



# ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

ALLOTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE AGENDA

DATE: OCTOBER 1ST 2013

LOCATION: TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, HIGH STREET

TIME: 7.30

7.00pm SURGERY TIME FOR ALLOTMENT HOLDERS

1	<b>Apologies</b> To receive and accept apologies for absence
2	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> To receive Declarations of Interest as per the Town Council's Code of Conduct
3	<b>Minutes</b> To approve the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 <sup>th</sup> August 2013 – attached at <b>Appendix A</b>
4	<b>Allocation of Allotment Plot</b> To Agree to the re-letting of allotment plot that has been used for 15yrs to house 39 chickens – report attached at <b>Appendix B</b>
5	<b>Application for Chickens</b> To consider request to keep chickens x 2 – verbal report
6	<b>Refund of Allotment Rental</b> To consider a request for a refund of allotment rental – verbal report
7	<b>Management of Vacant Plots</b> To consider future management of vacant plots – report attached at <b>Appendix C.</b>
8	<b>Replacement Fencing</b> To consider the request for a contribution towards replacement fencing – verbal report
9	<b>Biffa Bin</b> To consider Biffa Bin rental – verbal report
10	<b>Warden Resignation</b> To note that the Warden of Barlows Lane Allotment site has resigned.
11	<b>Waste Clearance</b> To note – update on proposed third party waste clearance
12	<b>PCSO Site Visits</b> To note that the Town Council has arranged for PCSO's to visit Allotment Sites – verbal update
13	<b>Exclusion of the Press and Public</b> TO PASS A RESOLUTION to exclude members of the public and press from the meeting at Part 2, Item 14 of the agenda. Due to consideration of confidential tenancy matters and contractual matters.
	<b>Part Three – CONFIDENTIAL</b>
14	<b>Noncompliance with requirements/duties</b> To consider and approve appropriate action with regard to non-compliance with requirements/duties.
15	<b>Maintenance Contracts</b> To consider maintenance contracts – report to follow under separate cover for Members only.
16	<b>Tenant and Warden Issues</b> To consider individual requests from Tenants and Wardens.



# ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

# A

## Notes of Allotments Sub-Committee **Surgery**

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### **Time and date**

7.00pm on Tuesday 6 August 2013

### **Place**

Town Council Office, 66C High Street, Andover

### **Attendees:**

#### **Town Council Representatives**

Cllr D Drew (P)      Cllr Z Brooks (A)      Cllr K Hughes (P)      Cllr P North (P)

Also present: Cllr R Khuman

Mary Bayes (Allotment Officer) (P)

Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk) (P)

### **Allotment Holders:**

None

### **Wardens:**

Barbara Long – Vigo Road

The following points were raised by allotment holders during the Surgery:

- **Vigo Road – Gates**  
Barbara Long reported that there were 5 gates onto the Vigo Road allotment site that were actively being used by tenants.  
There were a number of other gates which were permanently closed after the tenant had given up. However, 2 had been opened and were being used without the Town Council's permission.  
The Warden was informing tenants to keep the main gates closed at all times to prevent further fly tipping. The Warden suggested that the Town Council should follow previous protocol of shutting off gates as tenants left.



## Minutes of Allotments Sub-Committee

### Time and date

7.30pm on Tuesday 6 August 2013

### Place

Town Council Offices, 66C High Street, Andover

### Attendees:

Cllr D Drew (Chairman) (P)

Cllr K Hughes (Vice Chairman) (P)

Cllr Z Brooks (A)

Cllr K Bird (A)

Cllr P North (P)

### Officers Present:

Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk) (taking the notes) Mary Bayes (Allotments Officer)

ASC 30/13	Apologies for Absence	Action
	Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bird and Brooks.	
ASC 31/13	Declarations of Interest	
	There were no declarations of Interest.	
ASC 32/13	Minutes	Action
	The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 July 2013 were signed by the Chairman of the meeting as a correct record.	
ASC 33/13	Vacant Plots - Update	Action
	Mrs Bayes reported that 18 vacant plots had been re-let since 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2013. Letters were being sent to all on the waiting list offering plots. At the time of the meeting there were 22 vacant plots. The Chairman asked why the plots were not being taken and Members discussed the merits of providing a rotovation service. It was agreed that a Press Release would be issued regarding vacant plots.	<b>Officers to issue press release regarding vacant allotment plots.</b>
ASC 34/13	Glass Removal	Action
	Mrs Bayes reported that the Town Council was frequently needing to dispose of broken glass that had been left on allotment sites. The glass could not be taken to the local rubbish dump as the Town Council was classed as 'commercial'. Mrs Bayes reported that she had investigated the cost of a hire of a skip that could be stored on the site where the Christmas Lights were stored, this would be at a cost of £140 per year. Members agreed that this would resolve the Health and Safety issues and provide value for money with regard to the disposal of the glass.	<b>Officers to obtain a skip, at a cost of £140 per year for the disposal of glass from the allotment sites.</b>
ASC 35/13	Access Gates at Vigo Road Allotment	Action
	Members discussed the issue of access being gained to Vigo Road allotment site via small private gates around the site. Members noted that Vigo Road had recently been subject to fly tipping and the Warden and officers were reminding tenants to keep	<b>Officers to inform new tenants that access via private gates would not be allowed.</b>

