

# KENDAL TOWN COUNCIL

## Allotments Committee

**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020 at 7.00 pm  
(Via Teleconferencing)**

- PRESENT** Councillors Alvin Finch (Chair & Mayor), Dave Miles (Vice Chair), Giles Archibald, Michele Miles, Stephen Coleman and Carol Hardy  
Deborah Allison (Site Rep – Canal Head)
- APOLOGIES** Chris Rowley (Site Rep)
- OFFICERS** Janine Holt (Assistant to the Town Clerk), Pierre Labat (Townscape Manager) and Nicky King (Council Secretary)
- 080/20/21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**  
None.
- 081/20/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
None.
- 082/20/21 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9TH DECEMBER 2019**  
The Chairman presented the minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019, which had been approved by full Council on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020. Members agreed they were an accurate record of the meeting.
- RESOLVED** That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019 be accepted as a correct record.
- MATTERS ARISING (Not on Agenda)**
- 083/20/21 Castle Haggs Extension (Minute 656/19/20)**  
Janine had previously been tasked with arranging payment for new fencing posts by the end of the financial year. She advised that sufficient funds had not been available. Members agreed to discuss the matter later in the meeting under the review of spend against budget 2020/21.
- 084/20/21 PROJECT UPDATE**  
Rabbits at Town View  
It was reported that rabbits are once again a problem at Town View. The rabbit fence was checked regularly in February/March following attendance by pest control in January and no problems were found, although there was one rabbit on site at that time. By week commencing 8 June there were reports of a large number of rabbits. Pierre cannot see any holes in the fencing but it is obvious that rabbits are entering the site from somewhere.

Councillor Finch raised his concern to learn during allotment site checks of a tenant verbally abusing KTC staff. The tenant was unhappy about the rabbit situation. He commented that he did not have an answer to the problem, previous attempts to clear the site of rabbits had not proved successful and it may be that shooting them is the only option remaining. Councillor Coleman proposed that this course of action be progressed. Janine advised that permission would have to be sought from SLDC. The proposal was carried with 3 Members in favour and 3 abstentions.

#### General Update

Janine reported that the waiting list for allotment plots has increased by 91 to a total of 161. Site visits have just been completed. Generally things are working well and allotment holders are happy. Following the visits one notice to quit has been issued and 24 letters have been sent requesting tenants to carry out improvement work to their plots. The sites in question will be revisited in 4-5 weeks for further inspection.

A good job has been made of the fencing at Rinkfield and the tenants are happy with the work. There is an area on site which can be split into possible a further three plots. Pierre advised that a large amount of rubbish had been cleared from the site. There had been some nice community work to achieve this and everyone was pleased about the fencing.

#### **RESOLVED**

That Janine approach SLDC for permission to have the rabbits at Town View allotments shot.

#### **085/20/21**

#### **FIRES ON GREENSIDE ALLOTMENTS**

Janine reported that she had been contacted by an allotment holder who had an issue with a fire on Greenside allotments. A tenant was burning fresh hedge cuttings along with other wood and this had produced thick smoke which entered his house. He requested Committee to consider banning fires on allotment sites, particularly bearing in mind the current climate emergency.

A general discussion ensued. Councillor Coleman commented that Committee should not be encouraging bonfires and considered they should be banned. He acknowledged there had been an increased need for bonfires during the recent withdrawal of household green waste collections, but this service had now resumed so the requirement should have declined. It was agreed Janine would contact the Allotments Association to ascertain their policy on bonfires and report back to Committee for further consideration.

#### **RESOLVED**

That Janine contact the Allotments Association to ascertain their policy on bonfires and report back to Committee.

#### **086/20/21**

#### **ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER**

##### Autumn/Winter Edition:

- Biodiversity enhancement
- Bees (contact Jacqui Cottam at Heron Hill School)

Pierre advised that the People's Café is asking people with spare veg to take it down to them. Notices have been put on sites and there is an article in the current newsletter.

**087/20/21**

## **REVIEW OF SPEND AGAINST BUDGET 2020/21**

Members considered the Budgetary Control Statement to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020. The following matters were highlighted:

### Pest Control

Whilst the budget for this item is currently quite healthy, the current problem with rats could result in overspend.

### Waste Removal

There has been a problem with fly tipping and waste during lockdown. This has been reported to SLDC, however Pierre has had to remove substantial rubbish from allotment sites.

### Site Maintenance

Budget is looking healthy. Janine reported a quote received in the sum of £655 to remove asbestos from Rinkfield allotments. Councillor Coleman proposed that this expenditure be approved. This was seconded by Councillor Archibald and carried.

Asbestos on Coley Barn was also noted and a quote for its removal is being obtained. Members agreed to remove this at the same time as Rinkfield if the quote is less than £1,000.

Pierre commented that there is a larger problem to consider, with asbestos still present on many sites. He suggested a survey of all sites be carried out. Councillor Archibald stated that asbestos is a potential health issue and Committee should act immediately to remove any asbestos from sites. He proposed that Pierre organise a survey. This was seconded by Councillor Coleman and carried unanimously. Survey report to be available for the next Committee meeting in September.

