

## Allotments report Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2016

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 15th November 2016 between the Drinkstone Parish Council Allotment representative and the Trustees.

Those present;

Christine Lambert [Parish Councillor and Trustee],

Joyce Cocksedge [Trustee]

Michael Lambert [Trustee]

Fires - Rubbish fires always cause mixed reactions in the village. There have been no other complaints raised by other tenants or residents of bonfires on the allotments, therefore the trustees recommend to the Council that no change on rules and regulations should be made at this time.

Hedges - In response to an allotment holder's email we discussed how to maintain the high hedge on the Gedding Road side and it was agreed that this hedge be made level with the adjoining hedge both in height and width to ensure easy maintenance for the holder. It was decided that initially a quotation be sort for this work depending on costs or alternatively a working party be formed to do the necessary.

Maintenance of plots - We discussed the condition of plots and confirmed that they should be kept clean and in good condition and at least 80% of the allotment should be cultivated each year. It was mentioned that there is a waiting list for allotments.

Rents - we approved an increase in rents of the allotments over a two year period and a letter to be sent to each allotment holder with the new anticipated charges.

Hose Pipes - The use of hand held hoses will be allowed on a trial period of one year and reassessed thereafter annually.

After careful consideration of the situation regarding the hedge on Gedding Road it was felt that it would not be fair on other tenants if allotment funds were used to employ a contractor to cut just the one hedge or seek volunteers when that was the only maintenance required. Therefore Michael Lambert trustee arranged to have the hedge reduced at his own expense. Tim Moss has very kindly agreed to remove the waste from the site and dispose of it.

## Matters arising from Council meeting Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016

Mr Cilvert reported that a tenant has been having bonfires on the allotments causing a nuisance. He requested that the rules be amended to ban bonfires.

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### **Rent review for 2016**

On 15<sup>th</sup> November the trustees met to consider the allotment rents that at present are very low. (Emails had been sent to parish clerks in the Mid Suffolk area to establish what other Councils are charging and also whether hand held hoses are allowed to water the plots. A lot of the Councils do not have responsibility for any allotments but those that do have sent details. The average rent for an allotment is from £20 per annum. Approx. half of them allow hand held hoses at no additional charge.)

The allotments at Drinkstone must of course be self-supporting, although there is no maintenance work outstanding or required in the foreseeable future we do need to build up a reserve to allow work to be done if required. We therefore consider that an increase in rents should be approved.

**Our proposal is that;** we should increase the rents of the allotments over a two year period to bring them in line with other allotment rents and build up a reserve for any work that is required in the future.

2017 rent will increase to £10 per annum.

2018 anticipated rent increase to £15 per annum

Larger plots;

2017 rent will increase to £ 18

2018 anticipated rent increase to £24

The use of hand held hoses will be allowed on a trial period of one year and reassessed there after annually.

