



Allotment Sub Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on July 2nd, 2024, at 7pm

PRESENT

Councillors: Buxton, Elson, Sellars, Scott, Fairbairn (Chair until item 4, then stepped down from this sub-committee),
 Allotment tenant representative: Bill Bamberger, John Eyres
 Staff: Jim Brown (Head Groundsman), Marion Fox Goddard (Parish Clerk) & Allotment holders

1. Apologies

Cllr Marshall, Mr White (allotment tenant representative)

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Fairbairn - allotment holders.

3. Welcome Mr Bamberger and Introductions

Cllr Fairbairn welcomed Bill Bamberger (new allotment representative) and introduced the sub-committee members and staff.

4. Election of a new chair for the Allotment Sub- committee

Cllr Sellars was nominated and voted as Chair. From this point Cllr Sellars chaired the meeting.

5. Allotment holders' forum/ 8. New allotment agreement

During this item allotment reps and allotment holders from the public forum raised their concerns/queries regarding the new allotment agreement. The clerk attempted to address the concerns and read out responses to queries that had been raised prior to the meeting – full details are available in the agenda pack for the meeting which is available on the council [website](#). *Item 8 was pulled forward to this point of the meeting.*

Queries and responses summarised below. – items in bold will be recommended to full council on July 24th.

	Concern raised	Response
1	Clause A 8.1: "comply fully with all enactments, statutory instruments, local, parochial or other byelaws, orders or regulations affecting the Allotment Site."	I believe the concern raised about this is because allotment holders are not aware of enactments, statutory instruments, local, parochial or other byelaws, orders or regulations affecting the Allotment Site. This clause needs to remain in case there are any changes in the law or if the landowner gives the parish council notice that they want the land back (12 months' notice required). The requirements of tenants are included in the new agreement and schedule. No update to full council.
2	Clause A 8.4: "immoral purposes"	Immoral would cover antisocial so I suggest it is not necessary to change this. No update to full council.

3	Clause A 8.5: "The Tenant shall not enter onto any other plot at any time without the express permission of the relevant plot holder."	I don't think this is an unreasonable clause. Some allotment holders may be happy for any other allotment holder to enter their site but there may be others that are not. I'm sure they would understand if another allotment holder went onto their plot to rescue an animal or in an emergency. If permission has been given there is no problems for allotment holders to help each other out and go on each other's allotments. No update to full council.
4	Clause S 3.3: "The main access gate shall be closed and locked at all times."	There is divided opinion on this one. If you are alone on the allotment do you want anyone to wander in? Update to be recommended to full council: when you leave you must keep it locked if the ASC¹ agrees to recommend this to full council.
5	Clause S 5.2: "No hoses are to be used at any time."	Update to be recommended to full council: Hoses to be used sparingly and not to be left on. No sprinklers to be used.
6	Clause S 5.3: "No fires between the hours of 15.00 and 19.00 and 15.00 and dusk"	Update to be recommended to full council: Fires to be lit when the wind conditions are right with consideration to neighbouring properties.
7	Clause S 6.1: "dogs not allowed on site unless it is held at all times on a leash and remains on the tenant garden only"	There is divided opinion on this one. Some people fear dogs. I believe s6.1 is the best stance to start with on this as some allotment plots are not fenced off. If an allotment holder's plot is fenced/secure, it is suggested they use their own discretion if they 100% sure their dog will not get out or go out if someone else opens the gate. The clause allows the council to act if there ever is a problem with dogs not being managed responsibly on the site. No update to full council.
8	Clause S 8.2: "Only glass substitutes such as polycarbonate, Perspex or other alternatives may be used in any permitted structures."	Update to be recommended to full council: Glass greenhouses are permitted if they maintained to not be a danger to other users of the allotment site. All structures including polytunnels to be securely fixed.
9	Clause S 8.5: "The Council will not be held responsible for loss by accident, fire, theft or damage from Allotment Garden."	This is under the heading of Buildings and Structures. The council cannot be held responsible for the losses listed as the buildings and structures are the responsibility of the tenant and the council cannot monitor whether the gate is always locked. This is not an unreasonable clause. If there was an accident or fire which was directly due to the action of Balderton Parish Council, a claim could be sent to the council so this could be considered. No update to full council.
10	Clause S 9.2: "must cover any manure on the Allotment Garden which has not been dug"	Update to be recommended to full council: Manure heaps to be covered. Consideration of the nearby water course must be taken to not allow manure to leach into it. (Manure to be spread in the autumn and dug in in the spring).
11	Clause S10.3: "chemicals must be in compliance with all relevant legislation."	If allotment holders bring chemicals on to their plot, it is not unreasonable to ask them to comply with legislation regarding storage. New products are clearly labelled and if allotment tenants have anything that is not labelled or is old it is not unreasonable to expect allotment holders to

