

KENDAL TOWN COUNCIL

Allotments Committee

**Monday 29th July 2019 at 7.00 pm
in The Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Kendal**

- PRESENT** Councillors Alvin Finch (Chair & Mayor), Dave Miles (Vice Chair), Michele Miles and Stephen Coleman
- Councillor Chris Rowley was also in attendance, along with an allotment holder from Town View.
- APOLOGIES** Councillor Giles Archibald
- OFFICERS** Janine Holt (Assistant to the Town Clerk), Pierre Labat (Townscape Manager) and Nicky King (Council Secretary)
- 242/19/20 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- None.
- 243/19/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- None.
- 244/19/20 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11TH MARCH 2019**
- The Chairman presented the minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2019, which had been approved by full Council on 1st April 2019.
- RESOLVED** That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11th March 2019 be accepted as a correct record.
- MATTERS ARISING** (Not on Agenda)
- 245/19/20 Minute Ref 941/18/19 – Disposal of Green Waste at Canal Head**
- Janine Holt reported that no alternative arrangements for the disposal of green waste had been made. The Townscape Manager was continuing to leave waste on site as he used to, which appears to be working. She will still look at alternatives, but is not sure this is required now.
- RESOLVED** Janine Holt to research alternative arrangements for green waste disposal.
- 246/19/20 ANNUAL REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE**
- Janine Holt presented the meeting with the Terms of Reference for the Committee.

Councillor D Miles proposed that these be approved without amendment. This was seconded by Councillor M Miles and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED

That The Terms of Reference be approved without amendment.

247/19/20**PROJECT UPDATE**

Janine Holt presented the Project Update. She reported an increase in the demand for allotments.

During site visits undertaken in May, 27 plots were found to be in an unsatisfactory condition. Letters have been issued to the tenants responsible and follow up visits are scheduled. The Performance Indicator shows a 98% occupancy rate. Janine will update the KTC website with information of vacant plots.

Councillor Coleman expressed concerns with anti-social behaviour on Castle Hags extension (he is the tenant of a plot on a neighbouring site). Janine explained that she had written to tenants on Castle Hags Ext regarding the problem, but not those on adjacent sites. Signs were displayed on site advising that anti-social behaviour has been reported to the police and the problem appears to have improved. Suggestions made during conversations held with tenants on Castle Hags Ext included higher fencing and moving the bench in the cemetery, which was being used to stand on in order to enter the site. It was agreed that Janine will speak to SLDC regarding moving the bench as a first step and write to allotment holders on Castle Hags and Canal Head with an update.

RESOLVED

Janine Holt to speak to SLDC regarding moving the bench in the cemetery and write to allotment holders on Castle Hags and Canal Head with an update.

248/19/20**APPLICATION TO KEEP BEES ON PLOT 44 COLEY BARN**

Members considered a request from the tenant of plot 44 Coley Barn to keep bees. Following a general discussion Committee agreed they were keen to encourage bee keeping. Councillor Rowley declared support for the request, commenting that Coley Barn was close to his back garden and noting a distinct lack of honey bees in his garden of late.

Councillor Coleman proposed that the request be approved, subject to Janine consulting with tenants at Coley Barn. This was seconded by Councillor Finch and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED

That the request to keep bees on Plot 44 Coley Barn be approved, subject to consultation with tenants on site.

249/19/20**DISCUSSION – HOW TO MANAGE ALLOTMENTS IN AN ENVIRONMENTAL WAY**

In the absence of Councillor Archibald, Committee agreed to defer this matter until the next meeting. It was agreed Janine would request a paper from Councillor Archibald outlining his ideas.

Councillor Rowley raised the matter of slug pellet use. Janine to ensure this is included, if not covered in the paper from Councillor Archibald.

RESOLVED

This matter to be included on the agenda of the next meeting. Janine to request a paper from Councillor Archibald and ensure the use of slug pellets is included for consideration.

250/19/20**DRAFT POLYTUNNEL POLICY**

Janine Holt explained that she had prepared a KTC policy document for poly-tunnels on Town Council owned and managed allotments due to an increase in requests for poly-tunnels.

