

EXETER ALLOTMENTS FORUM

Thursday 10 October 2019

Present:-

Apologies:-

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APOLOGIES

Margaret Grapes - Marypole

Becky Wells - Cowick Lane

Andrea Shelley - Trews Weir II

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MINUTES

Smartwater. Councillor Harvey. Following the theft of Smartwater marked items from his plot Councillor Harvey felt disappointed with the police response. Chair (Faith Stafford) will contact PCSO Holah to discuss the police response to incidents where Smartwater is involved.

It was felt by most members that Smartwater is worthwhile as thefts from sites appears to have decreased.

Invasive plant species. Faith Stafford. Faith had prepared a petition to the council asking that they accept responsibility for the eradication of invasive species from allotment plots. There followed a lengthy discussion amongst forum members as to what constituted an invasive species and who had responsibility for identifying such, and it was decided that Chair will approach the council with a request that **Stags Horn Sumach** be added to the list of proscribed plants.

Proposed Foot/Cycle path through Prince Charles road allotments. Councillor Harvey advised the meeting that no planning application had yet been received for the proposed path.

Chair is discussing alternative routes with Councillor Aves.

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ALLOTMENT SERVICE UPDATE

Polsloe Road. Daniel Hayward-Smith advised the forum that a stand of mature trees is blocking light from several plots at this site. Tenants of affected plots may have to move from the site. Dan will be contacting the tenants of these plots to discuss a way forward. The land affected will be fenced off from the plots that remain at the site.

A single plot site in Gladstone Road is looking at being sold to the plot holder whose property it adjoins as it is effectively their garden. The council stress that it has no intention to sell any land currently in use as allotments. Councillor Harvey

advised the forum that the council is conducting an audit of vacant land and there may be a case for increasing allotment plots.

Waiting lists. There are approximately four hundred persons on the waiting list with eighty vacant plots across the city.

Letting and checking is working well across the city.

Rule change. Carpets will no longer be permitted as weed suppressant on plots as it is environmentally hazardous due to leaching of chemicals into the soil and difficulty of disposal when no longer required.

Self-management. Whipton lane site proposing to extend their current lease for a further seven years.

Cowick land site considering a revisit to the possibility of moving to level two.

Grass cutting. Planned to take place three to four times each year.

Nonpayment of rents. Following accepted procedures it can take up to three months to become effective. With due regard to Data Protection the council could advise Letting and Checking teams when reminder notices are sent with the hope that personal on site contact may speed the process.

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CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR UPDATE

Nothing to report

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MATTERS ARISING

Emergency contact (out of hours). Following an out of hour's incident at Hamlyn Lane Sue Chedzoy experienced difficulty contacting the out of hour's team via a call center in Milton Keynes.

Dan will supply sites with a notice giving site postcode and a telephone number for emergency contact.

Recycled wheelie bins. Councillor Harvey informed the meeting that there were a number of wheelie bins that are no longer fit for rubbish collection can be offered to potholders for use as water butts, plant containers etc. Dan will arrange delivery to sites.

Combination locks. More sites changing to combination locks with the larger sites being dealt with initially. Ron Blakey (Cowick Lane) advised that their site had experienced failures of combination locks, probably due to constant daily use. The council not prepared to change supplier of these locks at this time. The combination numbers to be changed after a period of two to three years allowing for plot holder turnover.

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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Composting toilets. Ron Blakey (Cowick Lane) enquired as to the emptying of composting toilets. This will be carried out by contractors when the need arose, but

not envisaged for the foreseeable future.

As Dan Hayward - Smith will shortly be taking paternity leave potholders are reminded that they should use the Allotments Email address for contact.

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DATE OF NEXT MEETING

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.30 hours.

Date of next meeting - 9th April 2020.

(The meeting commenced at Time Not Specified and closed at Time Not Specified)