

ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

Allotments Committee Agenda

Wednesday 3 February 2021



To the Members of the Allotments Committee:

Cllr L Gregori (Chairman), Cllr B Long (Vice Chairman), Cllr L. Banville, Cllr D Coole, Cllr R Hughes and Cllr D Treadwell.

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the ALLOTMENTS Committee to be held **Virtually via Zoom on Wednesday 3 February 2021 at 6.00pm**, when it is proposed to transact the following business: -

Wendy R Coulter

28 January 2021

Please find below the joining details for the Allotment Committee Meeting on 3 February 2021:

<https://zoom.us/j/99439804694?pwd=UEVkkK1p0bVWV3pRZ2xaN2JoaS9GZz09>

Meeting ID: 994 3980 4694

Passcode: 821511



ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

Allotments Committee Agenda

Wednesday 3 February 2021

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ALL MEETINGS: In line with Andover Town Council's "Recording at Meetings" Policy, Members and the public are requested to note that this meeting will be recorded by the Council, and may also be subject to the recording by members of the public.

6.00pm SURGERY TIME FOR ALLOTMENT HOLDERS

The Allotment Committee meeting will start at the end of Surgery Time.

Item No	Item	Page No
1	Apologies for Absence	3
2	Declarations of Interest	3
3	Minutes of the Last Meeting	3
4	Public Participation	3
5	Motions	3
6	Request for Allotments - North side of Andover	4
7	Update on Allotment Plot Availability	4
8	Allotment Officers Report	4
9	Committee Work Programme	4
10	Date of Next Meeting	4
11	Exclusion of Press and Public	4
	CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS	
12	Maternity Cover	5
13	Allotment Site Report	5
14	Complaints	5
Appendix A	Minutes of the last Meeting	6
Appendix B	Request for Allotments - North Side of Andover	14
Appendix C	Allotment Availability	16
Appendix D	Allotment Officer's Report	20
Appendix E	Committee Work Programme	22

Item 1 Apologies for Absence

To receive and accept apologies for absence.

Item 2: Declarations of Interest

To receive and note any declarations of interest relevant to the agenda.

Item 3: Minutes

To agree the Minutes of the Allotments Committee meeting held on Wednesday 14 December 2020 – attached at **Appendix A**.

Item 4: Public Participation

There is an opportunity for members of the public to make statements or ask questions on items on the agenda or on other items relevant to the Town to which an answer may be given in the meeting and recorded in the minutes or, if necessary, a written reply will follow or the questioner will be informed of the appropriate contact details. Each person is limited to 3 minutes and the total amount of time set aside will be 15 minutes.

Item 5: Motions

Motion

Andover Town Council is to arrange regular meetings with wardens at least every four months. They will be chaired by either the Chair or Vice Chair of the Allotments Committee and officers will provide secretarial support for them. If face to face meetings are not possible handover Andover Town Council is to make innovative alternative arrangements.

Proposer: Cllr Barbara Long

Seconder: Cllr Robin Hughes

PUTTING IN PLACE AN ALLOTMENTS STRATEGY

Background

Many parishes and principal authorities have put in place an Allotments Strategy to guide the development and management of their allotments' estate. Currently we do not have one despite allotments being the only statutory duty of the town council. This puts us at a distinct

disadvantage in planning and managing our estate. It also makes it more difficult to articulate the importance of our allotments in terms of offering welfare and other benefits to our residents.

Motion

Andover Town Council is to construct an Allotments Strategy. This work will be led by the Allotments Committee.

Proposer: Cllr Luigi Gregori

Seconder: Cllr Robin Hughes

Item 6: Request for Allotments – North Side of Andover

To receive an update report on the request for allotments – north side of Andover – report attached at **Appendix B.**

Item 7: Allotment Availability

To receive an update report on the allocation of Allotment Plots and the Waiting List – report attached at **Appendix C.**

Item 8: Allotment Officer's Report

To receive the Allotment Officer's report – attached at **Appendix D.**

Item 9: Committee Work Programme

To receive the Committee Work Programme and to make additions or amendments as necessary – attached at **Appendix E.**

Item 10: Date of Next Meeting

Members are requested to note the date of the next meeting: **Wednesday 14 April 2021 via Zoom, starting at 6.00pm**

Item 11: Exclusion of the Press and Public

To PASS a Resolution to exclude the Members of the Press and Public from the Meeting at Agenda Items 12, 13 & 14 due to the confidential nature of the Items which contain personal information which come

under GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 and Confidential Staffing matters, Ref Section 11 of LG & HA 1989 .