### Coley Barn

Janine advised that a quote for repairs to a wall at Coley Barn has been obtained in the sum of £120 and requested approval to proceed with this work. Councillor Coleman proposed that the work proceed. This was seconded by Councillor Archibald and carried with 1 abstention.

### Noticeboards

It was suggested that Coley Barn should be the next site to receive a noticeboard. The cost was reported as £580 plus VAT. Councillor Coleman expressed his view that noticeboards are a good idea, but commented that the board on the site where he has a plot has damp inside and updating of information inside the board is limited. Whilst he supported the addition of a board at Coley Barn he said these issues need to be addressed. Councillor Finch commented that a noticeboard at Coley Barn would be useful, particularly in view of the current rat problem.

Pierre commented that Committee had needed to be very proactive with regards to the rat problem and had to act on advice received from Pest Control. Councillor Coleman said in future notices should be put up on site so the public are fully aware of what action is being taken. He also suggested that a press release should be issued.

Councillor Finch referred to the remaining budget for Pest Control and stated that this was unlikely to be sufficient given the issues faced. Councillor Coleman proposed that any excess should come from the Site Maintenance budget. This was seconded by Councillor Finch and carried unanimously.

#### Water charges

The budget is as expected at this point. The problem on Greenside appears to have resolved itself.

#### Action Plan

Work at Rinkfield took up the majority of this budget but a good job has been achieved. There is £445 remaining in budget.

Councillor Coleman requested some further work to the budgetary control statement to ensure clarity in respect of the amount left to spend. Janine will feedback the request to the Treasurer.

Note: Minute 083/20/21 (Castle Hags Extension). It was agreed earlier in the meeting to discuss payment for new fencing posts under this item, however this was not discussed.

### **RESOLVED**

1. That expenditure of £655 be approved to remove asbestos from Rinkfield. Further asbestos at Coley Barn to be removed at the same time, if the quotation obtained is less than £1,000.
2. That an asbestos survey be arranged for all sites and a report presented to the next Committee meeting. Pierre to lead on this.
3. That repairs to a wall at Coley Barn be approved at a cost of £120.
4. That any shortfall in the Pest Control budget be made up from the Site Maintenance budget line.
5. Janine to feedback comments from Councillor Coleman regarding further work to the budgetary control statement.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **088/20/21**

Councillor Coleman understood there were currently no vacant allotment plots and requested confirmation. It was confirmed as correct.

#### Polytunnels

The position regarding polytunnels was queried. Janine advised she had prepared a policy which is on the KTC website. Tenants are required to contact KTC for permission but it is no longer necessary to go through SLDC Planning. Polytunnels currently on site have been considered during recent site visits and Janine will be writing to a tenant in respect of one greenhouse which is over the permitted size.

Verbal Abuse of KTC Staff

Pierre reported two incidences of verbal abuse he had received from an allotment holder whilst carrying out strimming work on site. Members discussed the appropriate of course of action and whether Committee should write to all allotment holders or individuals concerned. It was agreed Janine will contact CALC for further advice.

Tyres on Allotment Sites

Pierre reported a number of tyres on sites and asked Members to consider whether they felt it appropriate these be allowed. He pointed out that there was a removal cost involved if a vacating tenant left them behind. Councillor Archibald commented that tenants use tyres to grow produce in and felt it was a good way of recycling tyres. Following a general discussion it was agreed the use of tyres on plots continue to be allowed.

**RESOLVED**

Janine to contact CALC for advice in respect of the appropriate course of action following verbal abuse of staff by tenants.

**089/20/21****DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 7.54pm.

**Summary of Information, Resolutions and Recommendations to Council**

<b>Min</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Information/Resolution/Recommendation to Council</b>	
<b>084</b>	Rabbits at Town View	<b>RES</b>	That Janine approach SLDC for permission to have the rabbits at Town View allotments shot.
<b>085</b>	Fires on Greenside Allotments	<b>RES</b>	That Janine contact the Allotments Association to ascertain their policy on bonfires and report back to Committee.
<b>087</b>	Review of Spend Against Budget 2020/21	<b>RES</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That expenditure of £655 be approved to remove asbestos from Rinkfield. Further asbestos at Coley Barn to be removed at the same time, if the quotation obtained is less than £1,000.</li> <li>2. That an asbestos survey be arranged for all sites and a report presented to the next Committee meeting. Pierre to lead on this.</li> <li>3. That repairs to a wall at Coley Barn be approved at a cost of £120.</li> <li>4. That any shortfall in the Pest Control budget be made up from the Site Maintenance budget line.</li> <li>5. Janine to feedback comments from Councillor Coleman regarding further work to the budgetary control statement.</li> </ol>
<b>088</b>	AOB – Verbal Abuse	<b>RES</b>	Janine to contact CALC for advice in respect of the appropriate course of action following verbal abuse of staff by tenants.