

Report of the Allotment Sub Committee to the Parish Council

The Committee met at 7.30 pm on **Monday 26th June 2017**, in Committee Room 1 at the Parish Hall, Great Baddow. Cllr Mrs S Young chaired the meeting.

Present: Cllrs Mrs S Young, K Ronaldson, T Miller, Mrs C Shaw, Mrs J Sosin, Mrs V Sadowsky and Mrs M Miller

In Attendance: The Clerk of the Council
 The Grounds Supervisor
 Towerfield Allotment Site Representative Mr T Hull

164/17 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs D Ronaldson, who had substituted Cllr Mrs M Miller, and Cllr K Liley and Cllr J Fuller.

165/17 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Pecuniary Interests or Registerable Non Pecuniary Interests.

166/17 Minutes

The minutes from the last meeting held on 27th March 2017 were presented to the meeting and proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw. They were agreed unanimously and then signed as a true record.

167/17 Public Question Time

There were no members of the public present.

168/17 To receive an update report on matters raised by the Allotment Representatives on 27th March 2017

A report prepared by the Grounds Supervisor had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following items were noted:

A fortnightly cutting schedule is now in place at the Towerfield site. The Vicarage Lane site is currently tended by 4 Seasons Landscapes.

Enquiries about the allotment number signage continues to be ongoing.

The Parish Council took delivery of a second 40-yard skip at the Vicarage Lane allotment site on 25th May 2017 and once again exceeded the 3-tonne weight allowance. Further rubbish remains at the site but it is hoped that this can be managed internally.

There are currently 8 vacant plots on the Vicarage Lane site and 8 on the Towerfield site. There is currently no allotment waiting list.

The Clerk was asked about the Best Kept Allotment Competition judging and she said that this would be checked.

169/17 Report of the Towerfield Allotment Representative

1. Mr Hull reported that young people were seen leaving the Towerfield site on 8th June 2017 and that it was discovered that 4 allotments had been vandalised.

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2. Mr Hull thanked the staff for the cutting of the paths and the strimming of vacant allotments and said that he was pleased that this will be undertaken on a regular basis.
3. Mr Hull reported that the main vehicle gate has dropped. The Clerk said that she had visited the site last week and seen that the gate post is leaning over. Enquiries will be made about repairing the post.
4. Mr Hull said that a tenant has asked if the overhanging willow tree can be cut back. The Clerk said that she did not think that the tree was the responsibility of the Council, as it is outside the boundary fence. The matter will be investigated.
5. Mr Hull reported that complaints are being made about two allotment plots which are not being worked. The Grounds Supervisor said that they are on her list to monitor.
6. Mr Hull raised the matter of security at the site and he told the meeting the lack of security means that the police are not willing to do anything. He requested that a padlock should be placed on the gate. The Clerk replied that padlocks on the gates had been tried on both allotment sites in the past but that this type of system had not worked. Padlocks with security keys are too expensive and combination locks caused a lot of problems for the tenants. Cllr Mrs S Young suggested that vandals should be reported to the police whether they would come out to the incident or not.

170/17 Vicarage Lane Allotment Site

In Mr Harris's absence, there was no report. The Clerk was asked to contact Mr Harris, as no apologies had been received.

171/17 Allotment Deposits

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting which outlined the current situation relating to the amount of waste that is left on allotments plots and dumped in the Council's compound. The Clerk's recommendation is that refundable deposits should be introduced. Mr Hull said that whilst he supports the idea in principle, he felt that many tenants would not be happy about it. At a time of many vacancies and no waiting list, this action may not be seen by the tenants as a positive move by the Council.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr Mrs J Sosin that the subcommittee should further consider the implementation of a deposit system and that a report should be prepared for the next meeting in September 2017. A vote was taken with 6 in agreement and 1 abstention. The proposal was agreed.

172/17 Water Tanks

A report had been circulated to the meeting. The Clerk and the Grounds Supervisor undertook a site visit to both allotment sites on 21st June 2017. It was recommended that the subcommittee should consider budgeting for the replacement of four water tanks in the 2018/2019 budget, three on Vicarage Lane and one on Towerfield. Cllr A Sosin proposed that these replacement tanks should not be delayed and that work should proceed immediately. He proposed that the matter should be referred to the Finance & General Purposes committee on 3rd July 2017. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and agreed unanimously.

173/17 Matters for information

There were no matters for information.

174/17 Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Monday 25th September 2017 at 7.30pm.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.15 pm

Signed.....*E. Sui*.....Chairman.....*10th July 2017*.....Date