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Item 12: Update on recruitment of maternity cover

To note that the of recruiting maternity cover is underway.

Item 13: Allotment provision north side of Andover

To consider a report on an allotment site. Report attached under separate cover for Members of the Allotment Committee only.

Item 14: Complaints

To receive an update on any complaints received regarding allotments. To consider the process of complaint recording. Report attached under separate cover for Members of the Allotment Committee only.

The Chairman of the Committee will close the meeting.

Appendix A: Minutes of the last meeting

A

Minutes of Allotments Committee **Surgery**

Time and date

6.00pm on Monday 14 December 2020

Place

Virtual On-Line Meeting via Zoom

Cllr L Gregori (Chairman) (P)
Cllr D Coole (P)

Cllr B Long (Vice Chairman) (P)
Cllr R Hughes (P)

Cllr L Banville (P) (Arrived at 6.09pm)
Cllr D Treadwell (P)

Officers Present:

Tracy Predeth (Locum Clerk)
Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk)

Allotment Wardens Present: 1

Members of the Public: 2

Allotment Holders Surgery

The Chairman opened the surgery at 6.00pm and welcomed all attendees.

There were no questions raised at the surgery.

The Chairman closed the surgery at 6.05pm.

Minutes of Allotments Committee

Time and date

6.05pm on Monday 14 December 2020

Place

Virtual On-Line Meeting via Zoom

Cllr L Gregori (Chairman) (P)
Cllr D Coole (P)

Cllr B Long (Vice Chairman) (P)
Cllr R Hughes (P)

Cllr L Banville (P) (Arrived at 6.09pm)
Cllr D Treadwell (P)

Officers Present:

Tracy Predeth (Locum Clerk)
Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk)

Allotment Wardens Present: 1

Members of the Public: 2

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and Government legislation regarding Social Distancing, it was not possible to hold this meeting at a normal public venue. Therefore, the Town Council made arrangements under the Coronavirus Act 2020 and subsequent Regulations permitting remote meetings, to hold the meetings virtually. A voting procedure was actioned via role call method with each Member's name and response recorded in the Minutes.

AC 94/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received.

AC 95/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made relevant to the agenda.

AC 96/19 MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the Minutes of the Allotment Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 5 August 2020 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
L Gregori	X		
B Long	X		

D Coole			X
R Hughes	X		
D Treadwell	X		
TOTAL	4	0	1

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Allotment Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 5 August 2020 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

AC 97/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The notes below are a precis of statements/questions. They are not recorded word for word.

Member of Public 1:

I'd like to ask a couple of questions on the list of payments from 01.04.2019 to 31.03.2020.

It just doesn't seem that anyone is scrutinising the payments that the Town Council is actually making. If you scroll down to job numbers, Heavers Heating Services are charging £300.00 per allotment just to turn the water off. So that's £1,800.00 per year just to turn the water off. If you go back a year earlier, the same charges were just a couple of hundred pounds. Again, in March they actually charge £325.00 just to turn the water back on, or £65.00 per site.

Can I ask why its such an excessive amount where a local plumber would only charge £40.00 to £60.00 per hour or is it out to contract? Nobody seems to scrutinise it.

There seems to be some really weird payments in that year. You've been charged £156.00 for 50 waste sacks. You're charging over £100.00 for staples for the office. The charges you're being charged for electric, is £500.00 to £600.00 per month every year. These are astronomical charges that the office is paying. Are you being wired up to the shop below and paying their electricity charges at the same time? It would be interesting to find out.

Chairman's Response:

Thank you for raising those points. I am unable to comment on it as I was not on Council at the time. I am quite surprised as we certainly weren't paying £300.00 to turn the water on and off per site in the previous administration. I will defer the questions to the Town Clerk and I'll ensure you will get a written answer and those answers appear in the Minutes.

(Cllr L Barville joined the meeting at 6.09pm)

Member of Public 2:

I have three questions.

1. There's £98,000.00 in the Allotment Earmarked Reserves. Can that be spent on land purchases for allotments?
2. What steps have been taken to identify the potential sites, i.e., estate agents and landowners?
3. Has lease holding been discussed with potential site owners because land purchase is problematic on the north side of Andover, due to planning consents for future property building?

