

**HONITON TOWN COUNCIL**  
**ALLOTMENTS WORKING GROUP**

**Notes of Meeting on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021 at 2.30pm**

**Present: Cllr Roy Coombs, Cllr John Taylor, Cllr P Carrigan, Cllr J Zarczynski, Cllr J McNally, Cllr H Hurford, Cllr S Keene, Cllr D Munge, Cllr J Bonetta, T Darrant, Heloise Marlow, Allan Cavill (NATSOC)**

**1. Resolutions from Full Council meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

HM read out the Resolution20/223. There were no comments.

**2. Construction Update Report**

HM confirmed that she had visited the allotment site prior to the meeting with Allan Cavill from NATSOC. Banks Construction were making good progress and HM had sent out some photographs of the site earlier. Banks had estimated a 2 month build and had started work mid-April. As such HM was hoping for a mid-June finish.

**3. Working group representative re site visits.**

TD suggested that a member of the WG be appointed to attend site meetings with officers who would still provide the contractor with instructions. There were no volunteers, and it was agreed that Cllrs could visit the site at any time within reason, or view it from the permissive path.

**4. Plot sizes and numbers**

AC proposed a new site layout – as per attached. Having been to the site he would suggest moving the proposed composting toilet and the bike rack to the entrance of the allotments site which would then free up an additional plot. He advised against having paths between plots as these raise health and safety issues and maintenance issues. Rather than trying to minimise the risk, this can be removed by designing out the risk as per his plan which would give all plot holders access to the roadway. Individual tenants can put in paths on their own plots which they would be responsible for.

The following points were discussed:

- The demographics of allotment holders. AC advised that the average is now 40-42, lots of families and women who want to be eco-friendly, grow organic food.
- Whether at a cost of £54,000 the Council should be supporting a very expensive leisure activity for a small number of people.
- HTC has a statutory duty to try and provide allotments where there is a demand.
- The Council's annual budget of £2,500 for allotments.
- Whether the proposed ½ plots should be further sub-divided into ¼ plots.
- The evidence that there is little demand for ¼ plots.

- The number on the waiting list.
- Whether the waiting list could be released to an Allotment Association.
- When calculating the rent, the capital investment should not be included, only the running costs.

Members of the WG unanimously **RESOLVED** to recommend adoption of the amended site plan.

Proposed by Terry Darrant and seconded by Cllr Zarczynski.

## **5. Provision of allocation of allotments**

Member discussed the following:

- GDPR and the current waiting list.
- Whether the waiting list could be transferred to the Allotment Association once formed.
- The registration and constitution of any Allotment Association.
- How to transfer the management of the allotments to an Allotment Association.
- Holding a meeting with the plot holders to form an Allotment Association.

Members of the WG unanimously **RESOLVED** to recommend the allocation of the plots to those on the waiting list according to a first come first served basis.

Proposed by Cllr Coombs and seconded by Cllr Carrigan.

## **6. Draft tenancy agreement with HTC including fees**

AC confirmed that the tenancy agreement with the plot holders would need to include the terms of the lease with the landowner and any other site-specific clauses. It was confirmed that the allotments were temporary allotments due to the clawback clause in the lease with Combe Estates. AC recommended that HTC prepare a business plan which will provide details of the actual costs to the Council to include the cost of administering the site – that part of the costs would fall away once the site was transferred to an Allotment Association. He recommended a cultivation policy, a policy regarding what could be brought onto the plots and taken of them, and what size and colour sheds would be allowed. In the first instance the tenancy agreement would be between the Council and the plot holders until transferred over to an Allotment Association.

Members of the WG unanimously **RESOLVED** to recommend that HTC enter into tenancy agreements with the plot holders until management of the site can be transferred to an Allotment Association.

Proposed by Terry Darrant and seconded by Cllr R Coombs.

## **7. Formation of a new Honiton Allotment Association**

Any Allotment Association will need to be properly constituted with a constitution. AC recommended that there be 2-3 Cllr representatives to ensure continuous representation. Members again discussed whether to provide the Allotment Association with a copy of the HTC waiting list. It was confirmed that whilst HTC would be devolving authority to manage the allotments to an association, the Council retains responsibility at all times. Retaining access to the waiting list would retain control on the allocation of plots in chronological order. Any disputes would be dealt with by HTC.

Members of the WG unanimously **RESOLVED** to maintain the administration of the waiting list by HTC.

Proposed by Terry Darrant and seconded by Cllr Carrigan.

## **8. Correspondence to those on waiting list**

Members of the WG **RESOLVED** unanimously to write to the first 28 on the waiting list requesting confirmation as to whether they wanted a ½ plot or ¼ plot. Once those responses had been received, depending on the response, the remainder of the plots can be offered a second tranche on the waiting list.

## **9. Update on Clapper Lane Allotments**

Cllr Coombs provided the [attached update](#).

Heloise Marlow

Deputy Town Clerk

Honiton Town Council