



Bishop Auckland Town Council

The Four Clocks Centre, 154a Newgate Street,
Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham DL14 7EH

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Town Clerk: David Anderson

TO: Members of the **ALLOTMENTS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Councillor Fleming, (Chairman).
Councillors Cullen, Blackburn, Tucker and vacancy.

All other Members of the Town Council for information

Dear Councillor,

I hereby give you notice that a meeting of the **Allotments and Environment Committee** will be held in the Town Clerk's Office at the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **Tuesday, 4th September 2018** immediately following the meeting of the Finance Committee, but no earlier than 6.00 pm

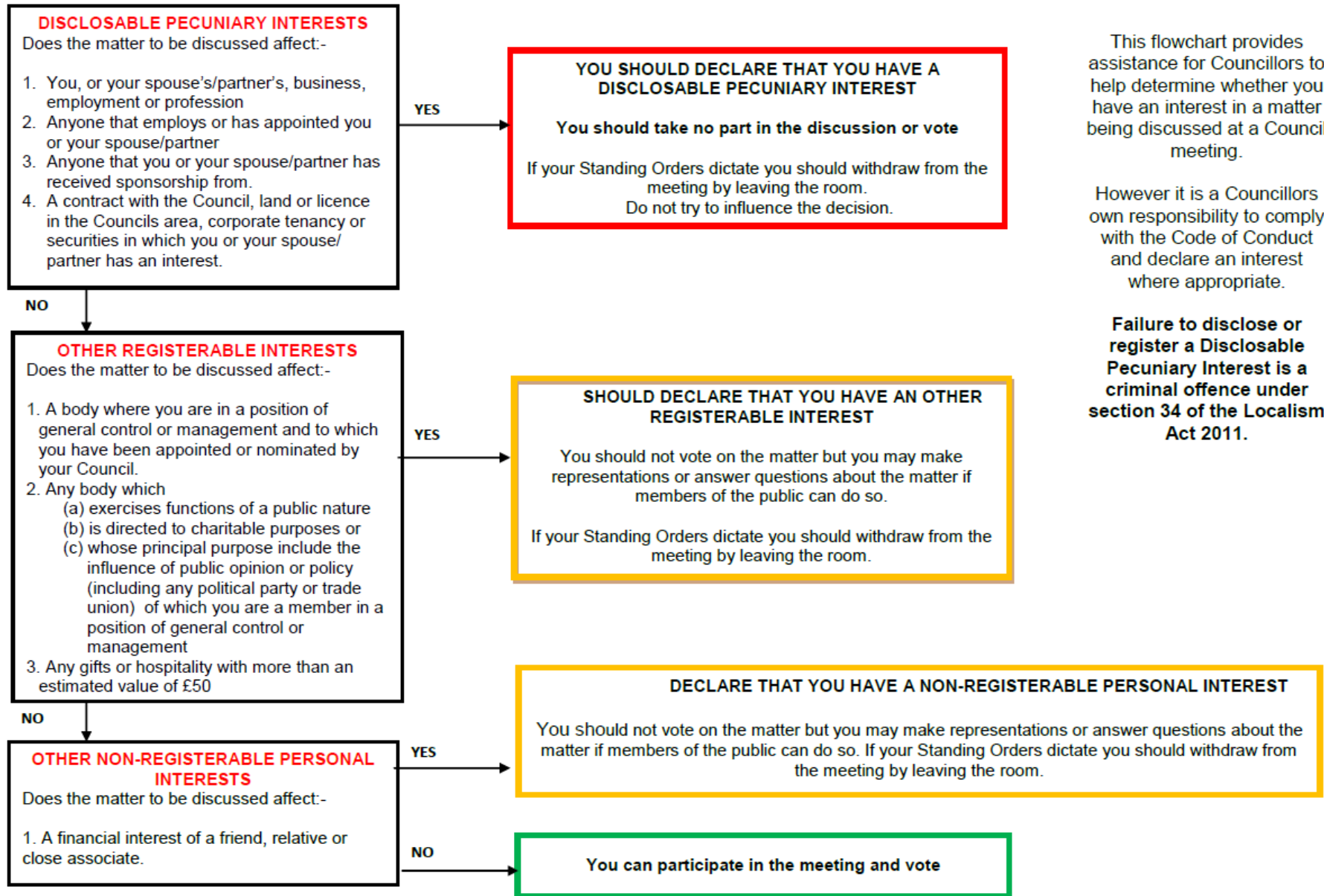
Yours sincerely,

David Anderson
Town Clerk

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
To invite members to declare any interests they may have in any matter identified for discussion in the meeting.
- 3. Public Participation**
To hear from any members of the public subject to Public Participation Policy
- 4. Report of Town Clerk**
 1. Pest Control, Woodhouse Allotment Site

DO I HAVE AN INTEREST?



This flowchart provides assistance for Councillors to help determine whether you have an interest in a matter being discussed at a Council meeting.

However it is a Councillors own responsibility to comply with the Code of Conduct and declare an interest where appropriate.

Failure to disclose or register a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is a criminal offence under section 34 of the Localism Act 2011.

BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL
ALLOTMENTS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

4th SEPTEMBER 2018

REPORT OF TOWN CLERK

1. Pest Control, Woodhouse Close Allotment Site

Members will be aware that pest control measures have been in place at Woodhouse Close Allotment site for 2 years. The current contract ended on 14th August 2018. The last visit being made on 1st August 2018.

An intensive pest control regime was first instigated in 2016 as a result of reports of rat activity by neighbouring properties. Durham County Council (DCC) undertook a site survey and recommended an intensive riddance programme consisting of weekly visits to the worst effected plots, followed by a period of monthly visits once the problem was under control.

During the first year DCC had to undertake a number of riddance programmes to bring the problem under control. A riddance programme has also been undertaken during the last year. Currently there are 40 bait stations on the site which are inspected on a monthly basis with poison replenished where necessary.

