

**LLANDOUGH COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON A HYBRID BASIS ON THURSDAY 22 AUGUST 2024 AT 7.00pm.**

*(Some members attended in the Council Chamber and others from another location using the Zoom Video Conferencing platform)*

**PRESENT**

Councillor Dr M. Misra (Chair)  
Councillor C. Gibson (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Mrs L. Barrowclough  
Councillor B. Augustian  
Councillor Mrs P. Carreyett  
Councillor M. Edwards  
Councillor P. King  
Councillor D. Mears  
Councillor M. Stanyard-Jones

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were none.

**1. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTEREST.**

There were none declared.

**2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION.**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

**3. COMPLAINTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN RELATION TO OVERGROWTH FROM THE LEWIS ROAD RESERVE ALLOTMENTS SITE.**

A resident of Spencer Drive had complained about overgrowth emanating from the site which in her opinion was damaging her boundary fence. There was also a complaint to consider from another local resident in relation to thistle weed seeds blowing into resident's gardens. A further resident had emailed expressing concerns about the care required in clearing any of the overgrowth due to evidence of hedgehogs resident on the reserve allotments site.

Councillors King and Dr Misra had recently visited the site to investigate the complaint about bramble growth allegedly damaging the resident's

fence and a report was provided for consideration by the Council. Guidance was also provided to members on the responsibility placed on the Council in relation to the management of the overgrowth.

It was reported that the Spencer Drive resident had complained about overgrowth damaging her fence back in the Spring of 2023. In April 2023, the Council engaged its grounds contractor to remove a tree behind the fence and to clear overgrowth to enable the resident to arrange for the construction of a new fence. Councillors King and Dr Misra advised that although the fence may have been repaired, there was no evidence of a new fence having been constructed.

In the discussion that took place, the following points were made:

- a) Ad hoc clearance of parts of the site would be costly and adversely impact on the Council's ability to fund the development of the site.
- b) It was unlikely that there was any legal liability on the part of the Council to clear overgrowth on the site.
- c) The overgrowth served to enhance the biodiversity of the site.
- d) Flailing of the site was not supported given the cost involved and a biodiversity assessment would be required before such work could be undertaken.
- e) Seeds from thistles could blow into residential gardens from any vacant land and was not unique to the Lewis Road reserve allotments site.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) The resident of Spencer Drive be advised that the Council had arranged for clearance of overgrowth at the rear of her property in Spring 2023 for the purpose of enabling her to replace her fence which it now appeared had been repaired rather than replaced.
- b) She be informed that the Council is unable to further assist with clearance of the overgrowth until such time as the development of the site for allotments and a community area is implemented.
- c) She be further advised that the Council has a duty on the part of the community to reserve funds for the development of the site and pending the development to preserve the biodiversity of the site.
- d) The other resident be advised that seeds from thistle weeds can occur at any location and is not unique to the Lewis Road site.

#### **4. COSTED ESTIMATES FOR THE PLANNING APPLICATION REQUIRED FOR THE LEWIS ROAD RESERVE ALLOTMENTS SITE.**

The Clerk had obtained two estimates for preparing the documents required for the planning application submission as well as the SUDS application. A third estimate was awaited.

In view of the cost involved, the Clerk was seeking advice from the Strong Communities Grant Fund to ascertain whether grant funding would be considered for the costs involved. He hoped to receive a response by the September Council meeting. He had approached the Big Lottery Fund to assess grant options and they had advised that grants were available for the development of the site but not in relation to planning application preparation costs.

A suggestion was made to change the scheme design so that planning permission would not be required but this was not supported.

It was noted that the neighbouring householder had arranged for the construction of a new boundary fence and it was hoped that he had fully taken into account the extent of his land ownership thus ensuring that the entrance in to the allotments site had not been compromised in any way.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) The decision on the choice of consultants to prepare the planning documentation be referred to the September meeting of the Council.
- b) The Clerk write to the neighbouring householder advising him that the Council owned the entrance area into the allotments site and that the Council would require unrestricted access to the site for contractor's vehicles when the site development commenced.
- c) He be requested to confirm that he had not encroached on the land owned by the Council and this was likely to be assessed at a future point in time by a Council appointed surveyor.

**5. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND TNHE PUBLIC.**

**RESOLVED** that: The press and the public be excluded from the next item of business due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**6. SICKNESS ABSENCE OF CARETAKER.**

It was reported that the Caretaker would require at least two week's sickness absence for an outstanding medical procedure. He had been already been granted enhanced occupational sick pay following a recent long-term absence and he wished the Council to consider a further enhancement.

**RESOLVED** that: a further two weeks at full pay and two weeks at half pay be approved in view of the exceptional circumstances involved.

Signed..... Date: 19 September 2024  
Chair