

KENDAL TOWN COUNCIL

Allotments Committee

**Monday 11th March 2019 at 7.00 pm
in The Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Kendal**

- PRESENT** Dave Miles (Vice Chair), Michele Miles, Giles Archibald, Stephen Coleman and Carol Hardy
- Councillors Chris Rowley and Geoff Cook were also in attendance.
- APOLOGIES** Councillor Alvin Finch (Chair)
- OFFICERS** Janine Holt (Assistant to the Town Clerk), Pierre Labat (Townscape Manager) and Nicky King (Council Secretary)
- 938/18/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- None.
- 939/18/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- None.
- 940/18/19 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10TH DECEMBER 2018**
- The Chairman presented the minutes of the meeting held on 10th December 2018, which had been approved by full Council on 7th January 2019.
- RESOLVED** That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10th December 2018 be accepted as a correct record.
- 941/18/19 MATTERS ARISING (Not on Agenda)**
- Janine Holt updated Members on the following matters:
- Minute Ref 680/18/19 – Site Visits**
Councillor Finch was due to join the Townscape Manager and Assistant to the Town Clerk on their allotment visits scheduled for 9th January 2019. Due to illness the site visits did not take place and the invitation was extended to Councillor Finch for the next site visits due in April.
- Minute Ref 682/18/19 – Noticeboards**
Janine Holt will purchase noticeboards for Underley Hill and Wattsfield this week. The Townscape Manager will make necessary arrangements to set up on site.
- Janine Holt had previously been tasked with drawing up preferred wording to certain tenancy agreement clauses as follows:
- Minute Ref 688/18/19 – Bonfires (clause 4.9)**
Feedback had been received from the site rep at Coley Barn who did not agree with the decision to disallow bonfires. A general discussion

ensued. Councillor Coleman noted that the current clause in the tenancy agreement states that only 'non-compostable garden waste' may be burnt. He asked whether there was any evidence to suggest that this was not being adhered to. Janine Holt advised that she does not receive many complaints in this respect. The Townscape Manager commented that it is useful to be able to burn certain things such as raspberry canes. It was decided that the current clause should remain in the tenancy agreement allowing the burning of non-compostable garden waste. However a reminder will be issued discouraging bonfires which must be kept to a minimum. Where possible tenants should compost garden waste themselves or take home.

RESOLVED

That the current clause 4.9 should remain in the tenancy agreement as is, allowing the burning of non-compostable garden waste. A reminder to be issued discouraging bonfires which must be kept to a minimum.

Minute Ref 689/18/19 – Sprinklers (clause 4.8)

The amended clause was read out...

*Sprinklers or any form of irrigation system must not be connected to a site tap. Hoses can be connected to site taps but must not be left unattended or inconvenience other tenants. Water must only be used on the allotment, **anyone using water for other purposes will be reported to the police.***

Members approved the wording.

RESOLVED

That Members approve the revised wording to Clause 4.8 of the tenancy agreement.

Minute Ref 690/18/19 – keeping of hens (clause 4.12)

The amended clause was read out...

Most sites are free from hens, however with permission from the Allotments Committee the keeping of hens on the following sites, Coley Barn, Sandylands, Shaws Brow, Underley Road and Underley Hill is permitted. Cockerels are not permitted at any time.

Members approved the wording.

RESOLVED

That Members approve the revised wording to Clause 4.12 of the tenancy agreement.

Minute Ref 692/18/19 – Disposal of Green Waste at Canal Head

Janine Holt had spoken to Tony Jamieson at Canal Head about the challenges of disposing of green waste and what improvements could be made. He agreed that current arrangements were unacceptable from a health and safety point of view. Alternatives were being considered and Janine Holt would report back at the next meeting.

RESOLVED

That Janine Holt report back on alternative arrangements for green waste disposal at the next meeting.

Minute Ref 693/18/19 – Electronic Maps

Janine Holt had brought a copy of the site map to the meeting.

942/18/19**RINKFIELD FENCING**

Janine Holt had spoken to the site rep at Rinkfield who did not consider the proposed fencing to be a priority. This was contrary to the view of a number of tenants. Along with the Townscape Manager, she wanted to offer an informal open morning on a Saturday. This would allow an opportunity to get to know the tenants of Rinkfield and seek views on the fencing and other issues on Rinkfield.

Members agreed to the suggestion. It was decided to keep the matter as a standing item on the agenda for the time being.

RESOLVED

That an informal open morning with tenants from Rinkfield be arranged. This matter to become a standing item on the agenda for the time being.