Members considered the document. Councillor Coleman proposed that the policy be approved. This was seconded by Councillor D Miles and carried unanimously.

It was agreed that Janine will make tenants aware that approval needs to be sought. Those tenants who already have poly-tunnels will need to apply.

It was noted that the fourth paragraph on the second page needs grammatical correction.

RESOLVED

Janine to make tenants aware approval needs to be sought. Those tenants who already have poly-tunnels will need to apply.

251/19/20**APPEAL DECISION ON REFUND OF DEPOSIT**

Members considered a letter received from a tenant of a plot on Town View requesting a refund of deposit paid. Janine provided further background information and advised Committee that, as a gesture of goodwill, a refund of rent had already been made.

Following a general discussion Councillor Coleman commented that a gesture of goodwill had already been made (which could have been withheld) and proposed that no further refund in respect of the deposit should be offered. This was seconded by Councillor Finch and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED

That no further refund in respect of the deposit will be made.

252/19/20**RINKFIELD FENCING**

Janine Holt updated Committee on the Rinkfield fencing situation. She advised that SLDC had now agreed to take down the trees on site and this will take place in the autumn. She had met with Rinkfield tenants and discussions had highlighted the need for the fencing. She explained that fencing will be erected once a date for tree felling is confirmed.

It was noted contractors had previously advised they were unable to quote for the fencing without knowing if the trees would be in situ. Members agreed quotes should now be requested from contractors on the basis that the trees will be removed. Janine to keep in touch with SLDC.

RESOLVED

Quotes to be requested from contractors on the basis that the trees will be removed. Janine to keep in touch with SLDC.

253/19/20**PROPOSED ALLOTMENT IMPROVEMENT PAPER**

Janine Holt presented a Proposed Site Improvement Report. For a number of years the Allotments Committee held a budget of approximately £70k. This money was generated from the sale of land owned by KTC and it was agreed the proceeds would be used to purchase additional allotment land. Despite extensive searching no suitable potential site was identified. Towards the end of 2018, Full Council considered a recommendation put forward by the Allotments Committee and resolved to approve the expenditure of money previously earmarked for new allotment sites on the improvement of existing sites.

Following the resolution by Council, Janine Holt undertook a series of data collection methods to establish what needs to be improved on each site. The report detailed proposed improvements and it was noted that tree maintenance work was a requirement on several sites. Janine commented that tree maintenance is an historic problem, but not all trees on allotment sites are the responsibility of KTC.

The previous find of a piece of brown asbestos on Underley Hill was noted. During a general discussion Members considered whether this should be included within the remit of the improvement report. The area is currently grassed and cordoned off and the land is owned by SLDC. It was agreed that Janine would request a position statement from the Town Clerk and then consider if any action was required.

Councillor Coleman thanked Janine for the report commenting that it was a good basis on which to start. His recollection was that Committee wished to establish a baseline of what any allotment holder should expect as standard. Janine replied that it was difficult to standardise as the sites are so diverse.

Following a general discussion regarding what the report should address, it was agreed Janine would undertake further work and include the following information in the report:

- Number of plots on each site.
- Whether fencing is up to standard.
- Access to water (height of taps, number of taps etc).
- Extra columns to be included for fencing, water and pathways.
- Traffic light system of green/amber/red to be used.
- Any issues with trespassing to be highlighted as a priority.

Janine to present an updated version of the report at the next meeting.

RESOLVED

1. Janine Holt to request a position statement from the Town Clerk in respect of brown asbestos on Underley Hill.
2. Janine Holt to undertake further work to the Proposed Site Improvement Report and present an updated version at the next meeting.

254/19/20**ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER**Autumn/Winter Edition

- Composting – possible workshop by Pierre
- General allotments article – planned improvement works/bringing sites up to standard.

255/19/20**REVIEW OF SPEND AGAINST BUDGET 2019/20**

Janine Holt presented a summary of current spend against budget. She highlighted the Pest Control heading and reported the removal of two wasps' nests. It was also noted that there are rats on Coley Barn.