Chairman's Response:

1. As far as Earmarked Reserves are concerned, all the monies are allocated for specific projects. It has to be a discussion with the Council itself. We need to look at a

combination of CIL/Section 106 and other funding mechanisms, as well as identifying additional monies from the precept.

2. I will refer back to the Town Clerk and she will provide a written answer. In order to make a plot of land economically viable, they have to be of quite significant size, as you need to consider not only the site itself but parking, toilets and other considerations. Many of the sites previously identified within the north element of Andover are not economically viable.
3. An interesting point about leasehold. Allotments cost a lot of money and not just to maintain them. So, a lease of ten or fifteen years would not be economic. I have also had confirmation that most of the farming areas developers have taken options on them. I hope that answers your questions.

AC 98/19 MOTIONS

ADOPTION OF AN ALLOTMENTS MAINTENANCE STRATEGY

Proposed by Councillor Luigi Gregori and seconded by Councillor Lauren Banville.

Background

To drive forward an effective and efficient allotments service for the residents of Andover, there is a requirement for an underlying maintenance strategy to articulate our routine maintenance schedules across our sites as well as identifying additional works that need to be fed into the allotment works programme. Many of these projects will be spend to save measures.

The Drove Association, and in particular Mr Mike Cantillon (National Allotments Society Regional Representative) and Mr Ted Reynolds (The Drove Association Maintenance Lead), have produce a good draft maintenance strategy which we can usefully use as the basis for building our own which will require further consultation with key stakeholders such as our site wardens.

Motion

“To adopt the Strategy for Maintenance of Allotment Sites as the initial draft strategy for the Andover Allotments, and to then use it to drive the allotment works programme forward.”

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
L Gregori	X		
B Long	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole	X		
R Hughes	X		
D Treadwell	X		

TOTAL	6		
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RESOLVED: That the Strategy for Maintenance of Allotment Sites be adopted as the initial draft strategy for the Andover Allotments, and to then use it to drive the allotment works programme forward.

AC 99/19 REQUEST FOR ALLOTMENTS – NORTH SIDE OF ANDOVER

Members noted the update report on the request for allotments on the North Side of Andover – **attached at Record Minutes.**

AC 100/19 ALLOTMENT EARMARKED RESERVES

Members considered the Earmarked Reserves for Allotments and the schedule for the use of the Earmarked Reserves.

It was proposed by Councillor L Gregori and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the Earmarked Reserves be rolled over to the next budget year.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
L Gregori	X		
B Long	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole		X	
R Hughes	X		
D Treadwell		X	
TOTAL	4	2	

RESOLVED: That the Earmarked Reserves be rolled over to the next budget year.

It was proposed by Councillor L Gregori and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that £50,000.00 be set aside for the Allotment Reserves, for the provision of additional allotments, from the 2021/2022 budget.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
L Gregori	X		
B Long	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole	X		
R Hughes	X		
D Treadwell		X	
TOTAL	5	1	

RESOLVED: That £50,000.00 be set aside for the Allotment Reserves, for the provision of additional allotments, from the 2021/2022 budget.

AC 101/19 ALLOTMENT BUDGET 2021/2022

Members considered the Allotment Budget for 2021/2022 for recommendation to the Policy and Resources Committee.

A member suggested that the charges for the Pest Controller were high and that revised quotes should be sought. Alternatively, the role could be offered to the Drove Allotment Association and wardens at a cheaper cost. The Chairman clarified that the role of a Pest Controller required a qualified licence and therefore, would not be a simple alternative. A question was raised regarding the proposed 2021/2022 income budget for Barlows Lane being £500 less than the previous proposed 2019/2021 income budget for Barlows Lane of £5,500. It was clarified that it was due to the final net income received for 2019/2020 being just under £5,000. Further clarification was requested on the costs for grass cutting and the regularity of the work, the number of times the Pest Controller visited the allotment sites due to the monthly payments that had been paid, the high costs of plot clearances and the increased water charges. The Proper Officer advised that the grass cutting was based on a need basis which had increased during the growing season. The Pest Controller charged a flat fee for visiting the allotment sites on a monthly basis and on a need basis. However, no charges had been received for the extra visits. The high cost of a plot clearance was due to extenuating circumstances. The water charges included several repairs works which was carried out at the same time as the water was turned on and off.

It was proposed by Councillor L Gregori and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the Allotment Budget 2021/2022 be recommended to the Policy & Resources Committee.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
L Gregori	X		
B Long	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole		X	
R Hughes	X		
D Treadwell	X		
TOTAL	5	1	

RESOLVED: That the Allotment Budget 2021/2022 be recommended to the Policy & Resources Committee.