943/18/19**PROJECT UPDATE****Allotments Database**

Janine Holt advised that all plot holder information had been successfully exported to the allotment specific database. Invoices had since been issued via the new database. She noted some limitations but reported an overall improvement.

Outstanding Rent

A small number of tenants had not paid rent due by 31st January 2019. These tenants would now be issued with notice to quit letters.

Inspection Visits

Visits had taken place between 20-27 February. A total of 472 plots had been checked and 37 letters had been prepared to send to tenants whose plots are currently in an unsatisfactory condition.

Councillor Archibald referred to a number of plots which cannot be cultivated and asked whether these were included in the 472 plots visited. Janine Holt confirmed that those plots had been included in the number of vacant plots.

Community Plots

Janine Holt talked about trying to encourage community plots. There is currently a plot on Sedbergh Road in conjunction with Age UK and Cumbria County Council. Horticare also have a plot which is used as an educational tool to grow veg for use in their kitchens to make their own food. She advised that she had been approached by a tenant of Canal Head regarding two challenging plots on that site. High school children were attracted to the site and it is a currently a problem area. The tenant wished to return the two plots to scratch and maintain them and a trial period had been agreed. His proposal was to approach the school and encourage students of years 10 and 11 to become involved with the cultivation of the two plots. It was hoped this would break the cycle and improve the situation.

The Townscape Manager explained possible improvements that could be made quite easily to the site such as increasing the height of fencing and the use of padlocks to prevent school children

entering. Councillor Coleman commented that action was needed to try and change behaviour of the school children involved. He added that other avenues should be explored and suggested a PCSO be asked to visit the site. Janine Holt advised that the problem tends to begin at Easter and gets progressively worse with the lighter evenings.

944/18/19**WORK UPDATE FROM TOWNSCAPE MANAGER****Underley Hill**

One tenant had requested to extend his site. The plot had been re-measured.

The Townscape Manager explained that there is a tree within the boundary of site fencing which is causing lots of shadow and requires felling. Councillor Archibald commented that this should not be felled without replacing with 2 or 3 new trees, although these did not necessarily have to be on the same site. Members discussed possible locations for the replacement trees and it was suggested these could be fruit trees. It was agreed to present a proposal of where the new trees could be planted, along with costs, at the next meeting. Janine Holt noted that it was SLDC land therefore permission would be required and she would contact Graham Nicholson. She would make it clear that Committee were looking at replacing the felled tree with 2 or 3 new trees as recompense.

RESOLVED

That a proposal including location and costs of 2/3 new trees be presented at the next meeting. SLDC permission to be sought to fell the tree causing shadow on site.

Town View

The main path which had been slippery and quite steep was improved and reinforced last year. The grass had been replaced with woodchip this year and a decent path has now been achieved. The Townscape Manager had worked with Chris from Horticare on this project.

A new hedge had been laid and an access strip formed for future maintenance. The top of the hedge would be trimmed on a regular basis to encourage compact growth. The Townscape Manager advised that there is a small area on the corner of Nobles Rest which is short of hedge and needs finishing. The Friends of Nobles Rest wished to work together to complete the work. They would like to develop a native hedge, pollinators etc. Janine Holt commented that it was a nice community project. The group had not requested funds just manual support and the Townscape Manager would help with the ongoing maintenance.

Wattsfield

The Townscape Manager explained that there had been a longstanding request for a new water tap. There were plans to install a fourth tap at the bottom end of the site to service a number of plots. Continental had offered to dig the trench free of charge. This was a low cost project and the tenants were happy to be gaining an additional tap.

Sandylands

Work was currently being undertaken to clear sites on Sandylands and these should be much easier to rent out on completion.

Dog Fouling Problem

The Townscape Manager produced a leaflet which it was proposed to display on sites highlighting the problem of dog fouling along footpaths etc.

945/18/19**APPLICATION FOR POLY TUNNEL ON WATTSFIELD**

It was noted that retrospective approval was being sought from a tenant of Wattsfield for a plastic greenhouse. The dimensions were 2 metres high x 2 metres wide x 3.5m long. It has the appearance of a poly tunnel but the structure is not as strong.

Janine Holt explained that poly tunnels had historically required full planning approval. She had spoken to a planning officer who advised that they were happy for poly tunnels to be placed on allotment sites provided they were not permanent structures.

