.

Mrs Bell, Chair of Heckington in Bloom and plot holder expressed her thanks to the Parish Council for coming up to speed in terms of 'ring-fencing' of allotment rental income which she highlighted at an earlier Parish Council meeting. She said that historically, this ring-fencing had not taken place and she asked whether there would be any reparations. The Clerk advised the Councillors present that this is an Allotment Management meeting, not a meeting of the Parish Council. Councillors are not obliged to answer questions posed during the public forum. Councillor Davison acknowledged the question and indicated that an additional £2500.00 had been budgeted for the allotments. Mrs Bell asked whether that would also cover the maintenance that the Parish Council as a landowner is responsible for. The Clerk read out the budget heads. Councillor Davison said that the Committee will carry out further research as to what the Parish Council is duty bound to fund.

**Action: Allotment Management Committee and the Clerk will seek clarification.**

A member of the public asked a question about the delivery of woodchip. She asked whether the woodchip can be delivered to individual plots rather than the communal plot. Mr Wright explained that the Association are trying to encourage the deliveries to go to the communal plots due to a rising number of complaints.

**Action: Association to ask the arborists to join the Facebook group to post when deliveries can be expected.**

**5. Councillors/members present**

Mr Steve Wright, the Chair (Allotment Association/Allotment Management Committee)  
Councillor Davison, Parish Councillor  
Mr Foard, Treasurer, Allotment Association

Mr Robson, Vice-Chair, Allotment Association  
Councillor O'Connor, Parish Councillor  
Ms Weston, Secretary, Allotment Association

## **6. Apologies**

None.

## **7. To receive any reports of member's interest, pecuniary or otherwise in relation to the agenda and any dispensations in accordance with the Localism Act 2011**

None.

## **8. General Matters**

### **a) Terms of Reference**

Mr Foard proposed that the following Terms of Reference (as amended) are adopted. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Davison and the motion was passed by unanimous resolution of the Committee.

## **HECKINGTON ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To be responsible for the oversight of the allotments and its tenants.
- 1.2 To be responsible for the provision of budget proposals to the full Parish Council in September of each year, with the assistance of the RFO.
- 1.3 The Allotment Management Committee with the assistance of the RFO will obtain quotes and tenders for contract work, where required.
- 1.4 The Allotment Management Committee will deal with all other matters, as may be requested by the Parish Council.

### **2. Membership**

- 2.1 The Allotment Management Committee shall be comprised of a maximum of three Parish Council Members as determined at the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May.
- 2.2 The Allotment Management Committee shall elect from its number a Chair each year at the first Allotment Management Committee meeting after the Parish Council's Annual Meeting in May.

### **3. Meetings**

- 3.1 The Allotment Management Committee will, as a minimum, meet four times a year. Additional meeting may be convened as required by the Committee.
- 3.2 Meetings will be conducted in accordance with Heckington Parish Council's Standing Orders and will be convened within the prescribed statutory framework. For clarity, the agenda must be published 3 clear days before the meeting, the meeting will be held in public unless there is a legitimate reason that it should not be and minutes will be produced.
- 3.3 The meeting may be convened at a day and time convenient to the Committee.

### **4. Working Group**

- 4.1 The Allotment Management Committee may appoint a working group of councillors, non-councillors and/or a mixture of both.

- 4.2 The working group may set its own meeting schedule. Working groups are not required to meet in public but must produce minutes for public examination.
- 4.3 The working group shall report to the Allotment Management Committee in the first instance.

## 5. Code of conduct

- 6.1 The adopted Code of Conduct will apply to all Council members and to non-council members.

## 7. Voting

- 7.1 Parish Council committee members may vote on all matters unless they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, and a dispensation has not been granted by the Proper Officer.
- 7.2 Non-councillors will have voting rights as the Allotment Management Committee of the Parish Council.

## 8. Expenditure

- 8.1 The Allotment Management Committee has delegated authority in relation to expenditure of the allotment rent income, without the prior approval of the Parish Council.
- 8.2 The Allotment Management Committee must seek approval from the full Parish Council to any expenditure above and beyond the allotment rent income up to the budgeted amount.

## 9. Regulatory matters

- 9.1 All activities and recommendations made by this Committee must comply relevant legislation.
- 9.2 No activity or recommendations should undermine or invalidate the Council or Allotment Association's insurance.

## 10. Terms of Reference

- 11.1 The Terms of Reference for the Allotment Management Committee will be set and approved by the Allotment Management Committee.

## 12. Committee Dissolution

- 12.1 The Parish Council may at any time, at a properly convened Parish Council meeting, make a resolution to dissolve the Allotment Management Committee.

### b) Ring-fencing of allotment income

The Clerk explained that the income received, minus deposits in 24/25, is £2567.00. £1550.52 has been spent, leaving £1016.52. After the pest control fee has been deducted there will be a sum of £332.48 to carry forward to 25/26.

