

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director People and Places (Introduced by the Executive Member for People, Councillor John Walker)	Executive Cabinet	12 August 2010

ALLOTMENTS – ACTION PLAN 2010/11

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To give an overview into potential sites which could be considered for the provision of allotments and agree the actions.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- Approval is given to begin the public consultation process on the following sites:

(a) Rothwell Road, Anderton

(b) Manor Road, Clayton-le-Woods

And, to undertake further site investigation around ground conditions and potential land transfer at Duke Street, Chorley, followed by public consultation if the investigations are favourable

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- The Small Holdings and Allotment Act (1908) places a duty on local authorities to provide sufficient allotments according to demand. Chorley Council, like most has waiting lists for plots.
- A decision was made to make an investment in financial year 2010/2011 of £40,000 to develop sites and reduce the numbers on the waiting list.
- An exercise has been undertaken to identify suitable sites. Desktop exercises have been carried out and a number of these sites appear to be suitable for development. This report outlines the work undertaken and the current position of each site as well as proposed future actions

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

- To begin public consultation on sites which have been identified for future development
- To increase future allotment provision and in order to address public demand

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- None

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

9. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Put Chorley at the heart of regional economic development in the Central Lancashire sub-region		Develop local solutions to climate change.	✓
Improving equality of opportunity and life chances	✓	Develop the Character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live	✓
Involving people in their communities	✓	Ensure Chorley Borough Council is a performing organization	✓

BACKGROUND

10. The desktop exercise related to the analysis of baseline data, survey results and also brief site surveys. This enabled officers to determine the land available and whether it would be possible to provide new sites at areas with the highest waiting lists.
11. Chorley Council does not have a substantial land bank and as such we only identified a small number of potential sites. Of all of the sites identified, four were deemed the most suitable, these are Rothwell Road, Anderton, Manor Road, Clayton-le-Woods, Duke Street, Chorley and Lodge Bank, Brinscall. These four sites were advanced due to their existing terrain, drainage, potential for vehicular access, existing leases and their classification under the Development Plan Document through the Local Development Framework. The remainder of the sites have not been dismissed but cannot be delivered without further investment and are shown as sites with potential for future development in Para 16.
12. Consultation and feasibility studies were undertaken on each of the sites. Consultees included Development Control, Planning Policy, Streetscene, Parks and Open Spaces, Legal, Contaminated Land Officer, Crime Reduction Officer, LCC Highways, Liberata, Environment Agency, United Utilities, National Grid and an Ecological Consultant. During these consultations one of the sites, Lodge Bank, Brinscall, was deemed unsuitable at this time and as such has not been included in the 2010/11 plan.
13. The second stage of the consultation process will only begin once those consulted above have no objection to the proposals. Manor Road, Clayton-le-Woods has passed the first stage and Rothwell Road, Anderton is very close. Officers would shortly be looking to place these sites into the public arena and begin a wider consultation process, subject to Executive Cabinet approval.
14. A list of the proposed sites is detailed below along with the potential of each site and also the current position or actions going forward.
- 15.

	Potential Site	Site Potential	Feasibility study Outcome
2010/11	Rothwell Road, Anderton	56 plots and a community food growing area in Phase 1. A further 30 plots in the future	Potential site subject to public consultation. Partnership working with United Utilities to ensure success.
	Manor Road, Clayton-le-woods	26 plots and a community growing area	Potential site subject to public consultation.
	Duke Street – Land Exchange Rangletts Recreation Ground	Subject to land whichever option is pursued. In excess of 40 plots	Further site investigation needed around soil and land composition and around Legal Transfer

16. The following sites were identified as part of the study but, for various reasons, such as funding, access and ground conditions have not been included in the 2010/11 action plan.

	Potential Site	Site Potential	Feasibility study Outcome
Potential future developments	Yarrow Bridge Depot	Subject to overall site design. Could exceed 30 plots	Cost makes this site unachievable within year 2010/11. Consider availability of Section 106 funding
	Lodge Bank, Brinscall	40 plots and a community food growing area in phase 1.	Land is susceptible to flooding and there are concerns that the previous use of the land, may result in the need to carry out remediation works. Monitor site during winter 2010/11
	Southport Road, Chorley	Could exceed 30 plots	Due to location of the site approval to provide a vehicular access is unlikely due to poor sightlines. A major road scheme to facilitate a safe access would be required
	Cowling Road, Chorley	Large site could exceed 50 plots	Site investigation and site history needed Site is very undulating and would require imported fill

17. In addition to these Council sites, officers are working with partner organisations to explore other allotments and community growing schemes.
18. While demand exceeds the supply of allotment plots by such a margin, it is envisaged that the management and allocation of the Council sites will continue to be managed in house. As supply increases we will explore the potential to transfer allotments into community management.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

19. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	✓	Customer Services	✓
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	✓	No significant implications in this area	

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

20. As members will be aware, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has set up a Task Group to consider allotments. The scope of their work is currently being finalised. Given the additional resource allocated in 2010/11 and the work done to date, there is a danger that the work scheduled to take place in 2010/11 could be delayed. This action plan for 2010/11 aims to also provide clarity for the Task Group. There remains much for the Group to review, for example, possible provision beyond 2011/12, management and development opportunities and planning issues regarding farm diversification allotment schemes.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF TRANSFORMATION

21. As mentioned, £40,000 has been allocated to increase the provision of allotments. The three schemes will provide 120+ plots. The project is using the Council's project management methodology to minimise the risk of project slippage and overspend.

JAMIE CARSON
DIRECTOR PEOPLE AND PLACES

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Martin Walls	5250	12 August	***