

BRANDON & BYSHOTTLES PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6 GOATBECK TERRACE, LANGLEY MOOR, DURHAM
ON TUESDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER 2021, AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs Bonner (in the Chair)
and Councillors Bell, Grantham, Jamieson, Sims and Turnbull

AII. 19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

AII. 20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Elmer and Turnbull.

RESOLVED: To receive the apologies.

AII. 21 COCKHOUSE LANE – REQUEST FOR SKIP

A tenant from the above mentioned allotment site had requested a skip for the site.

RESOLVED: To recommend approving the provision of a skip for the site.

:To recommend that the Allotments Officer organises the provision of a skip and writes to all tenants to inform them.

: To recommend that the Community Highways Worker is present to discard of any rubbish on paths and around the allotment site, also to ensure that only allotment tenants are using the skip.

AII. 22 BROOMPARK ALLOTMENT SITE – PLOT 5 - REQUEST TO ERECT A GREENHOUSE

A tenant from plot 5 at Broompark allotment site had requested permission to erect a greenhouse – dimensions 3 metres x 3 metres

RESOLVED: To recommend that the Allotments Officer writes to the tenant to inform him that his request has been approved on the condition that the greenhouse be kept in good condition and removed at the end of the tenancy unless instructed otherwise.

AII. 23 LANGLEY GROVE – PEST CONTROL UPDATE

Following several complaints from residents regarding the presence of rats on the allotment site, Durham County Council carried out a short intense cycle of pest control treatments. Following this, the Allotments Officer requested an update from the Pest Control team.

RESOLVED: To recommend that the Allotment Officer writes to all tenants to inform them that the cycle of Pest Control treatments has now been carried out, and that all tenants must endeavour to take all steps to minimise rat presence on the site, particularly the grazing tenants.

: To recommend reviewing the situation regarding rats and present findings at the next Allotment Committee Meeting.

All. 24 LOW BROWNEY

a) Spare land update

The Allotments Officer updated the Members that confirmation had been received from Durham County Council that a section of spare land situated next to the allotments site, does in fact belong to the Parish Council. A garage located on the land had been removed due to health and safety concerns at a cost of £1000.00 + VAT.

RESOLVED: To take for information.

b) Request from tenant regarding spare land

The tenant from plot 43, plot located next to the spare land mentioned above, had requested permission to use the spare land as an extension of his allotment plot. There is currently no dividing fence between plot 43 and the spare land and the tenant had carried out a vast amount of work in order to tidy the land up.

RESOLVED: To recommend granting permission to the tenant to take tenancy of the newly established plot on the grounds that they pay rent for the additional plot.

: To recommend that in the event that the tenant relinquishes tenancy of either plot then the plot would be split and the responsibility to erect a dividing fence would be with the new tenants.

All. 25 COMMERCIAL STREET – COMPLAINTS FROM RESIDENT

The Allotments Officer informed the Members that numerous complaints from a resident had been received. The complaints were in relation to: noise nuisance from ducks, noise nuisance from cockerels, caravans on plots, barbed wire on plots, fires, plots being untidy and the erection of sheds. Following a site visit the Allotments Officer sent a letter to all tenants reminding them of multiple rules in the agreements.

RESOLVED: To recommend that the Allotments Officer advises the resident that they should contact Environmental Health in relation to the noise nuisance from the ducks. Following their investigations, if the Parish Council are issued with a noise nuisance complaint, to contact the tenant to inform him and request that the ducks are removed from the allotment site.

AII. 26 WATERHOUSES GRAZING – ISSUES REGARDING ACCESS TO LAND

A grazing tenant had contacted the Parish Council to report access issues, due to cars parking in front of the Bridleway which is used to access the grazing land.

RESOLVED: To recommend that the Allotment Officer informs the tenant that as the road which the cars are parking on does not belong to the Parish Council, the Parish Council is unable to assist with the matter. To advise that the tenant should try to resolve the matter with the car owners or alternatively contact Durham County Council as they may own the land and be in a better position to assist.

AII. 27 LOW MEADOWFIELD – UPDATE REGARDING ACCESS CONCERNS - PLOTS 7/8/9/10/11

Following enquiries into the ownership of the road used to access the above mentioned allotment site, advice was sought from CDALC Solicitors. The solicitor advised that because the access road had been used regularly for more than the required amount of years, a permanent right of way had been established, meaning that residents are unable to prevent tenants from accessing the road and any attempt to obstruct the right of way would leave residents liable for damages.

