

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

Held on Thursday 1st October 2020 at 11:00am

In accordance with the Local Authority and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, this meeting was conducted remotely, via the Zoom video conferencing platform.

Present: Councillor Mrs E. Blezard
Councillor B. Mayne
Councillor Mrs P. Mayne – Acting Chairman
Councillor R. Seal

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Acting Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
All members were present and therefore no apologies were received.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded of the requirement to make an appropriate declaration at the meeting on any item in which they had an interest.

There were no declarations made.

3. Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

RESOLVED that all items relating to specific tenants be taken in private including items 9, 10, and 11.

4. Allotment Policies

The Town Clerk circulated a number of draft policy statements and members went through each statement in detail and discussed the merits of each policy. A number of changes were recommended to the first draft of the policy document which would be brought back for further consideration at a future meeting.

RESOLVED that the draft policy document be noted and that the following policies be agreed:

- Allotment Waiting List – The list will now be closed to people outside of the Normanton and Altofts area and reviewed in 12 months,
- Applicants who already have an allotment will be passed over in favour of applicants who do not already have a plot,
- The Council will consider applications for the passing on of plots on a case by case basis, provided that a familial link can be demonstrated,
- Joint Tenancies will no longer be permitted for new tenants,
- All plots are taken as seen and any issues must be reported within 14 days,
- Permanently fixed (cemented or dug in) play equipment is not permitted,
- Fencing on allotments shall be no higher than 1.6m and of traditional construction with palings of an even height along the length of the fence. Rails should be in the inside of the fence for security reasons.
- Any tenant found to be causing a statutory nuisance through the use of bonfires is at risk of eviction.
- Applications for livestock will only be considered after a period of twelve months has passed.
- Rent will be payable at the full rate for the year, or any part thereof.

5. Allotment Tenant Handbook

The Town Clerk circulated a draft Allotment Tenant Handbook. Members made various suggestions for alterations and agreed that a second draft would be brought back to a future meeting.

RESOLVED that the first draft of the Allotment Tenant Handbook be noted and that a second draft be brought back to a future meeting.

6. Allotment Appeals Policy

RESOLVED that the Allotment Appeals Policy be agreed and adopted.

7. Allotment Inspections

RESOLVED that annual inspections will be cancelled for 2020 and that small inspections would be carried out as and when required following social distancing guidelines and the Risk Assessment.

8. Allotment Waiting List and Occupancy

It was reported that there were 206 applicants waiting and at the current rate of allocations, this could take up to seven years to clear.

These figures demonstrated the need to close the waiting list to applicants from outside of Normanton and Altofts.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

9. Allotment Allocation Issues

The Town Clerk reported on issues surrounding allocation of plots. It was agreed that additional volunteers could be sought from the Council if problems persist.

It was further suggested that a clear job description was provided for on-site volunteers to clarify areas of responsibility.

RESOLVED that the report be received and that a Job Description be created for voluntary site roles.

10. Site Specific Issues

A number of reports were submitted from Cypress Road, Wentworth Terrace and Norwood Street.

RESOLVED that the reports be received and that:

- i) small scale inspections be carried out where required;
- ii) two good quality combination locks be provided at Wentworth Terrace Allotments; and
- iii) Individual responses be provided to each site.

11. Review of Decision - Gladstone Street Allotments

Members discussed the installation of a fence at Gladstone Street Allotments.

RESOLVED that the tenant be instructed to alter the fence in line with the newly adopted fence policy.

In the absence of any further business, the Acting Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.