	<p>the gates closed at all times.</p> <p>The Warden had confirmed that in the past when a tenant had left the site, the private gate that they had used had been permanently closed. However, two of these gates had recently been opened and were being used by new tenants.</p> <p>Members agreed that those using existing accesses would be allowed to continue, however the gates must be permanently shut if the tenant left the site. No new access would be allowed.</p>	
<b>ASC 36/13</b>	<b>Update from Warden Meeting</b>	<b>Action</b>
	<p>The Chairman updated Members on the recent meeting held with the Allotment Wardens.</p> <p>He reported that the Wardens had requested that the billing period be changed to September to August each year. It was agreed that this item would be brought to the next meeting of the sub-committee for detailed consideration.</p>	<b>Officers to report at the next meeting on the administrative process for moving billing date to September each year.</b>
<b>ASC 37/13</b>	<b>Frequency of Allotment Sub-Committee Meetings</b>	<b>Action</b>
	<p>Members discussed the frequency of Allotment Sub-Committee meetings. It was noted that there were at least 8 meetings per year, which increased workload on officers to prepare reports and attend meetings.</p> <p>It was proposed that there should be 4 meetings per year with delegation of operational services to Officers to allow the continuing service of the allotments.</p> <p>It was proposed that the Officers would be authorised to spend up to £400, with confirmation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Sub-Committee.</p> <p>It was further agreed that at each quarterly meeting the accounts for the allotments would be provided to monitor budget spend.</p>	<p><b>Allotment Sub-Committee meetings to be held 4 times per year.</b></p> <p><b>Delegation given to Officers for Operational management of the Allotment Service.</b></p> <p><b>Delegation of £400 spend be given to Officers.</b></p> <p><b>Urgent actions and spend over £400 to be agreed with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Sub-Committee.</b></p>
<b>ASC 38/13</b>	<b>Sub-Committee Work Programme</b>	<b>Action</b>
	This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.	
<b>ASC 39/13</b>	<b>Exclusion of the Press and Public</b>	<b>Action</b>
	<b>RESOLVED: That the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting due to consideration of confidential individual requests.</b>	
<b>ASC 40/13</b>	<b>Individual Requests Requiring Sub-Committee Approval</b>	<b>Action</b>
	Members received and considered individual requests from Allotment holders.	

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.26pm.

Chairman

Date



# ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

# B

## Report

### PLOT 10B - VIGO ROAD

**Produced for:**  
Allotments Sub-Committee

**Date of Report:**  
Tuesday 24 September 2013

#### Summary of Key Issues

To approve the reallocation of an allotment plot that has been used to keep chickens for the past 15 years, with regard to Health and Safety.

#### Current Situation

For the past 15 years this plot has been used to keep 39 chickens. The tenant has recently surrendered this plot and has made every effort to clear the plot of debris and fouling. A large coop where the chickens used to roost has been left on the plot as it could be used as a shed.

#### Possible Contamination of Soil

The Allotments Administrator has carried out research into the possibility of contamination to the soil by the chicken excreta.

The following organisations/experts have been contacted:

TVBC environmental health, local farmers, Haringay contamination agency, DEFRA, RSPCA, Basingstoke & Deane website (advice about keeping poultry).

#### TVBC - Environmental Health Department

The environmental team at TVBC do not deal with type of contamination. However they carried out their own research DEFRA etc. and came to the same result as the Allotment Administrator, that there is no readily available information regarding contamination from chicken excreta.

They did however manage contact with the Wessex Centre, Part of Public Health Executive (0845 0552022).

The Wessex Centre confirmed that there is no current legislation regarding soil contamination from chicken excreta however they confirmed that there is a condition, psittacosis, which can be contracted from exposure to a large amount of chicken feathers. In their opinion there is no cause for concern regarding the issue of chicken excreta, and that any bacteria in the soil would die within days.

#### DEFRA

The Allotment Administrator was unable to find any information relating to soil contamination from chicken excreta.

#### Local Farmers

The general consensus is that chicken manure is good for the soil

#### Haringay Contamination agency

They have no experience of such a matter

#### RSPCA

Only deal with matters relating to livestock

#### Basingstoke & Deane website

No reference is made to soil contamination the information is generally relating to the keeping of livestock on allotments.

### **Re-allocation of the plot**

An allotment applicant is most keen to take over the tenancy of this plot, as soon as possible. They have confirmed that they have carried out their own research into the matter and have not been able to find out any detrimental information relating to soil contamination via this medium.

They are fully prepared to thoroughly dig the plot over, wearing protective clothing and a breathing mask when cleaning out the coop with Jeyes fluid prior to using it as a shed. They have mentioned that they would like their young relatives to assist them with the plot.

### **Assessment of Plot**

The warden has been asked to carry out a full inspection of this plot before the Allotment Sub-Committee meeting on 1st October 2013.

