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CHIPPERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

ALLOTMENT MINUTES

**The Minutes of the Allotment Annual General Meeting.
The meeting was held on the 9th June 2026 at 7.00 pm in The Small Hall, The
Common, Chipperfield WD4 9BS**

Councillors present: Cllr Foxall, Cllr Paton (Chair), Cllr Flynn and Cllr Hinton
Also present: Mrs U Kilich Parish Clerk to the Council and 14 members of the public.

1. Welcome & Fire announcement

The Chair, Cllr Paton welcomed attendees to the Allotment AGM and outlined emergency exits and safety procedures.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence received from 2 allotment holders who were unable to attend.

3. Minutes

- a. To approve the Allotment Minutes meeting held on 7th January 2026
Cllr Paton informed members that the Allotment Minutes from 7th January 2026 were approved at the Extraordinary Council Meeting on 10th March 2026.
- b. To discuss matters arising from the Minutes
Grant Application through Blackwell Trust
Members discussed a grant funding opportunity available through the Blackwell Trust.
 - Information regarding the grant application process has recently been obtained.
 - The application window is reportedly short (approximately two weeks)
 - It was noted that eligibility criteria would need to be checked before any application could be submitted.
 - Discussion took place regarding whether the allotments, as a non-charitable body, would qualify.

Action: Parish Council to investigate eligibility and circulate application information.

Potential Allotment Association

Discussion took place regarding the possible formation of an Allotment Association. Potential benefits identified included:

- Applying for grants directly
- Holding funds independently of the Parish Council
- Organising social events
- Managing communal fund for allotment-related activities
- Organising maintenance by allotment holders to save costs

Members acknowledged that further information would be required regarding governance, responsibilities, banking arrangements, and member interest.

Action: Parish Council to investigate possible structure and report back.

c. To discuss any outstanding items from the meeting

Cllr Paton informed members that the allotments currently look very good. The maintenance arrangements are now undertaken by the warden following the cessation of Sunnyside's involvement. Positive feedback was received regarding the work undertaken by the warden, and it was noted that maintenance costs have also reduced.

Four plots were identified during inspection as being below the required standard. Two plots had mitigating circumstances and no further action was required. One plot had since been brought up to an acceptable standard. One plot (24b) remains subject to enforcement action due to lack of cultivation as well as other matters. The Council confirmed that action regarding Plot 24b is ongoing.

4. Chairman's report

a. Tennis Club update

Cllr Paton informed members that the planning application is currently with Dacorum Borough Council.

The discussion included:

- Public consultation responses included both objections (33) and expressions of support (42).
- Clarification has been provided to planning officer regarding allotment occupancy and plot status.
- Discussion took place regarding whether parts of the site may historically have been common land. No definitive evidence has yet been located. The freehold land was passed to Chipperfield PC from Kings Langley PC in 1960.
- No planning decision has yet been made. It was noted that any Secretary of State consent required in relation to allotment land, or

Common land, would be considered only after a planning decision had been made.

- CPC received a Freedom of Information request regarding the Tennis Club proposal. The Clerk informed members that for transparency the information will be included on CPC's website.
- The second Tennis Court planning application was approved in 1995, without the approval of from the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State was approached retrospectively.
- The two plots that are currently occupied by the Tennis Club require some attention. It was decided that the Clerk will write to the Tennis Club requesting them to manage the plots.

b. Hornets' Nest discovered by plots 8ab

Cllr Paton informed the members that an allotment holder reported that there was hornet's nest identified near Plot 8ab. Quotations have been obtained for removal. Alternative local contractors are being explored to reduce costs.

Action: Arrange removal using the most cost-effective suitable contractor.

5. To update members on the inspections of the allotments

It was reported that overall the allotments are looking the best they have been for some time. The Chair also reported:

- There are no vacant plots currently available.
- Two individuals are currently on the waiting list
- Members discussed advertising vacant plots more proactively when they become available.

Suggestions included:

- Notices on the allotment gates
- Notices on the allotment noticeboards
- Continued use of the Parish Council website.

Resolution: Vacancies will be publicised on the gates as well as through noticeboards and existing communication channels when appropriate.

6. Allotment accounts for 2025/26 (unaudited)

The annual allotment accounts were presented.

It was reported that the allotments account for 2025/26 showed a deficit of £1260. Major contributing factors included:

- Clearance of neglected plots
- Increased water charges
- Infrastructure and maintenance expenses

Members discussed expenditure relating to the clearance of neglected plots and removal of waste. The Chair explained that costs included:

- Significant waste removal
- Membrane installation
- General clearance works

It was confirmed that allotment deposits had been used where appropriate to offset costs. It was highlighted that the unusually high water use was also due to a leak which has now been identified and repaired. The Clerk reported that a credit note has recently been received from the water supplier and this will be investigated further.

Action: Confirm water supplier credit and update accounts if applicable.

Concerns were raised regarding hosepipe usage. Members noted:

- Existing rules restrict hosepipe use.
- Hosepipes should generally be used to fill containers rather than for prolonged direct watering.
- Excessive hosepipe use can affect water availability for other plot holders
- Request to share the Tennis Club Tenancy Agreement

Action: Reminder to be issued to all allotment holders regarding hosepipe rules and expected etiquette.

Members raised concerns regarding inconsistencies between various allotment documents and rules.

Topics included:

- Fences
- Pathway responsibilities
- Paving slabs
- Cultivation requirements

The Council confirmed that:

- The tenancy agreement itself has remained unchanged.
- The allotment rules would be reviewed to ensure consistency and clarity.

Action: Review allotment rules and circulate updated documents for consultation before implementation.

Discussion took place regarding hedge maintenance responsibilities and costs. Members reported that;

- Gaps are developing in boundary hedges
- Footballs are entering allotment plots through openings
- Concerns exist regarding access through damaged sections.
- The gate is hard to lock because of current arrangements

- The tennis club hedge needs cutting (following the nesting season)

Action: Inspect affected areas (done) and raise concerns with relevant football club representatives.

7. Financial Forecast for 2026/27

The Council presented a preliminary forecast for the coming year.

Key points:

- Overall expenditure is expected to reduce by approximately £400 compared with previous year.
- Forecast expenditure remains approximately £4,200-£4,300.
- A request to minute that the year-end deficit relating to the allotments be shown as an indirect grant or subsidy provided by the Council

Based on current assumptions, a plot fee of approximately £78 per plot would be required to achieve a break-even position.

The Chair thanked attendees for their participation and closed the meeting at 20.33

Q&A

Open Forum

There were no further comments.