AC 102/19 UPDATE ON ALLOTMENT AVAILABILITY

Members noted the update report on the allocation of Allotment Plots and the Waiting List – **attached at Record Minutes.**

A question was raised as to whether numbers on the waiting lists had been duplicated by people going on more than one allotment site waiting list. The Proper Officer advised that people had been asked to identify just one site that they wished to add their name to, however, confirmation would be sought from the Allotment Officer.

Members were also advised that Allotment Officers were currently issuing the new contracts after the finalisation of receipts of payments and people giving up their plots for this year.

AC 103/19 TYRE REMOVAL

Members noted the report on the removal of tyres from the seven Allotment Sites – **attached at Record Minutes.**

(Councillor D Treadwell left the meeting at 7.50pm)

AC 104/19 OLD WINTON REPLACEMENT FENCING

Members noted the report, containing quotes for the replacement fencing at Old Winton Road Allotment Site – **attached at Record Minutes.**

It was debated that this item be deferred which would enable the Committee to source a more pragmatic approach with regards to the work required and costings. The Chairman gave his thanks to the Allotment Officers for the hard work in obtaining the quotes.

It was proposed by Councillor L Gregori and seconded by Councillor D Coole that the work on Old Winton Road replacement fencing be deferred.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
L Gregori	X		
B Long	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole	X		
R Hughes	X		
TOTAL	5	0	0

RESOLVED: That the work on Old Winton Road replacement fencing be deferred.

AC 105/19 ALLOTMENT OFFICER'S REPORT

Members noted the Allotment Officers Report – **attached to Record Minutes.**

The Chairman thanked the Allotment Officers for the report.

AC 106/19 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members noted the Committee Wok Programme.

Additional Items were requested to be including:

- Update report on Picket Piece and Picket Twenty Allotment Sites.
- Allotment Availability on Picket Twenty, Picket Piece and Northern Sites.

AC 107/19 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the next Allotment Committee meeting would take place on **Wednesday 3 February 2021 via Zoom, starting at 6.00pm.**

AC 108/19 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed by Councillor L Gregori and seconded by Councillor L Banville that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting at Items 16 and 17, due to the confidential nature of the items which contain personal information which come under GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
L Gregori	X		
B Long	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole	X		
R Hughes	X		
TOTAL	5	0	0

RESOLVED: That the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting at Items 16 and 17 due to the confidential nature of the items which contain personal information which come under GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.05pm.

Chairman

Date

Appendix B: Request for Allotments – North side of Andover

B

Purpose of the Report

To note actions taken with regard to allotment provision since the previous meeting.

To request the Allotment Committee to consider further actions to be taken for the provision of Allotment Land to the north of Andover.

Background

At the previous Allotment Committee Meeting Members tasked the Officers with a number of actions in relation to progressing the possibility of an Allotment Site to the North Side of Andover.

A complaint was recently received from residents about the 'lack of action' the Town Council had taken with regard to the provision of allotment sites to the north of Andover.

The Town Clerk was asked to respond to the complaint.

There were several demands within the complaint and the committee is asked to consider them below.

Current Situation

- A new waiting list has been created.
- The waiting lists for all allotment sites are being monitored – a report on allotment availability is attached to the agenda.
- Once Maternity Cover is in place, work will commence on the Application of 106/CIL monies for the purchase of an additional allotment site to the North of Andover.
- Once the size of the new allotment site has been agreed, an assessment will be carried out against the cost effectiveness of smaller sites. However, it should be noted that in general, the costs for the smaller sites are the same as for the larger sites.
- The Town Councillors undertook investigations to determine the allotment provision for Andover allotments, to ascertain why the provision was so low on the North side of Andover and whether there was additional land that could be provided.
- Following the work, it was determined that Andover, overall will require further provision for allotments within the next ten years. Unfortunately, the development at Augusta Park was agreed before the area came under the jurisdiction of Andover Town Council and the Borough Council, at the time, was not lobbied for better provision of Allotments.
- Figures and estimates for the future provision of allotments have been presented to the Allotment Committee.
- Following the acknowledgement that greater provision of allotments in Andover will be required Members have agreed to set aside monies within the Town Council's Earmarked Reserves to assist with the provision of Allotments.
- Work is being undertaken to source land to provide for additional allotments. Test Valley Borough Council have confirmed that Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies could be available to assist with this.

