



Chard Town Council

THE GUILDHALL, FORE STREET, CHARD, SOMERSET TA20 1PP
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Mayor: Cllr Jenny Kenton Acting Proper Officer: Adrian Turner

Minutes of the Allotment Forum held on Wednesday 26 April 2023 in the Town Hall at 12.30pm.

Present:

Cllr: J Baker (Chair)

In Attendance:

Adrian Turner – Acting Proper Officer
Gail Chadwick - Acting Responsible Financial Officer
Sarah Steggall – Admin Assistant

There were 11 members of the public present and no members of the press present.

The meeting started at 12.30pm

Apologies were received from Mike Lee.

JB confirmed the minutes of the last Allotment Forum held on 11 January 2023.

Matters arising from the last meeting 11 January 2023

Water Tanks-on going issues with vandalism and filling of tanks. Amenities team to inspect the water tanks.

Locks - Lock has been replaced.

Fences & Hedges - Checked at last allotment inspection and will be checked again at the next inspection in May

Sheds & Greenhouse Policy - to be discussed at the AGM.

Notice Boards - Quotes for a separate Chard Town Council notice board were obtained. This was deemed too expensive. It was agreed that Chard Town Council notices can be put on the Allotment Holders Association notice board.

Rental Payments - Breakdown of the account figures was provided by Gail Chadwick, Responsible Financial Officer.

Points raised - Did the payment for the lease include the children's play area? Yes, currently, but this will be separated in future accounts.

Staffing costs for dealing with the allotments will now be included in the accounts.

Responsible Financial Officer will provide a simplified version of accounts/costings at the AGM.

Car Park Extension - Adrian Turner reported plans are in place. Looking to source free stones/chippings. Also, deep ridges outside of gate to be levelled off.

Lease - increased by 13% per annum with effect from March 2023.

Rent increase - will be discussed at the AGM. A year's notice is required for any rent increase.

Report from Acting Proper Officer

There are 181 managed plots at Chardstock Allotments. 164 plots are full size and 17 half sized.

2023 - 11 vacant plots (10 full size & 1 half size)

2022 - 13 vacant plots (12 full & 1 half size)

2019 - 10 Vacant plots (5 full size & 5 half size)

93.4% Occupancy

Allotment Inspection took place on 8 February 2023

Letters sent to Allotment Holders: 12

Next inspection May 2023

Number of Plots Terminated

1 Oct 22 to 21 April 23 -17

1 Oct 21 to 30 Sep 22 - 22

1 Oct 20 to 30 Sep 21 -20

New Allotment Holders

1 Oct 22 to 21 April 23 - 12

1 Oct 21 to 30 Sep 22 - 16

1 Oct 22 to 8 Dec 22 - 3

Waiting Lists

12 applicants and 10 current allotment tenancy holders would like another plot.

Reporting issues to allotment tenants - it was discussed whether tenant holders could be contacted by email, to be notified of any allotment issues and to save postage costs. Sarah Steggall to look into the best way to obtain email addresses.

Budget report - accounts were provided by Gail Chadwick. Going forward the accounts will include staffing costs and a simplified version of the accounts will be provided at the next AGM.

Points raised-

Do the allotments have to make a profit? No, but they should break even.

What is the License fee? This is the fee paid by all new allotment tenants, a one-off fee.

Could a breakdown of costs eg: lease/staffing costs/postage/maintenance be provided? Gail Chadwick agreed to produce a report for the AGM.

Lease payments for allotments and playground will be separated. On a pro-rata basis.

Any Other Business

How many warning letters are sent out to tenants before they receive a notice to quit? Sarah Steggall will clarify at the next meeting.

Allotment Association have organised a clean-up of the site during the summer. Adrian Turner has agreed to provide dumpy bags/black bin sacks and the amenities team will remove the rubbish. Bob Adams to inform Sarah Steggall of the exact date so this can be organised.

Bee Hives-is it possible to have a bee hive on a tenant's plot? Sarah Steggall will look into the current regulations.

Dead Ash Trees- Adrian Turner to look into removing the trees when budget allows.

Next Forum meeting TBA. AGM will be held in October.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 1.25pm.