In an attempt to safeguard against any risks of possible contamination it is suggested that this plot be fully rotovated, cleared of any residual debris and inspected for any remaining feathers before the plot is re-let. As a further safeguard the Officers could give the contact details of the Wessex Centre to the new tenant for further investigation before she takes over the tenancy.

### **Recommendation**

- **To rotovate Plot 10B Vigo Road prior to re-allocation**
- **To approve the re-allocation of Plot 10B Vigo road**

Note: The person to contact about this report is Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk), Andover Town Council, 66C, High Street, Andover, Hampshire. SP10 1NG.

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Distribution: To all Councillors



# ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL



## Report

### PURCHASE OF ROTOVATOR

**Produced for:**  
Allotments Sub-Committee

**Date of Report:**  
Tuesday 24 September 2013

#### Summary of Key Issues

To consider the future purchase of a Rotovator to allow improved management of vacant allotment plots.

#### Current Situation

The following is a status report which shows available revenue not collected, please refer to attachment for breakdown of available rental not collected from vacant plots.

total number of vacant plots - 14 of 504

7 full plots

7 half plots

The total amount of revenue collectable if these plots were tenanted is £682.31.

There are various reasons why there are still 14 vacant plots.

They are all in a very poor condition with debris on the plot, totally overgrown 4' grass, completely neglected.

#### Possible Action/Solution

It is suggested that these plots be cleared, strimmed and rotovated. If they were in a clean, tidy and workable condition we would be able to re-let them very quickly.

This has been demonstrated by the feedback received from some applicants. They feel overwhelmed with the amount of work involved in clearing and digging these plots.

#### Cost of Rotovator

The cost of a rotovator capable of rotovating these plots is approximately £650 which is a discounted trade price.

The cost of rotovating an average plot would be approximately £60 which includes strimming the plot first.

The Town Council's maintenance contractor would store the rotovator.

#### Business Investment

In the 1<sup>st</sup> year of purchase the Town Council would need to cover the cost of the Rotovator. However in the long term it would provide an improved allotment service, all plots rented out would be let out in a clean manageable state.

This would assist with the administration management – the Town Council would be able to carry out exit inspections with the knowledge of the condition of the plot when originally let out.

A refundable deposit scheme would be introduced on the surrender of a clean and tidy plot.

### **Financial Implications**

Cost of purchase of rotovator - £650

Cost of Strimming Plot - £60.

Approximately 10 plots per site are left vacant each year. Therefore 70 plots per year are vacant.

Approximately 70 plots = £2,830.80 (35 full plots, 35 ½ plots)

£50 deposit per plot = £3,500

In year 1 – 14 plots are vacant, 7 full plots, 7 ½ plots. Total income = £682.41. Total deposit = £700

In the current Budget 2013/2014 there is no provision for the purchase of a rotovator, however the Allotment Sub-Committee could recommend to Policy and Resources Committee that the monies be taken from Reserves.

### **Legal and Policy Implications**

The Allotments Service is the main Town Council service. The Town Council has improved the service provided to tenants and the recommended future management of vacant plots would further improve the service for the following reasons:

No untidy plots on allotment sites

No grass/weeds causing annoyance to neighbouring tenants

Fast turnaround of vacant plots

Improved administration of plots, tenants begin tenancy with a clean plot. A Deposit is paid; returnable on condition that plot is in clean condition when tenancy is surrendered.

### **Recommendation**

- **To consider to providing a rotovation service for vacant plots**
- **To consider a deposit scheme on start-up of tenancy, to be rolled out to new tenants**
- **To consider recommending to Policy and Resources Committee the purchase of a rotovator, the monies to be taken from reserves.**

Note: The person to contact about this report is Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk), Andover Town Council, 66C, High Street, Andover, Hampshire. SP10 1NG.

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ALLOTMENT FINANCIAL REPORT AT 12 SEPT 13		
<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Admirals Way</b>	
Plot No.	Full/Half Plot	Rental
13	FP	£53.92
10B	HP	28.72
14B	HP	38.44
		£121.08
<b>Site Name</b>	<b>BARLOWS LANE</b>	
Plot No.	Full/Half Plot	Rental
NO VACANCIES		
		0
<b>Site Name</b>	<b>CHURCHILL WAY</b>	
Plot No.	Full/Half Plot	Rental
11A	HP	£35.92
17A	HP	26.92
19	FP	57.72
21	FP	67.58
		£188.14
<b>Site Name</b>	<b>MYLEN ROAD</b>	
Plot No.	Full/Half Plot	Rental
NO VACANCIES		
		0
<b>Site Name</b>	<b>OWR</b>	
Plot No.	Full/Half Plot	Rental
NO VACANCIES		
<b>Site Name</b>	<b>THE DROVE</b>	
Plot No.	Full/Half Plot	Rental
13B	HP	41.92
13C	HP	41.92
39A	FP	53.92
74A	FP	53.92
		191.68
<b>Site Name</b>	<b>VIGO ROAD</b>	
Plot No.	Full/Half Plot	Rental
25C	HP	22.00
15A	FP	53.92
38B	FP	53.92
39B	FP	51.57
		181.41
Available Revenue		£682.31