It was also noted that there is budget available in the Site Maintenance heading which could be utilised for tree removal work, as discussed earlier in the meeting. It was agreed the Townscape Manager will identify trees requiring work and obtain costings for consideration at the next meeting.

RESOLVED

Townscape Manager to identify trees requiring work and obtain costings for consideration at the next meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS**256/19/20**Noticeboards

The Townscape Manager advised that the new noticeboards are now in place on Underley Hill and Wattsfield. The noticeboards display a plan of the allotment site, contact telephone numbers and community notices etc. Indications were that they had been well received.

Councillor Finch proposed the installation of two further noticeboards at Castle Hags and Sedbergh Road. This was seconded by Councillor Coleman and carried unanimously. Janine Holt to present details of the total cost at the next meeting.

RESOLVED

That two further noticeboards be installed at Castle Hags and Sedbergh Road. Janine Holt to present details of the total cost at the next meeting.

257/19/20Rabbits at Town View

An allotment holder from Town View had attended the meeting to request a rebate of rent to cover expenses he had personally incurred as a result of the presence of rabbits on the site.

Janine Holt explained that the rabbits had got into the site whilst fencing had been taken down by the Townscape Manager in order to carry out work to the hedge. As soon as the problem became apparent, traps had been purchased and these appeared to be proving successful.

A general discussion then ensued. Members agreed there was no easy solution to rabbits on sites. It was noted that there is the possibility of dogs going onto Town View in October, however this is not a popular option with some allotment holders. The use of ferrets was suggested as an alternative. It was agreed that Janine would speak to tenants on Town View to gauge their views and Committee will review the matter at the next meeting in September. Permission may need to be sought from SLDC to use dogs/ferrets on site.

All things considered it was decided not to offer a rebate of rent to the tenant. Members agreed that, whilst the additional expense incurred was unfortunate, KTC had responded to the problem as best as they could under the circumstances as soon as it had become known. Councillor Coleman stressed the need for tenants to report any problem with vermin on sites as soon as possible so that prompt action can be taken.

It was also mentioned that there is a problem with mice on Town View.

RESOLED

That no rebate of rent will be offered to the tenant on Town View.

258/19/20**DATE OF NEXT MEETING – MON 23RD SEPT 2019 AT 7PM**

The meeting closed at 8.27pm.

Summary of Information, Resolutions and Recommendations to Council

Min	Subject	Information/Resolution/Recommendation to Council	
245	Disposal of Green Waste at Canal Head	RES	Janine Holt to research alternative arrangements for green waste disposal.
246	Terms of Reference	RES	That The Terms of Reference be approved without amendment.
247	Project Update	RES	Janine Holt to speak to SLDC regarding moving the bench in the cemetery and write to allotment holders on Castle Hags and Canal Head with an update.
248	Application to Keep Bees at Coley Barn	RES	That the request to keep bees on Plot 44 Coley Barn be approved, subject to consultation with tenants on site.
249	How to Manage Allotments in an Environmental Way	RES	This matter to be included on the agenda of the next meeting. Janine to request a paper from Councillor Archibald and ensure the use of slug pellets is included for consideration.
250	Draft Polytunnel Policy	RES	Janine to make tenants aware approval needs to be sought. Those tenants who already have poly-tunnels will need to apply.
251	Appeal Decision on Refund of Deposit	RES	That no further refund in respect of the deposit will be made.
252	Rinkfield Fencing	RES	Quotes to be requested from contractors on the basis that the trees will be removed. Janine to keep in touch with SLDC.
253	Proposed Allotment Improvement Paper	RES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Janine Holt to request a position statement from the Town Clerk in respect of brown asbestos on Underley Hill. 2. Janine Holt to undertake further work to the Proposed Site Improvement Report and present an updated version at the next meeting.
255	Review of Spend Against Budget	RES	Townscape Manager to identify trees requiring work and obtain costings for consideration at the next meeting.
256	Noticeboards	RES	That two further noticeboards be installed at Castle Hags and Sedbergh Road. Janine Holt to present details of the total cost at the next meeting.
257	Rabbits at Town View	RES	That no rebate of rent will be offered to the tenant on Town View.