

## **Allotment Working Party – 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018, 6.30pm**

### **Attendees:**

Councillor Steve Allsopp (SA)  
Councillor Paul Dixon (PD)  
Jane Allison (JA) - Allotment representative  
Pat Malloney (PM) - Allotment representative  
Dave Thompson (DT) - Allotment representative  
Ruth Wakeley (RW)– Parish Allotments Administrator

#### **1. Overview of ongoing allotments actions.**

- The Parish Ranger is now working on the allotments sites to make improvements in addition to play park inspections.
- There has been a good response to the vacant plots being offered from the waiting lists.
- Plots are being cleared on behalf of new and existing tenants regarding rubbish including asbestos left from previous tenants.
- Inspections regarding ‘active cultivation’ of tenanted plots have begun on the sites. This is slower than hoped due to Parish Ranger unexpectedly being away for a month.
- Strimming of overgrown vacant plots has begun.

#### **2. Rotovating plots for new tenants**

- It was previously recommended by the Parish Chair to encourage new tenants to remain on the existing vacant plots by offering to trim and/or rotovate an overgrown plot being offered.
- Finding a company to rotovate all year around has been difficult. However, two of the three companies contacted can offer this service. It was proposed that Greenshawe be offered the contract with a review of performance after the initial list of plots has been rotovated.
- This recommendation will be proposed at the next Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting.

#### **3. Non-parish resident fee rates.**

- The current fees for non-residents is £61 per year. A gradual rise of fees over three years for existing tenants who are not parish residents was proposed. Starting with £70 from 1 October 2018 with £10 increments for the next two years.
- Increased costs for maintenance of the allotments was also considered. Should the water company increase costs to supply water, for example, the Parish would look at fees prior to the three increments.
- This above recommendation will be proposed at the next Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting.

#### **4. Waiting lists**

- Following a complaint from a resident outside of the Parish, Cllr Tim Swinyard asked that the Councillors review the waiting list rules which give priority to South Swindon parish residents.

- It was agreed that due to the South Swindon parish residents paying towards the upkeep of the allotments as part of the council tax/precept, the position would not change.
- The Parish Clerk to contact Cllr Swinyard with the decision.
- This recommendation will be proposed at the next Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting.

#### 5. **Weed spraying on allotment pathways –**

- Historically this has been done each year by Swindon Borough Council. A request for this to continue was received by tenants via a few Site Reps.
- It was proposed that this should continue to keep the weeds from transferring onto the tenant's plots.
- This recommendation will be taken to the next Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting.

#### 6. **Parklands water trough**

- Two tenants from the above allotment site requested an additional water trough for the 10 plot site.
- Having looked at the ratio of plots per water troughs for the other sites it was agreed that one trough for 10 plots was suitable. Therefore, the proposal was for no change.
- This recommendation will go to the next Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting.

#### 7. **Fencing**

- Due to deer getting on site & occasional break-ins, permission was sought for capital costs to be spent on securing the following sites:-
  - i. Broome Manor – pallistrade fencing proposed .
  - ii. Shrivenham Road – additional planting additional planting to create a denser hedgerow for all seasons.
  - iii. Rushey Platt – additional planting to create a denser hedgerow particularly during winter.
- Broome Manor Extension site also has a few small gaps that would benefit from either chain fencing or hedgerow plants.
- It was recognised that security of the allotment sites is paramount. Therefore, it was recommended RW source prices for the pallistrade fencing and necessary planting.
- The request for the use of capital costs be taken to the next Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting.

#### 8. **Rats & Foxes**

- The Parish office has received reports of rats at Glenwood Close and foxes at Bisley and Hatton Grove allotment sites.
- It was suggested that the foxes could be re-located and the rats be removed.
- It was recommended that advice be sought from Wiltshire Wildlife trust and Prokill Ltd about this issue including advice about best practices and hygiene.
- RW to contact Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and Prokill Ltd and action accordingly with approval by the Clerk.

**9. Site reps comments and queries**

- DT was concerned about number of vacant and overgrown tenanted plots. RW and the Parish Ranger are already actioning this in earnest.
- PM reiterated the concern about the uncultivated 'tenanted' plots.

Meeting closed 7.40pm