- Members have considered the suggestions regarding the small pockets of land for the provision of additional allotment sites and have concluded that this would not be an economically viable way forward. "A council shall not under this Act acquire land for allotments save at such a price or rent that in their opinion all expenses, except such expenses as are incurred in making roads to be used by the public, incurred by them in acquiring the land and otherwise in relation to the allotments, may reasonably be expected to be recouped out of the rents obtained in respect thereof". Small holdings and Allotments Act 1908. S 25.
- Therefore, the search is for a larger piece of land, possibly outside the parish of Andover. As above, the Council must be certain that the value of purchase of the land does not exceed any rent that it may receive from the letting of the allotment plots.
- Different uses of land may be considered. However it should be noted that consents will be required to ensure the land can be used for allotments. For example, the land is not contaminated.
- The Town Council will continue to pursue the possibility of securing CIL monies and or monies from the Public Loans board. However, there is funding available for Community Groups and Registered Allotment Associations. More information can be found here: <https://www.nsalg.org.uk/allotment-info/funding-advice/>

Further Actions Requested from Members of the Public

- A detailed action plan for the next 12 months
- Provision of a dedicated Andover Town Council, point of contact

Next steps

- To note the actions taken.
- To formulate and agree an action plan for the next 12 months
- To consider the provision of a dedicated Andover Town Council point of contact

Note: The people to contact about this report are Fern Long – Allotment Officer, Andover Town Council, 68B High Street, Andover, Hampshire. SP10 1NG

Tel: 01264 335592

Email: allotmentofficer1@andovertc.co.uk

Website: www.andover-tc.gov.uk

Appendix C: Allotment Availability

C

Purpose of the Report

- To update the Allotment Committee on the number of plots occupied and vacant on allotment sites
- To update the Allotment Committee on how invoicing has gone this year with the offices being closed due to Covid 19 and completing the payments using a new procedure.

Allotment Site Allocations

ADMIRALS WAY

- Total number of plots: 29
- Capacity: FULL
- Unsuitable Plots: 2. Reason; soil contamination with cement and tree roots which make the ground unworkable. Also, very shaded.
- Waiting List: 8

BARLOWS LANE

- Total number of plots: 102
- Capacity: 9 Vacant
- Unsuitable Plots: 1. Reason; car park area which is concrete. Toilet is sited on this area.
- Waiting List: 26

CHURCHILL WAY

- Total number of plots: 44
- Capacity: 4 Vacant
- Unsuitable Plots: 0
- Waiting List: 9

OLD WINTON ROAD

- Total number of plots: 82
- Capacity: 7 vacant
- Unsuitable Plots: 1. Reason; this is a piece of land which is small and has been turned into a 'community plot' with the authorisation of Allotment Officers earlier this year. They will use this piece of land for storage for their gardening show materials and other community events with they hold.
- Waiting List: 10

MYLEN ROAD

- Total number of plots: 25
- Capacity: 1 Vacant
- Unsuitable Plots: 0
- Waiting List: 5

THE DROVE

- Total number of plots: 125
- Capacity: 6 Vacant
- Unsuitable Plots: 0
- Waiting List: 21

VIGO ROAD

- Total number of plots: 106
- Capacity: 9 Vacant
- Unsuitable Plots: 4. Reason 2 are used as carparking spaces and are covered in concrete – very small areas which would not work to grow on. 1 has contaminated ground and the produce would not be fit for human consumption. 1 is hopefully going to be reinstated in the winter once the weeds have died and the soil has rejuvenated.
- Waiting list: 18

PICKET PIECE – NOT OPEN

- Number of plots available 11 including 2 disabled friendly
- Capacity: 11 (Please note these have already been allocated on the allotment officers records, to the first 11 people that first registered with ATC Allotments and the Allotment officers)
- Unsuitable plots: none
- Waiting list: 13
- The Deputy Clerk has chased the structural engineer at David Wilson Homes for an update on progress at site, we received a response last week confirming the majority of the work has been completed but there are a few snagging issues with a water leak they need to resolve. The Deputy Clerk is arranging a meeting with the Structural engineer, with the vice chairperson, the allotment officer, the Deputy Town clerk to have a walk around site with him. Awaiting date to be confirmed.

