

**Allotment & Environment Committee**

**10 Sept 2025**

**Town Council Offices, Kingsway, Bishop Auckland**

**Present:** Cllr Michael Siddle (Chair), Cllr Rob Elliott and Cllr Lesley Zair

**Also Present:** Sarah Harris (Clerk), Vicki Booth (Deputy Clerk) reps from Pollards Allotment Association and Edge Hill Allotment Association and South Church Self-Managed Association

**AEC009/25 - Apologies for absence** – Cllr Fox, Harker & Legge

**Resolved:** that the members noted and accepted the apologies

**AEC010/25- Declaration of Interest** - no declarations were made.

**Resolved:** that no declarations were made.

**AEC011/25- Action Log** – All updated besides changes on the terms of reference.

**Resolved:** that members noted the updates and requested the action log be available on the website with the minutes.

**AEC012/25- Allotment report –**

**a) Landscape** – discussed the screenshot of from the Scribe. Update since report written reduces the waiting list from 66 to 47 (equating to 25 individuals). Large increase in applications received since the online form was introduced 4 months ago. Update given regarding vacant plots, unusable plots and suspended sites.

**Resolved:** that members noted the update

**b) Cultivate 4 Life** – an overview was given regarding a successful season on the CIC's plots.

**Resolved:** that members note the update

**c) Summer Inspections** – an overview was given over the warnings and follow up letters issued and the number of NTQ's that is anticipated to be enforced. The enforcement seemed to be an even split between long standing tenants and new tenants.

**Resolved:** Members said consideration needs to be made to ensure that new tenants are aware of the amount of work and time required for a site.

**d) Tenancies 2025-26** - Update was given re moving onto email where possible and the teething issues that may come with this and the extra option to pay by a link.

**Resolved:** that members noted the update

Signed chair

**e) Rules & Regulations:** gave an overview of the amended rules proposed including out of area tenants, removing duplication, maximum two plots, starter plots if available, co-worker update, voting on town council business, deposit for new tenants, legacy plots, water update, animal policies, waste, security.

**Resolved:** that members noted the update and accepted the revised rules and regulations and the supplementary policies for Horses/ponies, Poultry and pigeons.

**f) Site Works & Maintenance** – the allocated funds for this tenancy year was discussed

**Resolved:** that members noted the update

**g) Site association/site meetings** - advised all dates have been notified and agreed

**Resolved:** that members noted the update

**h) Allotment Awards:**

**Resolved:**

**i) Transfer for in year tenancy funds:** will be on the next payment list

**Resolved:** that members note the update

**j) Allotment Rent Rates 2026-27:** that an update on income was summarised and the budget set aside for allotments

**Resolved:** that members agree that the rent to increase to 0.31p per sqm (2p increase)

**k) Environment:** an overview was given regarding the floral displays, flower beds and hanging baskets and what members would like next year.

**Resolved:** that members would like to see better community work, to do a community call for action and this needs to be done shortly.

**AEC0013/25 Public Participation** – that participants asked questions relevant to their allotment site

**Resolved:** that the Chair answered questions proposed and further information can be given at the 1-1 meetings in next couple of weeks.

**AEC0014/25- 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.**

**AEC015/25 – strategy**

Long term strategy was discussed including leases, and the draft terms of reference for allotment strategy working group and an environment working group were presented.

**Resolved that:**

Members adopted the working group TOR and to go to full Council for membership

Members agreed and noted that noted that de-designated of Broken Banks has been approved and a process for consideration of sale adopted and a valuer has been appointed and will meet on site on the 18<sup>th</sup> Sept.

Signed chair