During a general discussion concern was raised about the risk of "opening the flood gates" if approval was granted. Councillor Coleman suggested speaking to site reps and tenants in order to gauge views. There was a general feeling that plastic greenhouses have a different visual appearance and Janine Holt commented that each one needs to be judged on its own merit. Councillor Rowley made the point that poly tunnels do offer increased productivity, but agreed that other issues raised needed consideration. Councillor Archibald suggested granting retrospective approval subject to there being no significant objections from tenants and nearby residents. Members agreed that there was a need to develop a policy/guidelines for future requests. It was suggested that CALC/NALC could be contacted for advice in this respect.

On a different matter it was highlighted that the gate/stile at Wattsfield is quite dangerous and slippery. The Townscape Manager was obtaining a quote for this to be replaced with a full gate. Councillor Coleman proposed that this work be approved. This was seconded by Councillor Archibald and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED

1. That views from site reps, tenants and nearby residents be sought in respect of the request for retrospective consent to erect a plastic greenhouse on Wattsfield.
2. That a new gate be installed at Wattsfield.

946/18/19**ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER**Summer edition

General bee article.

Autumn/Winter edition

General allotments article. It was suggested by Councillor Coleman that this include a report on the current programme of upgrade/improvements and making it clear that different plot sizes are available.

947/18/19**REVIEW OF SPEND AGAINST BUDGET 2018/19**

Janine Holt presented a summary of current spend against budget. She highlighted pest control and reported low activity this year, although there had been a report of juvenile rats on Sedbergh Road. Budget was likely to reduce slightly as a result of this.

It was noted that the cost of noticeboards (approximately £900 plus associated installation costs) needed to be deducted from budget. Also the lawn mower requires servicing and the Townscape Manager was obtaining quotes.

The Townscape Manager requested a skip for Crow Tree for a couple of days for use by allotment holders as there is currently a lot of rubbish (wire, glass etc) on several plots.

Councillor Coleman proposed that remaining budget be used for a skip on Crow Tree and the lawn mower service. This was seconded by Councillor Archibald and carried unanimously.

Councillor Archibald highlighted the water charges budget heading and asked whether there had been any repeat of excess water usage at Greenside. Janine Holt advised that she had written to all tenants of the site advising that Allotments Committee were aware of the issue and made an appeal for any suspicious activity to be reported. The water is currently turned off and there has not been any water use. The situation is being monitored. Tenants had also been informed of the planned installation of push taps which was not popular. She had suggested to the Town Clerk that a push tap be installed on the one tap where it is suspected water is being taken from.

The Allotments Fund and action plan projects was discussed. Janine Holt explained this is an ongoing matter. Due to the Townscape Manager's work priorities this year autumn is likely to be the first opportunity he can start implementing action plan projects. It was agreed to report back to the next meeting to agree a schedule of work. It was noted that remaining budget in Site Maintenance would be lost if not spent, but could be used to purchase posts, timber etc.

RESOLVED

1. That remaining budget be used to fund a skip on Crow Tree and the lawn mower service.
2. That a schedule of work for action plan projects be agreed at the next meeting.

948/18/19**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

949/18/19**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 22nd July 2019 at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8.09pm.

Summary of Information, Resolutions and Recommendations to Council

Min	Subject	Information/Resolution/Recommendation to Council	
941	Bonfires	RES	That the current clause 4.9 should remain in the tenancy agreement as is, allowing the burning of non-compostable garden waste. A reminder to be issued discouraging bonfires which must be kept to a minimum.
	Sprinklers	RES	That Members approve the revised wording to Clause 4.8 of the tenancy agreement.
	Keeping of Hens	RES	That Members approve the revised wording to Clause 4.12 of the tenancy agreement.
	Disposal of Green Waste at Canal Head	RES	That Janine Holt report back on alternative arrangements for green waste disposal at the next meeting.
942	Rinkfield Fencing	RES	That an informal open morning with tenants from Rinkfield be arranged. This matter to become a standing item on the agenda for the time being.
944	Work Update from Townscape Manager – Underley Hill	RES	That a proposal including location and costs of 2/3 new trees be presented at the next meeting. SLDC permission to be sought to fell the tree causing shadow on site.
945	Poly Tunnel on Wattsfield	RES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That views from site reps, tenants and nearby residents be sought in respect of the request for retrospective consent to erect a plastic greenhouse on Wattsfield. 2. That a new gate be installed at Wattsfield.
947	Review of Spend Against Budget 2018/19	RES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That remaining budget be used to fund a skip on Crow Tree and the lawn mower service. 2. That a schedule of work for action plan projects be agreed at the next meeting.