### c) Allotment income (ring-fenced) and Allotment Association income

The Chair explained that the ring-fenced income from allotment rental income will be used by the Allotment Management Committee for maintenance of the allotments. The Chair explained that spending of the Allotment Association funds will be determined by the Allotment Association Committee.

**Action: Clerk to add approval of CCTV to the next agenda for the Allotment Management Committee.**

### d) Pest control

The Chair informed the meeting that pest control has been scheduled and Pestforce will be in attendance on Friday 14 March 2025. It is an annual contract with monthly attendance. Mr Wright said that he would

post a notice to Facebook to give allotment holders 24-hour's notice. Mr Wright said he will also post notice of the locations of the bait box. The Clerk said allotment holders are to be discouraged from setting their own poison and this rule will be added to the next tenancy agreement.

e) Front Hedge

The Chair informed the meeting that the Parish Council have approved expenditure for the front hedge to be reduced in height. It is now nesting season and he and the Clerk are awaiting Highways approval for a partial road closure.

f) Working Parties

The Chair said he would like plot holders to volunteer to form working parties. He asked if plot holders can help to maintain the vacant plots ready for advertising, he asked for assistance cutting back the inside of the front hedge and with clearance of litter from the dyke. He proposed the following dates: 16 March 2025, 19 March 2025 and 23 March 2025 at 10am.

There was some discussion around the tenancy agreement and fines for vacating tenants leaving their plots in an unacceptable state. The Chair confirmed that this has already been incorporated into the tenancy agreement. The Chair said that trash has been removed from the site and moving forward there is an agreement that the Parish Council Caretaker will maintain the vacant plots.

The Clerk had been asked to look for the documentation pertaining to the purchase of the allotment land but explained that she did not have the opportunity to do this as other matters had to be prioritised. She said that it is common sense however, to assume that the land was purchased for the provision of allotments. Councillor Davison shared the same view. There was further discussion about using the field as a car park during the Heckington Show weekend. There was some discussion as to how this has worked in the past and how this might work in the future. Councillor Davison recommended a conversation with the Show Committee.

The Chair asked whether there was a plan to flail the dyke. The Clerk confirmed that the Black Sluice Drainage Board had confirmed that the dyke falls within the remit of riparian ownership whereby maintenance costs must be equally shared with the neighbouring land owner.

**Action: Councillor Davison will liaise with a representative of the Heckington Show Committee. The Clerk will retain the action to look for definitive evidence that the land was purchased for allotment provision. Allotment Management Committee to obtain quotes to flail the dyke. Clerk to liaise with representatives of Mr Webbe in relation to use of the field. Clerk to liaise with Mrs Cash.**

g) Allotment Inspections, Friday 21 February 2025

Mr Wright said that several plot holders had received advisory notices further to the inspection. The notices were posted to the allotment plots but if not been collected the Allotment Association members will reach out to them by other means.

h) Defibrillator

There was general agreement that there should be a defibrillator at the allotments. A number of sources for funding have been identified.

**Action: The Clerk will explore suitable devices (solar) and report back to the next meeting of the Allotment Management Committee.**

i) Grants

Ms Weston, the Secretary provided an update; she said she had applied to the NK Lottery grant to pay the insurance premium for 25/26 which is due in November; it is anticipated that this will be somewhere in the region of £150-300.

She has also completed an application to the Coop. This is for funding for development of the community plot.

There is another grant application to NK for a structure for the communal plot.

A member of the public said that Heckington Living Magazine may offer grants.

j) Theft

The Chair emphasized that there is a zero-tolerance policy to theft. He said there are still reports of thefts and trespass on plots.

**Action: The Chair will issue a reminder about keeping the gate locked and when the last plot holder on site leaves the site.**

## 9. Finance

a) Income and expenditure and budgets

The Clerk explained that the income received, minus deposits in 24/25, is £2567.00. There will be a potential carry forward to ring-fenced of £332.48. The budget for 25/26 sits at £5015.00, this includes allotment rental income.

b) To receive an update from the Treasurer of the Allotment Association.

Mr Foard announced that there is £500.60 in the current account. The coffee morning funds need to be banked and it is estimated that about £485.00 was raised at the event. Ms Weston was again thanked for all her efforts along with all those who donated cakes and their time. The Chair said that there was a separate donation at the coffee morning for a memorial to be placed on the communal plot. The Chair has that money and will purchase the memorial items separately. Mrs Bell also has some funds to transfer to the Allotment Association bank account further to the coffee morning.

## 10. Date and time of the next meeting/s

A date was not set for the next meeting but it was agreed that this will be some time during early May 2025.

## 11. Questions from the public

None.

**The Chair closed the meeting at 8.57pm.**