



# ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of Allotments Committee **Surgery**

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### **Time and date**

6.00pm on Monday 14 December 2020

### **Place**

Virtual On-Line Meeting via Zoom

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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.



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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		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

**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 Banville 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:

<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>	<b>ABSTENTION</b>
L Gregori	X		
B Long	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole	X		
R Hughes	X		
D Treadwell	X		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>		

**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:

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

**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:

<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>	<b>ABSTENTION</b>
L Gregori	X		
B Long	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole	X		
R Hughes	X		

D Treadwell		X	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	

**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:

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

**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:

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

**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 Work 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:

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

**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