

# NORMANTON TOWN COUNCIL



## MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 1.00pm at Normanton Town Hall

Present: Councillor B Mayne  
Councillor P Mayne – Chairman  
Councillor T Morgan  
Councillor C Parsons  
Councillor R Seal

Donna Johnston – Town Clerk & RFO  
Jonathan Wilkinson – Property Officer

Absent: Councillor C Appleyard  
Councillor M Jennings  
Councillor M King  
Councillor P Marchant  
Councillor A Samuels – Vice Chairman

**059. To receive apologies for absence.**

RESOLVED that apologies for their inability to attend were submitted on behalf of Councillors M Jennings and P Marchant.

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

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Allotments Committee held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024 (Minute Numbers 040-051; Pages 19-23) be received and signed by the Chairman.

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Allotments Committee held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024 (Minute Numbers 052-058; Pages 24-25) be received and signed by the Chairman.

**063. To receive the notes of the Allotments Liaison Group.**

RESOLVED that the notes of the Allotments Liaison Group held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024 be received.

**064. To receive an update on vacancies and waiting lists.**

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

<b>SITE</b>	<b>VACANCIES</b>	<b>WAITING LIST</b>
Cypress Road	1	24
Edward Street		0
Ellins Terrace 1	12	14
Ellins Terrace 2	10	17
Gilcar Street	0	2
Gladstone Street	2	12
Heys Buildings	3	12
Newland Lane	2	20
Norwood Street	1	3
The Grove	0	7
Wentworth Terrace	3	13
	<b>34</b>	<b>124</b>

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

Members considered the following request:

NS025

Demolition of existing shed and creation of potting shed using existing dwarf wall base.

3m x 4m

APPROVED subject to the tenant removing the waste generated from the demolition of the old shed.

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

RESOLVED that the budget for the 2024/25 financial year showing income of £8778.26 and expenditure of £10,331.28 be received.

**067. To receive an update on the recent Allotment Inspections.**

It was reported that the majority of the inspections had been completed. There was a total of 410 plots inspected and 172 of these

had failed. A total of 75 written warnings had been issued along with 25 eviction notices.

There were still further follow up inspections due in November, January and March.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

**068. To consider the Town Council's policy on recharging former tenants for clearance of plots.**

Following the meeting of the Allotments Liaison Group, it was proposed that former tenants should be re-charged for clearance of plots at the end of their tenancy.

The existing Allotment Policy already provides for this and given the ever-increasing costs for skips, members were supportive of enforcing this policy in order to re-coup some of the costs.

It was suggested that photographs should be taken at the point of allocation so that there is a record of the condition of the plot.

*Existing Policy 9 – Leaving a Plot*

*Normanton Town Council will consider clearing plots that are not in an acceptable condition and may recharge the departing plot holder.*

RESOLVED that with immediate effect, all tenants who leave their plot in a poor condition will be recharged for the cost of clearance and waste disposal.

**069. To consider the procedure for the collection of site fees.**

Following the meeting of the Allotments Liaison Group, it was proposed that the Town Council reverts back to collecting and redistributing the Site Fees to ensure that payment is made to the sites for ongoing costs including insurance and minor repairs.

Members discussed the merits of the proposal and agreed that it would ensure a higher collection rate for the Site Fees however, from an administrative perspective, it needs to be as straight forward as possible.

The only way that this could work is for all sites to levy the same charge and for the Site Fees to be paid back to site at an agreed fixed level each year. It was proposed that a 95% collection rate would be

assumed so that any fluctuations in occupation rates can be accounted for.

It was suggested that a survey be carried out with all the sites in order to reach an agreement in time for the invoices being sent out in January.

RESOLVED that the report be received and that further discussions be entered into with each managed site.

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

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

- Newland Lane – new Site Secretary in post.
- Newland Lane – quotes awaited for the fence repairs following the removal of the fallen tree by Wakefield Council.
- Gladstone Street – Plots 19/20 cleared by volunteers (letter to be sent to thank them for their efforts)
- Gladstone Street – quotes were being sought to clear a large greenhouse with asbestos containing materials – members were supportive of the work being carried out given the amount of work already put in by volunteers.
- Norwood Street – Skip delivered, and waste cleared.
- NAS – Site visit awaited for the disposal of Edward Street.
- NAS – email discussion regarding rent increases.  
Prices would be obtained for other sites in the Wakefield District before a decision is reached on rent for 2026.  
Allotment accounts are to be sent out with the rent invoices to demonstrate where the money is being spent.