ANY SITE REQUESTED OR 3 PREFERRED CHOICES NOT YET RECEIVED CURRENTLY ON WAITING LIST

- Total number of requests: 19
- NB these are new potential tenants that are registered on our current waiting list who are happy to have a plot at any site or they have not yet informed the allotment officer of their 3 preferred sites.

PICKET TWENTY AREA SITE REQUESTS RECEIVED

- 3 – requests received and logged on a waiting list, if an allotment site is ever set up in Picket Twenty area in the future.

AUGUSTA PARK AREA SITE REQUESTS RECEIVED

- 1- request received and logged on a waiting list, if an allotment site is ever set up in Augusta Park area in the future.

Waiting List/General updates

- During November, December and January 2021, the allotment officer has been catching up on emails etc from the office closure, allotment staff shortages, completing and finalising the last of the payments received. All email and postal rental receipts have been completed.
- We only a few payments left, the Allotment Officer has not been made aware of by tenants that they have paid and sent in to ATC. Therefore, I have sent these details over to the Town Clerk for our

bank account to be checked and the payments verified, before 'Eviction Notices' are then sent to these tenants.

- Sadly, due to the current 'COVID 19 Lockdown' and in line with Government's and the National Allotment Society guidance, the allotment officer and the wardens are unable to meet potential new tenants at site and therefore allocate out the vacant plots. An email of the current guidance agreed with the Town Clerk, was sent at the beginning of January to the Allotment Chairman, vice chair person and the site Wardens.
- This also means that Plot Inspections are also on hold, the Porta loos still need to remain 'Closed' due to the speed and spread of the new virus and the amount of cleaning required. The only exception was the Drove Association site, who were contacted to confirm, if they had adequate members to clean the toilets theirs could be reopened as long as the necessary health and safety risk factors were put in place and the toilets cleaned regularly throughout the day. The officer has also spoken to the Porta Loo provider, asking them to ensure the toilets are still cleaned in line with our contract and the ATC signs stating 'Porta loos remain closed' are replaced with a cable tie as agreed by their manager.
- Bonfires are currently allowed following guidance given on 22nd December 2020 from the Environmental team at TVBC and provided to tenants. However, I have contacted them since the lockdown and still not had a current response as the person is on annual leave. The last time I checked their website it had not been updated since March 2020, last year so out of date. Just to make you all aware, Bonfires guidance is regularly reviewed by the allotment officer and the Town Clerk who make a joint decision on these matters.
- The allotment officer has continued to be inundated with 'New allotment requests' on a daily basis as allotment plots are still in 'High demand' with the current Covid 19 pandemic and lockdown. I have made new potential tenants aware we are unable to allocate plots at this present time. This means the waiting list continues to grow, lines of communications are kept open with people who are on the waiting list to ensure they are able to check their status within the waiting list. A number of emails have continued to be received and responded too as people are very keen to get their allotment plot.
- The allotment officer and Wardens have investigated several complaints recently received, in respect of Illegal dumping, Drone flying over allotment site and therefore notified our tenants of our findings, guidance and requesting their support with these matters. Notices were also completed and placed on the main/side/back gates and the Notice board for everyone to see. The allotment team really appreciates all the assistance we receive in dealing and sorting out these matters from our wardens, tenants and residents.
- The allotment officer has already started the process of contacting wardens to check if any 'Vacant' plots need covering as we cannot currently allocate out plots and may be sometime still with Covid restrictions.
- **Please note** - Whilst we have an active waiting list, we are not allowing any tenants second plots in accordance with our procedures and guidance from the Town Clerk.

Next steps

- As confirmed above the allotment officer to start the 'Allocation of new plots' process once the Covid 19 Lockdown restrictions are lifted and allow.

- Any 'Eviction Notices' will be served for non-payment, shortly.

Note: The person to contact about this report is Fern Long – Allotment Officer, Andover Town Council, 68B High Street, Andover, Hampshire. SP10 1NG

Tel: 01264 335592

Email: allotmentofficer1@andovertc.co.uk

Website: www.andover-tc.gov.uk

Appendix D: Allotment Officer's Report

D

This has certainly been another challenging period for the Allotment officer, with yet another 'COVID-19 pandemic Lockdown' restriction in place.

