



ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

A

Notes of Allotments Sub-Committee Surgery

Time and date

7.00pm on Tuesday 21 January 2014

Place

Town Council Office, 66C High Street, Andover

Attendees:

Town Council Representatives

Cllr D Drew (P) (arrived at 7.30pm) Cllr K Bird (A) Cllr Z Brooks (P) Cllr K Hughes (A)
Cllr P North (A)
Mary Bayes (Allotment Officer) (P)
Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk) (A)
Cllr V Pond (Minute Taker) (P)

Allotment Holders:

Mr M Dale – Old Winton
Mr M Simpson – The Drove
Mr M Cantiolon – The Drove
Mr M Poulton – Barlows Lane

Wardens:

Mrs B Long – Vigo Road Allotment Site

Mr D Butler – DMJ Country Services

Mr Cantiolon – The Drove and Mr Poulton – Barlows Lane

Concerned about the recent letter detailing the change in the charging period for the allotment year as it will not allow the holder to harvest any crops that are ready in October, should the holder choose to relinquish the allotment in September.

Mrs Bayes – Allotment Officer

Explained that allowance would be made to allow for the harvesting of the late crops in October and the plot would only be re-let once the harvesting was complete.

A plot can be relinquished at any time during the year. If for instance there is a termination after the invoicing period in say October there is a 40 day allowance period but if after the 40 days are up the holder has not paid then the plot has to be vacated.

WHEN INVOICES ARE ISSUED, THE TENANT HAS 40 DAYS (Rules and Regulations Paragraph 8) IN WHICH TO PAY THE INVOICE. THIS IS NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH AN ALLOWANCE PERIOD IN WHICH TO TERMINATE THE TENANCY. THOSE TENANTS WHO ARE CONSIDERING TERMINATING THEIR TENANCIES SHOULD CLEAR THEIR PLOTS, SHEDS AND HARVEST WHAT CROPS THEY WISH TO AND GIVE NOTICE OF TERMINATION TO THE TOWN COUNCIL.

Cllr Brooks, stand in for Cllr Drew (Chairman)

Advised that a further discussion on this item would take place at the next Allotments Sub-Committee.

Mr Cantiolon – The Drove

Sought clarification regarding refunds. Currently there is no incentive to hand back the plot, if having paid for a full year there is a need to give up the tenancy after say two months. So the plot becomes overgrown, but with a refund there is an incentive to hand it back promptly and the next holder gets a plot in a reasonable condition.

Mrs Bayes (Allotment Officer)

Explained that the majority of tenants who are relinquishing their plots are those who are not coping well. By changing the allotment year it gives the new allotment holder the chance to dig their plot before the planting season. Also highlighting the notion that a proportion of new allotment holders decide after six weeks that they have taken on too much but since there is no refund, knuckle down and really work their plot.

Cllr Brooks for Cllr Drew (Chairman)

Advised that a further discussion on this item would take place in the next Allotments Sub-Committee. If agreement was reached additional wording would be added to the Allotment Agreement.

Mr Simpson – The Drove

Rats are continuing to be a problem. As advised by the Allotment Officer he has cleared out his composting bins and has been regularly setting out rat poison, which does not seem to have any affect on the problem.

Mr Butler of DMJ Butler Country Services

Advised that this problem is endemic with all allotments but there was a need for all the allotments to be using the same brand of poison. A stronger rat poison could only be used in buildings, ie Barns etc and he was not allowed to use traps.

Cllr Drew (Chairman)

Advised that a further discussion on this item would take place at the next Allotments Sub-Committee.

Mrs Long – Vigo Road

Warden's report already given to the Allotment Officer.

Mr Simpson – The Drove

Concerned with security on The Drove regarding Aster House as nobody has been working there since the end of November 2013.

Mrs Bayes – Allotment Officer

Will continue to seek clarification with Aster and report back.

23.01.14 – Aster contacted for a completion date. Aster to revert.

Cllr Pond on behalf of Cllr Hardstaff – Old Winton Road

When the toilet was removed to be emptied the replacement toilet was left on the grass.

Mr Butler – DMJ Butler Country Services

Advised that the ground was too wet around the gateway so the decision was made that the toilet be left on the grass. Advised that in the future additional hard standing would be required.

Cllr Brooks and Cllr Drew

Thanked the allotment holders for attending. Advised that their comments were welcomed at any time and that there was no need to wait for a meeting but to contact the Allotment Officer by telephone, email or a visit. Mr Cantolon decided to stay for the following meeting as he was particularly interested in Item 9 – Appendix D.