RESOLVED: To recommend that a meeting be arranged between the Allotment Officer, the resident, the Meadowfield Ward Councillors and Chair, at the Parish Council offices, to discuss the matter.

: To recommend that following the meeting, the Allotment Officer carries out site visits with contractors to determine costs to erect the required fences and establish a means of access through an allotment plot to the 5 vacant plots.

AII. 28 HAMILTON ROW – COCKERELS

Following a letter which was sent to all tenants at Hamilton Row allotment site, reminding the tenants about the rules as stated in our agreement, about the keeping of cockerels. Several complaints were received from residents and an online petition was also received, all in support of allowing the cockerels to remain on the site. A meeting was held with the Chair, Esh Winning Ward Members, the Allotments Officer and the allotment tenant. The issue was discussed and it was resolved to allow the cockerels to remain on site until the item could be discussed at an Allotment Committee Meeting.

RESOLVED: To recommend that the Allotment Officer writes to all tenants at the above mentioned allotment site to inform them that they are able to keep cockerels on the site on the understanding that they carry out measures to minimise noise. Also on the basis that if precautions are not carried out and any further complaints are received, then the Council withholds the right to request that tenants remove the cockerels.

: To recommend that subject of cockerels be re-assessed on an individual site basis and that the allotment agreements be altered to correlate with findings.



All. 29 ALLOTMENT AGREEMENTS – DISCUSSION REGARDING UPDATING AGREEMENTS

The Allotment Officer had requested that all allotment agreements be updated, taking into consideration individual site concerns, issues and requirements.

RESOLVED: To recommend that the Allotments Officer sends a copy of the present agreement to all Councillors and requests that any ideas or recommendations be received by a specified date. Following which the Allotment Officer should work with Members to re-draft individual agreements.

All. 30 EMPIRE FIELD – REQUEST FOR FURTHER SKIP

A tenant at Empire Field allotment site had requested the provision of a third skip.

RESOLVED: To recommend that the Allotment Officer informs the tenant that the Parish Council does not provide any more than two skips per year per site. As the Allotment Officer will be organising a skip for Cockhouse Lane allotment site, under the circumstances permission will be given to the tenant to use the skip provided for this site, on this occasion only.

All. 31 BLACK ROAD

a) Update on Fence

Following a previous update from the Allotments Officer regarding the perimeter fence at the above mentioned allotment site, Tesco have now rectified all issues relating to the fence, including: Stabilizing the fence and covering the water pipe. The Manager at Tesco has informed the Allotments Officer that any future work required would now be the responsibility of the Parish Council. The only remaining issue relating to the fence is that the field gate has dropped, the Allotments Officer has instructed the contractor to rectify.

RESOLVED: To take for information.

b) Tree inspections

The Parish Council had recently been informed by staff at Langley Moor Primary School that a branch from a tree located on the allotment site had snapped off and landed in the school grounds. The branch has subsequently been removed. Following this the Allotment Officer has requested that a tree specialist survey the trees on site as soon as possible.

RESOLVED: To recommend that the Allotments Officer reports the tree specialist findings back to the Members and proceeds with any urgent work required.

All. 32 GARAGE AT LANGLEY GROVE

The Parish Council had been informed that a tenant who had erected a garage on Parish Council land, at the above mentioned allotment site, had sadly passed away. The tenants wife had requested information on what would happen with the garage going forward.

RESOLVED: To recommend that the Allotment Officer contacts the tenants wife to inform her that the options are: The tenants wife can take over tenancy of the garage if she wishes, alternatively she can gift the garage to the Parish Council or she can sell the garage on the understanding that it must be removed from Parish Council land at her cost.

All. 33 DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF QUOTATIONS FOR WORK AT THE FOLLOWING ALLOTMENT SITES:

a) Low Browney – Perimeter Fence Plot 43 / Spare Land

3 quotes for a boundary fence at the above mentioned allotment plot were obtained.

RESOLVED: To recommend that a 1.2 metre boundary fence is erected at the front of the plot and two 1.2 metre high pedestrian gates.
: To recommend awarding the contract to Kevin Wilson Gardening Services.

b) Folds Close - Notice Board

Following the removal of the previous notice board due to health and safety concerns. 2 quotes for a new notice board to be erected at the above mentioned allotment site were obtained.

RESOLVED: To recommend that a new standard size notice board be erected.
: To recommend awarding the contract to Wharton Landscapes.

The meeting closed at 10.45 am

Signed 

Date 17/9/21