As previously confirmed to the Chairman, Vice Chairperson and site Wardens, in line with the current government and National Allotment Society's (NAS) guidance, the allotment officer and the Wardens are currently unable to complete the following tasks and job roles: -

- Allocation of new allotment plots- is currently on hold until further government/NAS guidance is provided.
- Plot inspections – are currently on hold until further government/NAS guidance is provided.
- All site gatherings – are currently on hold until further government/NAS guidance is provided
- Communal toilets/facilities – Must remain CLOSED until further government/NAS guidance is provided.
- Bonfires- the latest guidance the officer received from TVBC Environmental Health team was on 22nd December 2020 which confirmed that small bonfires could now go ahead in line with the current Allotment Rules and regulations and all Wardens and Tenants informed. The officer has emailed the team several times since the 5th January 2021 due to the current 'Lockdown restrictions' and although chasing has not had a response as yet.
- Only existing tenants and their immediate household family members can currently visit the site – this will be reviewed again by the officer as soon as the current lockdown restrictions and guidance are lifted.

As you can imagine this is very frustrating for both the Allotment officer and the Warden's as we now have a long waiting list for all sites and keen to start getting our new potential tenants signed up with vacant allotment plots, fingers crossed we will be allowed to do this again soon. However, we all have an important part to play in stopping the spread of the COVID-19 virus and therefore correctly adhering to the current Government's guidance.

During the last few months, the allotment officer has been catching up on the backlog of emails etc from the office closure, allotment staff shortages, chasing quotes, completing/finalising the last of the payments received, dealing with new requests and the complaints received. Two reminders have already been sent to the tenants involved. All email and postal rental receipts have now been completed.

We only a few payments left where the Allotment Officer has not been made aware of, by tenants (as requested by the officers in our Invoice letter sent) that they have paid and sent in to ATC. Therefore, I have sent these details over to the Town Clerk for our bank account to be checked and the payments verified, before 'Eviction Notices' are then sent to these tenants.

The allotment officer has continued to be inundated with 'New allotment requests' on a daily basis as allotment plots are still in 'High demand' with the current COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown. I have made new potential tenants aware we are unable to allocate plots at this present time. This means the waiting list

continues to grow, lines of communications are kept open with people who are on the waiting list to ensure they are able to check their status within the waiting list. A large number of emails have continued to be received and responded too as people are very keen to get their allotment plot due to the COVID-19 lockdown and restrictions.

I hope later in the year we will be able to reintroduce the competitions we normally run as sure some of our lovely tenants that like to get involved have been missing these, like the Allotment officer has and seeing and speaking to everyone on sites visits which is an important part of the officer's role. I like you can't wait to get back to some sort of normal, with the vaccine rolling out now, hopefully it is not in the too distant future.

Throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic and various 'lockdowns' the allotment officer has sent out regular updates to Wardens and Tenants and Notices have been completed to place on the allotment gates and Notice boards.

We hope to continue to witness the great community spirit we have seen previously within our allotment sites and trust are tenants are getting their plots weeded and tidied during the winter months before spring arrives and new planting can start.

I am certainly missing my job share partner Nikki, but the whole team would like to wish her the best of luck with the soon arrival of her new baby and we can't wait to have baby cuddles soon.

The next priority, will be to start the 'Allocation process for new tenants' in turn on the waiting list which will be done in phases by the one officer so this is manageable. We are also continuing to receive high volumes of new requests for allotment plots which still seem to be in high demand with the restrictions of COVID-19.

We would like to publicly thank the Allotment Tenants of Andover who have been very understanding with the new challenges we have all had to face last year and the start of this year with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lastly, another very big thank you to all the Wardens who assist the Officers in managing the sites who have been especially helpful during the COVID-19 pandemic. The support the Wardens provide both the Tenants and the Allotment Officer is vital and I am very grateful for our strong team of Wardens who support me in the day to day running of all the allotment sites.

Thank you.

Fern

Allotment Officer 1

Note: The person to contact about this report is Fern Long (Allotment Officer), Andover Town Council, 68B High Street, Andover, Hampshire. SP10 1NG

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Appendix E: Committee Work Programme

E

Date of Meeting	ITEM	Requested by	Purpose of Item
3 February 2021	Allotment Availability on Picket Twenty, Picket Piece and Northern Sites		
14 April 2021	Review of maintenance across all allotment sites		
August 2021	Preparation for invoicing		
August 2021	Update on summer events/trips		
August 2021	Consideration of additional works to allotments to be included in the Budget 2022/2023		
October 2021	Consideration of Allotment Budget 2022/2023		
December 2021	Allotment Budget 2022/2023		
December 2021	Review of the Allotment Year and consideration of any additional works to be carried out during the winter months.		