

## HALLS, CEMETERIES AND ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

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**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020  
**Title:** Allotments Update  
**Contact Officer:** Operations and Estates Officer – John Hickman

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### **Background**

The purpose of this report is to update councillors on the current position regarding the allotments.

### **Lakeside Allotments.**

The Operation and Estates Officer has not been able to process a number of applications for retrospect permission that have been received for structures in excess of the agreed 2.5m x 3m at this site.

Lakeside allotment association representatives have requested the trees to the boundary with the Oxford Witney Hotel and the Lakeside flats are reduced, these are mostly willow that will require pollarding every few years. These works will be carried out soon at a cost of £4,950. The works team will also need to assist with these works as not all works required to the ditch and other shrubs will be carried out by the tree surgeons. The associated cost will be taken from the earmarked reserve held for the improvement to allotments.

The Operations and Estates has yet to access the costs associated to constructing 3 times composting bays at Lakeside.

### **Hailey Road Allotments.**

The Operations and Estates Officer has not been able to process the application for retrospect permission for a large poly tunnel more than the 2.5m x 3m agreed max size has been received due to time constraints.

The Allotment Association has been informed of council's decision to provide Hailey Road Allotments Mantis compost tumblers at a cost off £399 each along with 2 x composting Daleks at a cost of £21.50 each. The operations and Estates Officer is still waiting to hear from the Allotment association that they are in agreement with this in order that the items can be ordered.

### **Newland Allotments**

The Allotment Association has been informed of council's decision to provide Newland Allotments Mantis compost tumblers at a cost off £399 each along with 2 x composting Daleks

at a cost of £21.50 each. The operations and Estates Officer is still waiting to hear from the Allotment Association that they agree with this in order that the items can be ordered.

### **Windrush Place Allotments**

Initial ground works for Water, roadways and footpaths at Windrush Place Allotments has commenced.

There is now a hold up whilst a discrepancy with the boundary is addressed. It would appear the boundary hedge has been planted in an incorrect location meaning that the boundary fence cannot be installed on the correct boundary line unless the hedge is lifted and moved to the correct location. The incorrect boundary line reduces the size of the allotments that were supposed to be provided and will reduce the size of several allotments. Witney Town Council has been asked if they are willing to accept the reduced size of the allotments and the adjusted boundary or if the original boundary is to be maintained, the matter is currently with the Town Councils solicitors for guidance.

The Operations and estates Officer has recently met with the new Chair of the Allotment Association and the future Windrush Place Allotment representative to discuss what was agreed with the previous allotment association chair regarding what would be provided etc. on the site and to update them on progress. The previous chair of the allotment association did not want any sheds provided at the site for the allotments however the new chair has now requested these are provided one shed per allotment.

Originally it was thought that a communal building would be provided in the form of a portable structure for the allotments however the future Allotment association representative for this site feels he has sufficient contact and goodwill with the Consortium that they will try to get the consortium to donate the allotment association one of their site portable buildings for use as a communal building.

A further meeting will be held with the chair of the Allotment Association and the allotment association site representative on 10<sup>th</sup> November 20.

### **Environmental impact**

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

The Committee has already taken the decision to assist the allotment holders with their composting but is waiting for confirmation from the Allotment Association before ordering the equipment.

### **Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

**Financial implications**

The costs associated to the Tree works at Lakeside Allotments, £4,950 and shed at the new Windrush Allotments will be met from the earmarked reserve the Council holds in respect of new and improvements to existing allotments.

**Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report.