

NORMANTON TOWN COUNCIL



MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 9th October 2024 at 1.00pm at Normanton Town Hall

Present: Councillor T Morgan
Councillor C Parsons
Councillor M Rowley
Councillor A Samuels – Vice Chairman
Councillor R Seal

Donna Johnston – Town Clerk & RFO
Jonathan Wilkinson – Property Officer
Helen Senior – Admin Officer

Absent: Councillor C Appleyard
Councillor M Jennings
Councillor P Marchant
Councillor B Mayne
Councillor P Mayne - Chairman

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, Councillor A Samuels chaired the meeting.

040. To receive apologies for absence.

RESOLVED that apologies for their inability to attend be received on behalf of Councillors C Appleyard, M Jennings, P Marchant, B Mayne and P Mayne.

041. To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

042. To receive and sign the minutes of a meeting of the Allotments Committee.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Allotments Committee held on Wednesday 28th August 2024 (Minute Numbers 029-039; Pages 14-18) be received as a true record and signed.

043. To receive an update on vacancies and waiting lists.

RESOLVED that the report on waiting lists and vacancies be received.

<u>Site</u>	<u>Waiting List</u>	<u>Vacancies</u>
Cypress Road	28	0
Ellins Terrace 1	13	12
Ellins Terrace 2	16	8
Gilcar Street	7	0
Gladstone Street	15	0
Heys Buildings	11	1
Newland Lane	22	2
Norwood Street	10	3
The Grove	10	0
Wentworth Terrace	13	3
TOTAL	145*	29

*There are 70 individual applicants however some applicants have applied for more than one site. There are 12 applicants who are already tenants which leaves 58 new applicants.

044. To consider requests for skips, structures, livestock, and any other general matters.

Members considered a series of applications from tenants:

WT062

Request for support with the removal of an old shed with possible asbestos containing materials.

Quotes to be obtained and considered at the next meeting.

HB014

Skip request to dispose of waste

DECLINED

The application will need to wait until 1st April when the new budget is in place and the ground conditions are more suitable for the delivery of a skip.

HB045and 046b

Skip request to dispose of waste

DECLINED

The application will need to wait until 1st April when the new budget is in place and the ground conditions are more suitable for the delivery of a skip.

ET1-A

Shed request 6m x 2.5m concrete prefabricated structure.

DECLINED

Any new structures must comply with the Town Councils policy due to the potential for future costs of removal.

WT039

Skip request to dispose of waste

DECLINED

The application will need to wait until 1st April when the new budget is in place and the ground conditions are more suitable for the delivery of a skip.

Norwood Street

Midi Skip for grounds staff to dispose of waste from recently cleared plots in order to have them re-let. Subject to the ground being suitable for the siting of a skip.

APPROVED at a cost of £160.00 from Pickup Skips.

045. To receive the Allotments Committee Budget for the 2024/25 financial year.

Members were provided with a copy of the budget and gave consideration to other planned expenditure to the end of the financial year.

Expenditure was expected to be in the region of £12,647.45 including the water to the end of the year. This left little budget remaining for any unexpected expenditure over winter when pipes were likely to burst.

It was agreed to fund the fencing at Heys Buildings from the Allotments Earmarked Reserve to free up some additional budget.

There would need to be a freeze on non-essential expenditure until closer to the end of the financial year to ensure that budgets were adhered to.

Members discussed the cost implications of clearing vacated plots and the resulting waste which is left behind and agreed that the situation cannot continue.

RESOLVED that the Allotments Committee Budget showing income of £1,787.73 and expenditure of £7,244.42 be received.

046. To receive an update on the recent Allotment Inspections.

Members were provided with a report on the recent inspections which highlighted the following issues:

- Cypress Road – 21% of occupied plots failed the inspection
- Ellins Terrace 1 – 63% of occupied plots failed the inspection
- Ellins Terrace 2 - 55% of occupied plots failed the inspection
- Gilcar Street - 0% of occupied plots failed the inspection
- Gladstone Street - 22% of occupied plots failed the inspection
- Heys Buildings - 38% of occupied plots failed the inspection
- Newland Lane - 33% of occupied plots failed the inspection
- Norwood Street - 42% of occupied plots failed the inspection
- The Grove - 40% of occupied plots failed the inspection
- Wentworth Terrace - 35% of occupied plots failed the inspection
- 393 inspections had been completed
- 9 are outstanding
- 28 were vacant
- 374 occupied plots were inspected
- 141 occupied plots failed the inspection
- 74 written warnings were issued
- 11 eviction notices have been issued to date with further re-inspections due in October.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

047. To review some minor queries relating to bonfires on allotments.

RESOLVED that an amendment be included in the bonfire policy to allow bonfires on bonfire night, and the Friday and Saturday before and after bonfire night after 6.00pm.

048. To review the Allotment Appeals Policy.

RESOLVED that the Allotment Appeals Policy be reviewed and approved subject to some minor amendments.

049. To receive an update on the various allotment issues that have been dealt with in the last month.

A report was provided on issues dealt with since the last meeting including:

- Strimming of plots NS002, NS005, NS012, NS013 and NS025
- Allocation of plots NS002, NS012 and NS013
- Rubbish, as a result of the recent plot clearance, has been gathered together for disposal.
- Re-inspections for September have been completed.

- Plots to be numbered – a trial of a new system will be implemented at Heys Buildings to assist both the Property Officer and new Site Secretary.
- The tree stump at Newland Lane is expected to be removed in the next two weeks.
- Temporary fencing may be required at Newland Lane – the Town Clerk was delegated authority to order temporary fencing to be installed if required.
- A quote for flailing plots at Ellins Terrace was agreed but the work will commence after 1st April 2025 in the new financial year. S&D Landscapes £450.00 per day for 2 days. (the quote may need to be refreshed nearer the time)
- A quote was considered for the reinstallation of the gates at Ellins Terrace however the costs were prohibitive at the present time. The quote would be retained on file and considered in the future.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

050. To consider any complaints from tenants or neighbours about the allotments.

RESOLVED that the following complaints be noted:

- Gilcar Street – Weeds overgrowing, and structure attached to a resident’s fence. Tenant to be contacted and advised to improve over the next three months.
- Bonfire complaint at Wentworth Terrace – Tenants information passed to Environmental Health.
- Theft of fruit at Newland Lane Allotments – Tenant advised to contact the Police.

051. To consider any tenancy issues including breach of tenancy, warnings and evictions.

Two tenants had made contact with mitigating circumstances following receipt of eviction notices. No contact or mitigation had been received within 14 days of the previous written warning.

Members were mindful of the process for appeals and agreed that moving forward any mitigation received after the agreed timescale would need to be submitted as a formal appeal and dealt with as set out in the policy.

RESOLVED that the tenants would be advised to appeal.

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