

# Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Allotments

Agenda and Reports

For consideration on

## Monday, 11th October 2010

In Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Chorley

At 10.00 am



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5 October 2010

Dear Colleague

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP - ALLOTMENTS - MONDAY, 11TH OCTOBER 2010**

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Allotments to be held in Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Chorley on Monday, 11th October 2010 commencing at 10.00 am.

### **AGENDA**

1. **Apologies for absence**

2. **Minutes (Pages 1 - 2)**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Allotments meeting that was held on 11 August 2010 (enclosed)

3. **Declarations of Any Interests**

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda. If the interest arises **only** as result of your membership of another public body or one to which you have been appointed by the Council then you only need to declare it if you intend to speak.

If the personal interest is a prejudicial interest, you must withdraw from the meeting. Normally you should leave the room before the business starts to be discussed. You do, however, have the same right to speak as a member of the public and may remain in the room to enable you to exercise that right and then leave immediately. In either case you must not seek to improperly influence a decision on the matter.

4. **Witnesses**

The Task Group has agreed to interview/ consult various witnesses as part of the review process:

- Mr Bill Taylor – Chair of Chorley Allotments Society and a member of the public that requested a review of Allotments
- Miss Eleanor Smith – Member of public that requested a review of Allotments
- Sarah Turner – Community Growing Officer

Eileen Bee, Disability Forum Co-ordinator is unable attend so her comments will be presented to the next meeting of the Task Group.

A Chorley Council Planning Officer will also be present at the meeting.

5. **Any other item(s) that the Chair decides is/are urgent**

Yours sincerely

*Donna Hall*

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Chief Executive

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**Distribution**

1. Agenda and reports to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Allotments (Julia Berry (Chair) and Anthony Gee, Marie Gray, Alison Hansford, Harold Heaton and June Molyneaux for attendance.
2. Agenda and reports to Martin Walls (Head of Streetscene), Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services Officer) and Jennifer Moore (Head of Planning) for attendance.
3. Agenda and reports to Jamie Carson (Director of People and Places), Alan Bothamley (Streetscene Co-ordinator (Gronds Maintenance)) and Andy Brown (Greenspace Co-ordinator) for information.

**This information can be made available to you in larger print or on audio tape, or translated into your own language. Please telephone 01257 515118 to access this service.**

આ માહિતીનો અનુવાદ આપની પોતાની ભાષામાં કરી શકાય છે. આ સેવા સરળતાથી મેળવવા માટે કૃપા કરી, આ નંબર પર ફોન કરો: 01257 515822

ان معلومات کا ترجمہ آپ کی اپنی زبان میں بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ یہ خدمت استعمال کرنے کیلئے براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر ٹیلیفون

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## Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Allotments

**Wednesday, 11 August 2010**

**Present:** Councillor Harold Heaton (Chair) and Councillors Anthony Gee, Marie Gray and June Molyneaux

**Also in attendance:** Councillors Martin Walls (Head of Streetscene), Andy Brown (Greenspace Co-ordinator), Alan Bothamley (Streetscene Co-ordinator (Gronds Maintenance)) and Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

### 10.A.10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Julia Berry (Chair) and Alison Hansford.

### 10.A.11 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

It was proposed by Councillor Anthony Gee, seconded by Councillor June Molyneaux and was subsequently **RESOLVED for Councillor Harold Heaton to take the Chair for this meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Allotments.**

### 10.A.12 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

No declarations were declared.

### 10.A.13 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

**RESOLVED - The minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Task Group held on 24 June 2010 were held as a correct record for signing by the Chair.**

### 10.A.14 SCOPING OF THE ALLOTMENTS TASK GROUP

The Task Group considered a suggested scoping document for the Allotments Scrutiny Task Group, drawn up from proposals put forward at the first meeting.

It was proposed to include an additional objective to the review to encourage future self management of the allotments, as follows:

#### Objective 6

To consider the potential for forming Committees and User Groups within individual allotment sites to give tenants greater control and allow them to cover some of the functions currently carried out by Officers.

**AGREED – 1. That the scoping document for the review be approved for submission to the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

**2. That the proposed witnesses be invited to the next meeting of the Group.**

**10.A.15 OUTCOME OF THE ALLOTMENTS SITE VISIT**

On 16 July 2010, the Group visited a number of different allotment sites and made several observations. A brief overview of the Members findings was circulated at the meeting and after discussion the following conclusions were made:

- Allotment sites looked more aesthetically pleasing when a perimeter fencing was provided around the whole of the allotment site, rather than individual plots.
- A maximum size of shed needed to be stipulated along with an accepted type of material.
- The consideration of a communal storage facility on new sites.
- All plots on the sites to be the same standard size.
- Higher standards to be enforced, with more robust management procedures to support this.
- A condition to be implemented about when the Allotment is vacated so as to avoid fly tipping costs.
- The new rules would be implemented immediately for the new sites with the established sites being brought into line as tenancies changed hands.

**10.A.16 INFORMATION FOR CONSIDERATION**

The Group considered various documentation that was presently used in the administration of the allotments and looked at the charging details.

Members felt that there was a need to develop a criteria for the monitoring and management of the waiting lists. Presently the onus was on the Council to write each year to the people on the waiting list, this was considered to be a costly and often fruitless exercise.

There was general agreement for a tougher inspection and enforcement procedure to be brought into place, and that standards on the sites needed to be improved.

Consideration was given to a pricing review of the allotment rentals. Presently a half price discount is given to senior citizens, given the overall price for the year, the Group felt that this amount was too generous. All tenants also received a water but when they took on the tenancy in the first year. The price of this water was in no way covered by the rental charge and actually meant that at present the Council were in receipt of a negative equity for a senior citizen rental in the first year.

**AGREED**

- 1. That a new Tenancy Agreement be drafted by officers and brought back to the Group for consideration.**
- 2. That consideration be given to the implementation of a set procedure/arrangements to improve the management of the waiting lists.**
- 3. That consideration be given to a pricing review of allotment rentals.**
- 4. Look at ways of promoting community management.**

Chair