Minutes of Allotments Sub-Committee

Time and date

7.50pm on Tuesday 21 January 2014

Place

Town Council Offices, 66C High Street, Andover

Attendees:

Cllr D Drew (Chairman)(P)

Cllr K Hughes (Vice Chairman)(A)

Cllr Z Brooks (P)

Cllr K Bird (A)

Cllr P North (A)

Officers Present:

Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk) (A)

Mary Bayes (Allotments Officer) (P)

Cllr V Pond (Minute Taker) (P)

ASC 01/14	Apologies for Absence	Action
	Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hughes	
ASC 02/14	Declarations of Interest	
	There were no Declarations of Interest.	
ASC 03/14	Minutes – Appendix A	Action
	The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 November 2013 were signed by the Chairman of the meeting as a correct record. Item ASC64/13 a question was asked whether the site visits had taken place.	No action the dates for the visits has now passed
ASC 04/14	Quotations - Appendix B	Action
	Allotment Officer had prepared a spreadsheet for all the work that needs to be carried out. The quotations received so far outweigh the funds currently in the Budget.	Allotment Officer to prioritise the work.
ASC 05/14	Letter – Appendix C	Action
	Following the issue of a holding letter, a further letter is to be sent. In future letters from allotment holders can be answered by the Officers.	Allotment Officer to respond to letter answering each point, with or without input from the Chairman.
ASC 06/14	Deposit Scheme	Action
	Starting from 22 January 2014 the deposit scheme is to be put in force with each new agreement. It is not to be imposed retrospectively on current allotment holders.	Where hardship cases are encountered, these exceptions to be referred to the Committee. The £50 deposit is to be used to trim, spray and for the removal of rubbish only. No rotovation to be carried out by the Council.
ASC 07/14	Rats	Action
	A rolling programme is preferable but with the budget constraints it	Officers to make that decision

	can only be undertaken on a need basis.	as and when the need arises.
ASC 08/14	Clear Guidelines	Action
	A decision was requested by the Allotment Officer as to when three quotations were to be sought for work to be carried out.	Any single purchase over £1,000 needs three quotations. The exception arises when a number of allotments all need the same work carrying out at the same time and each quote although less than £1,000, when added together would breach the £1,000 threshold.
ASC 09/14	Andover Day Services – Appendix D	Action
	A letter has been received from Andover Day Services stating that they have problems maintaining their plot and asking whether they could “sub-let” it to Andover Trees United in order to house their spare whips. No full size trees would be grown on this plot. Mr Cantiolon – The Drive Aster has been using this plot as a crossing point to their site, plus there is the problem with security for The Drove allotment holders, Andover Trees United to be requested to supply a list of named personnel only who would be given access to the security codes.	Officers with the additional support of the Chair and Vice Chair to draw up an Agreement in order to regularise this position.
ASC 10/14	Feedback – Appendix E	Action
	Following an initiative by the Allotment Officer there have been responses from two senior schools declining the offer to become allotment holders.	
ASC 11/14	Update on Plots	Action
	Currently from April 13 to date, 61 plots have been re-let. There is half a plot and one plot vacant with 22 people on the waiting list seeking a plot for the coming year, whilst a number require a plot for next year.	
ASC 12/14	Exclusion of the Press and Public	Action
	RESOLVED: That the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting due to consideration of confidential individual requests.	
ASC 13/14	Eviction	Action
	The Allotment officer advised that there are two eviction notices to be served, one relating to a fence and gate being installed and the other relating to sustained non-cultivation of plot. Eviction Notice No. 1 The allotment holder installed a chain link fence and metal gate before Christmas 2013 around the plot, in direct contravention of item 5.1.2 of the Rules and Regulations for Allotment Tenants. Neither has this plot been fully cultivated and has being left in an untidy state during 2013. Eviction Notice No. 2 The second eviction notice is to be served due to persistent non-cultivation. The Allotment officer advised that despite several letters and telephone calls to the tenant asking them to cultivate their plot, no attempt has been made to fully cultivate it. The correct procedure has been followed by the officers and after each letter the holder’s response is to plant a fruit bush, which is then left to run wild until the next letter/contact is made.	To be deferred until next meeting. Chairman and Allotment Officer to double check that all the procedures have been followed and that there is a full history for the correspondence.
ASC 14/14	Acceptable buildings for allotments	Action
	A picture of a container approximately 4ft 10inches to 5ft, which appeared on an allotment in Vigo Road in mid October 2013 was shown. No permission was sought for this container. The plot	The Allotment Officer and the Chairman to send a letter detailing the responsibilities of

	holder has now emailed stating that for family reasons he needs to give up the allotment and that since the container has been shelved in the manner of a shed, he intends to leave the container for the next tenant,	the tenant when relinquishing the plot.
ASC 15/14	Submission of Quotations	Action
	Even though templates have been sent out the officers are still receiving quotations in the wrong format.	The Officers to reject future quotations that do not follow this template.
ASC 16/14	Minute Taking	
	The Chairman thanked Cllr Pond for kindly stepping in and taking the Minutes.	

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30 pm.

Chairman

Date