The Pest Control Officer has advised that the problem is under control, however rats will never be eradicated on the site. The main reason for this being the availability of food, i.e pigeon and hen feed and also in some cases the creation of muck heaps. It has also been suggested that the general condition of some plots provide harbourage for rats. It is stressed that there are some very good well maintained plots on the site.

The following advice has been given to tenants and this can be repeated when the new pest control contract is agreed.

- 1. General tidy up of all plots and footpaths** is required to remove any material such as timber, old carpets and stockpiled materials, which could provide harbourage for rats. This will need to be done before the pest control officer's first visit.

A site inspection will be undertaken in due course to ensure that gardens have been tidied to an acceptable standard to help control rats and other pests.

(N.B. a skip was last provided on 14th June 2018)

2. Pest Control Treatments

Pest control officers will use high strength treatments that are not available to the general public. You should therefore not put down your own poisons. This will not assist with the treatment and may have a detrimental effect as poisons available to the public are of a lower strength and have been known to increase rats resistance.

3. Storage of food, seed, bulbs

Hen and pigeon feed, seeds and bulbs etc should be stored in rodent proof containers.

4. Compost bins

If you have a compost bin you should turn the contents regularly. Never put household waste, meat, diary, bones, cooked foods etc in your compost bin as this will attract rats.

5. Disposal of Hen/Pigeon Waste

Hen/pigeon waste should be kept in a rodent proof container and disposed of on a regular basis so that it does not provide harbourage for rats and other pests.

Given the continuing problem with rats on this site and the vicinity of houses, it is suggested that the contract with Durham County Council be renewed as an ongoing contract. The service has been reliable and Pest Control Officers have responded to the increased needs of the site whenever necessary.

The cost of the contract, which includes the servicing of 40 rat boxes on a monthly basis and provision of 2 riddance programmes, is £2,263. For comparison the cost for 2017/18 was £2,244.

RECOMMENDED: That the pest control service at Woodhouse Close be renewed with Durham County Council as an ongoing contract.