

## Allotment & Environment Committee

13 February 2023

4pm Town Council Offices, Kingsway, Bishop Auckland

**Present:** Cllr Michael Siddle (Chair), and Cllr Sam Zair, Cllr Andrew Legge

**Also Present:** Sarah Harris, Town Clerk

**AEC38/23 - Apologies for absence** – were received from Cllr Kimm Lawson and Councillor K Fryatt (Eliot)

**Resolved:** that the members accepted the apologies for absence.

**AEC39/23 - Declarations of interest** – no declarations made

**AEC40/23 - Minutes of the previous meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 were presented**

**Resolved** – that members agreed that these were a true record.

**AEC41/23 – Public Participation**

**Resolved** – that members noted there were no members of the public present

*Exclusion of Press and Public In accordance with the provisions of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council do now exclude the press and public for the remaining item on the agenda by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted since publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest.*

**AEC40/23 – Consideration of enforcement action to be taken against allotment tenants following incident on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024**

The Town Clerk presented a report relating to an incident between allotment tenants resulting in a server breach of the tenancy. The tenancy is held by a charitable organisation rather than an individual person.

**Resolved:** that Members thanked the Town Clerk for the swift action in relation to investigation of the actions of the tenant, and agreed to escalate to full council relating to the nature for of the tenancy and the incident with the following recommendations:

- Formal Warnings be issued to both organisation Tenancies and the Tenancy on which the organisation Coordinator is a co-worker, which will detail the breaches and concerns of the council including not only the distress caused by the actions to the tenants affected but wider site tenants. Any further breaches in rules or regulations will result in an immediate eviction from the site. The Formal Warning will remain in place indefinitely.
- The organisation will provide the Council with an updated risk assessment for site activities within two weeks.
- That organisation will actively work with the Town Council Team to ensure that appropriate policies are in place to ensure that staff, volunteers, clients and other Council tenants are kept safe, this includes having clearly identifiable staff and volunteers, appropriate health and safety paperwork for all activities, as well as sanctions in place for any breach of the agreed policies.

Signed chair  
Feb 2024

- A quarterly report will be issued to the Town Council on organisation Activities, detailing the support given to the community, and statistics relating to project success.
- Any incident affecting the organisation Plots such as damaged fencing, will be immediately reported to the Town Clerk, with an agreed timeline for repair.
- organisation will reinstate and replace missing items from the fence and rotavate the plot within agreed timelines with the Town Clerk, and when all appropriate Health and Safety assessments are in place.
- The Town Council will issue a generic update to all site tenants advising them that the Council do take breaches of rules and regulations seriously, and provide reassurance messages and gentle reminder that they too need to abide by their obligations surrounding their tenancies.
- The Town Council will look to develop a robust set of additional rules and regulations for 'organisational' tenancies, which as minimum will include details around the required Health and Safety Paperwork to be in place, ensuring that 'staff' are clearly identifiable, that users only access their designated plots, and that the organisation has appropriate disciplinary action in place to address the actions of a 'staff member or volunteer' which has caused the breach.