¹ ASC – Allotment Sub-committee

		check that they are being stored safely. Update to be recommended to full council: Gas to be added.
12	Clause S 11.1: "Tenant will endeavour to maintain the plot number in good order and ensure it is visible at all times."	Update to be recommended to full council: Plot number markers to always be visible and remain the property of Balderton Parish Council.
13	I don't live in Balderton – will I be made to give up my plot?	No - We would not ask anyone to give up their plot if they have moved out of Balderton since they were issued their plot.
14	Clause S2.4 – All paths must be kept to a minimum of 45cm	Update to be recommended to full council: Remove this clause
15	Clause 12.2 – cars temporary parking 15 minutes	Update to be recommended to full council: Allotment holders who have mobility issues or are disabled can contact the council office for a pass for their windscreen to evidence that permission has been given for them to park next to their allotment.
16	If I don't sign the new agreement, will I have to give up my allotment?	All allotment holders will need to sign the new agreement.

6. Minutes of the Allotment sub-committee held on February 6th, 2024

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

7. To receive and update on the actions from the February meeting

The following update was noted:

Item Number	Action	Update	Any further action needed?
2	<i>Sign to advertise allotment representative vacancy.</i>	A sign was added to the noticeboard and gate shortly after the meeting. Mr Bamberger offered to take the role. No further interest received.	No
10	<i>Obtain email addresses for all tenants</i>	We have contacted tenants and have email addresses for 75% of allotment holders (45 out of 60). We wish to get email addresses to minimise costs to allotment tenants (administration/postage costs). We appreciate that some people do not have email addresses but will continue to encourage tenants to let us have an email to avoid this affecting rent.	Request email address in next letter sent to all allotment holders.
10	<i>Vacant Plots and 'community plot'</i>	Plots that were vacant at the in January/February have been let - Plots 2a, 5b, 5c, 15a, 15b, 15c, 21b, 23a, 23c, 24b, and 24c. The Amenities Committee accepted the recommendation of the ASC ² for the 'community plot'. The shed, machinery and green waste has been removed from this plot and 2 quarter plots were created	Consider whether to combine 20b and 20c – see agenda item 10 on the 2/7/24 agenda)

² ASC- Allotment Sub-committee

		(20 b and 20c). 20b has been let. Plot 20c was offered this month but not taken due to the shade from the large apple tree next to it. The apple tree next to plot 20c remains available for all allotment holders to take apples.	
11	New signage and notice board for the site	Will be organised later in 2024/early 2025	
12	Fences	Investigate replacing the top strand of chain link on the fence	This will be done in the autumn when we can cut the briars.

9. Health and Safety on site

During item 8, Mr Eyres detailed some of his concerns with respect to the environment and health and safety. The clerk detailed that the risk assessment is being reviewed and the council's health and safety advisor will visit the site as part of this work.

10. Consideration of whether to offer plot 20c to the neighbouring plot

The sub-committee agreed to make the offer.

11. Explanation of how plots are handed over and what happens when a tenancy ends

The clerk explained that when an allotment is handed over a photo is taken so when a tenancy ends this can be compared with the end 'state' of the allotment This will be used to make an assessment of whether some of the bond will be kept to pay for clearing the plot (if it is left in the same state as when it was handed over or better the bond will be returned in full).

12. Whether to allow businesses/charities have plots on the site.

The subcommittee agreed to recommend to full council that businesses/charities should not be allocated allotments. Their use is for residents rather than organisations.

13. Allotment inspections

The next inspections will be done in September by Cllr Sellars, the Head Groundsman and the allotment representatives.

14. Suggestions for the next agenda

- i. Trees over hanging the site.
- ii. Moles
- iii. Community composting
- iv. Consideration of whether/how to offer ¼ holders more rather than having to go at the end of the waiting list.

The meeting closed at approximately 8.30pm.

Inspections: to be arranged for September.

Next Meeting: to be arranged in October


4/10/24