



# CHILTON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Chilton Town Council Allotment  
held at Hutton House, Chilton, County Durham, on  
Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 10.30am

Chair: *Councillor S.Sutherland*  
Present: *E. Bruce, J. Houlihan, S. Reece*  
Members of the public: 0  
Finance & Admin Officer: A. Hall (Minutes)

## ALL1.01/25. APOLOGIES

None received

## ALL2.01/25 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

## ALL3.01/25 MEMBER DISPENSATION

None.

## ALL4.01/25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public in attendance

## ALL5.01/25 MINUTES OF 21<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2024

The minutes of the meetings held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were reviewed by the Committee and approved as a true record.

Proposed Cllr. S. Sutherland, Seconder Cllr. E. Bruce

## ALL6.01/25 REPORT ON NUMBER OF TENANTS TO PAY AND VACANCIES

Members were informed there were 2 people who had accepted allotments but had not signed a tenancy agreement or paid the annual fees despite numerous attempts at communicating with them.

**Action:** Write letters informing the applicants they have until 31st January 2025 to respond or it will be assumed they no longer want the allotments and they will be reallocated.

## ALL7.01/25 CAMERA SURVEILLANCE

Proposal to install cameras at various sites to monitor and deter fly tipping and antisocial behaviour. Members discussed the placement of cameras, with a budget of £399 to purchase cameras and relevant signs.

**Action:** to purchase 5 wildlife cameras and CCTV signs.

## ALL8.01/25 RODENTICIDE

Members were informed that we paid for someone to attend this training. Meeting to be arranged through the Town Clerk to put a plan into action and confirm costs for this project. Members agreed this can be actioned without going to the next meeting, unless unforeseen issues arose from the meeting.

**Action:** AH & JD to meet with potential contractor.

#### ALL9.01/25 END OF TENANCY PROCEDURES

It was agreed that at the end of a tenancy, once a final date has been agreed with the leaving tenant, a councillor and/or officer should attend the allotment and take photographs within 2 days of the end date of the tenancy. Photographs should then be taken at the beginning of any tenancy to show the condition of the allotment.

**Action:** Procedure to be drawn up (AH)

#### ALL10.01/25 FENCING WEST CHILTON TERRACE

Concerns had been raised at the Full Council meeting regarding the use of Heras fencing as perimeter fencing on allotments and their long term efficiency. **Agreed:** for a report to be produced for Full Council to make a decision on the types of fencing, costs, pros and cons and lifespan of each product (AH). **Proposed:** Cllr Reece, **Seconder:** Cllr Bruce

#### ALL11.01/25 REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Members were informed there had been storm damage to the perimeter fencing on WCT108 (down the side track). A quote had been received for £1,000. It was felt that this needed to be actioned as soon as possible.

**Action:** AH to contact contractor and arrange repair. **Proposed:** Cllr Sutherland **Seconder:** Cllr Houlihan

#### ALL12.01/25 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

No further reports.

#### ALL13.01/25 TENANCY AGREEMENT DOCUMENTATION 2025-26

Members were given an amended Data Collection form which included a request for a DEFRA registration number if birds are kept and a question regarding keeping of structures after the end of tenancy. Members were also given a new page for the handbook – new items were around keeping of bees, allotment site keys and the new regulations from DEFRA on keeping birds. One amendment was agreed, to include the words in the section on beekeeping ‘From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025, it has been agreed that the Town Council will allow bees to be kept on allotments, *if all conditions have been met*’.

#### ALL14.01/25 REVIEW OF FEES 26/27

Proposal to increase allotment fees by 5% to cover inflation and utility costs. Discussion on the rationale for fee increases and the need for clear communication to tenants. Agreement that the increase is necessary to maintain and improve the allotment sites.

**Action:** Approved to increase fees by 5% from 26/27 agreement year – information to be included in the 25/26 covering letter with tenancy agreements. **Proposed:** Cllr Reece  
**Seconded:** Cllr Sutherland

#### ALL15.01/25 COMMUNITY GARDEN

Proposal to expand the community garden at West Chilton Terrace to include additional vacant plots wct100 and WCT103. Agreement to waive fees for the community garden and support its development. Emphasis on making the garden accessible and encouraging community participation. It was felt that part of the proposal should be an agreement from the participants to promote and enter Chilton Show with the produce from the garden.

**Action:** Chair to speak to tenant leading the project and agree a way forward. To be followed up with confirmation in writing once terms had been agreed. **Proposed:** Cllr Sutherland  
**Secunder:** Cllr Reece

#### ALL16.01/25 CORRESPONDENCE

Nothing to report.

#### ALL17.01/25 WATER

Nothing further to report.

#### ALL18.01/25 FLY TIPPING

No new incidents have been reported.

#### EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Cllr. S. Sutherland proposed and was agreed to exclude due to the nature of business to be transacted both press and public.

#### ALL19.01/25 ALLOTMENT REPORT

Nothing new to report

#### ALL20.01/25 INSPECTIONS

Proposal to use drones for future inspections, with a preference for local suppliers. Discussion on the timing and frequency of inspections, with a focus on April and September.

**Action:** Policy to be updated and passed to P&R Committee for approval.

#### ALL21.01/25 ALLOCATIONS

Allocation meetings had been arranged and were taking place today (20 January 2025).  
9 meetings had been arranged.

#### ALL22.01/25 SMALL CLAIMS COURT UPDATE

One tenant declared insolvency, resulting in a loss of £200 for the council.

Ongoing efforts to recover payments from other tenants, with some making regular payments.

#### ALL19.01/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 10.30am in Hutton House.

Signed: -

Chair of Committee