RESOLVED that the reports be received.

Quotes had been obtained for the replacement of the gates at Newland Lane which were now extremely difficult to operate.

RESOLVED that RCW be authorised to install 8ft Galvanised double entrance gates at a cost of £2,495.00+ VAT.

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

A complaint had been received about the tipping of glass and nails on the track at Ellins Terrace 2. It was reported that an email / letter had been sent to all tenants to advise them to be more careful.

The neighbouring landowner had asked for permission to install an additional gate for the safety and security of their animals and to prevent fly tipping on their access track. Sufficient space would need to be made available for vehicles to turn around.

Members were satisfied to approve this request provided that the works were carried out entirely at the landowner's cost and that a key is provided for the Town Council.

This was subject to a site meeting to confirm the location of the gate.

RESOLVED that permission be granted for a secondary gate subject to the terms and conditions outlined above.

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

A letter was considered from a tenant at Ellins Terrace who had received a written warning. They raised questions about the timing of the inspection, postal delays and cultivation levels at different times of the year.

It was reported that inspections had commenced slightly later than planned due to the training of a new member of staff. One site will always be inspected last and unfortunately, this year it was the turn of Ellins Terrace.

Plots should be maintained throughout the year in a weed free state, not just in the main growing season.

Postal delays were outside of the Town Council's control and email should be used where the tenant has provided an email address.

RESOLVED that the correspondence be received and a response be provided.

**073. To exclude the press and public in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.**

RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from consideration of the appeals at items 74, 77 and 80 due to the sensitive nature of the business to be transacted.

**074. To consider an appeal against eviction from tenant FCCD170F.**

Tenant FCCD170F submitted an appeal against eviction and explained their personal circumstances which had prevented them from cultivating their plot.

Members considered their tenancy history over the last three years which had indicated an ongoing problem with weeds.

It was noted that the tenant had moved out of area which should have resulted in the tenancy coming to an end but had since returned and they had someone sharing the plot with them.

RESOLVED that the eviction be withdrawn and the written warning extended to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 to enable additional time to bring the plot up to an acceptable standard.

The tenant is also to be advised that plot sharing is not permitted, and a co-worker agreement would be sent out.

**075. To appoint three members to an Appeal Sub Committee with delegated authority to continue handling the complaint if required.**

RESOLVED that Councillor T Goodwin, Councillor F Marchant and Councillor A Bones be appointed to the Appeal Sub-Committee.

**076. To appoint the Chairman of the Appeal Sub Committee from the appointed members.**

RESOLVED that Councillor A Bones be appointed as Chairman of the Appeal Sub-Committee.

**077. To consider an appeal against eviction from tenant F7886FF6.**

Tenant F7886FF6 submitted an appeal against eviction and explained their personal circumstances which had prevented them from cultivating their plot.

Members considered their tenancy history over the last three years.

RESOLVED that the eviction be withdrawn and the written warning extended to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 to enable additional time to bring the plot up to an acceptable standard.

The tenant is to be offered the chance to reduce to one plot with their partner rather than a full plot each if that would make things easier.

**078. To appoint three members to an Appeal Sub Committee with delegated authority to continue handling the complaint if required.**  
RESOLVED that Councillor T Goodwin, Councillor E Blezard and Councillor F Marchant be appointed to the Appeal Sub-Committee.

**079. To appoint the Chairman of the Appeal Sub Committee from the appointed members.**  
RESOLVED that Councillor E Blezard be appointed as Chairman of the Appeal Sub-Committee.

**080. To consider an appeal against eviction from tenant A2D991BA.**  
Tenant A2D991BA submitted an appeal against eviction and explained their personal circumstances which had prevented them from cultivating their plot.

Members considered their tenancy history over the last three years.

RESOLVED that the eviction be withdrawn and the written warning extended to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 to enable additional time to bring the plot up to an acceptable standard.

The tenant is to be offered the chance to reduce to one plot with their partner rather than a full plot each if that would make things easier.

**081. To appoint three members to an Appeal Sub Committee with delegated authority to continue handling the complaint if required.**  
RESOLVED that Councillor P Sampson, Councillor A Bones and Councillor J Pritchard be appointed to the Appeal Sub-Committee.

**082. To appoint the Chairman of the Appeal Sub Committee from the appointed members.**  
RESOLVED that Councillor P Sampson be appointed as Chairman of the Appeal Sub-Committee.

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