

## LOUGHBOROUGH AREA COMMITTEE – 6TH JANUARY 2020

### Report of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces

#### ITEM 9 ALLOTMENT SECURITY

##### Purpose of Report

To consider issues around security at the Council's allotment sites.

##### Background

Allotments are a key part of the Council's Open Space provision. Allotments sites are laid out for people to grow their own vegetables, fruit and flowers as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.

Allotments should be clean, litter free and secure. It is desirable to provide appropriate parking, toilets, water supply and managed appropriate access routes.

There is a quantitative standard of 0.33 ha per 1000 people for allotment provision. Recently, the accessibility standard for provision has increased from 720 metres to 1000 metres to reflect The National Allotment Society's guidance and local consultation findings.

The Council operates 10 allotment sites (405 plots) in Loughborough. Please see the following list for their locations.

- Mountfields
- Lodge Farm
- Alan Moss Road Allotments Phase 1
- Great Central Rd
- Park Road
- Alan Moss Road Allotments Phase 2.
- Ingle Pingle
- Meadow Avenue
- Beacon Road
- Castledine Street Extension

The Council would be willing to consider the plot holders from any site forming an allotment association and managing the site independently.

Officers recognise that vandalism and the theft of equipment/produce can be very upsetting for allotment holders. Theft committed by plot holders can be particularly hard to combat and ruins the cohesive, community of allotment holders that the Council promotes on each site.

The Council's current security standard is for each site to have 2 metre perimeter palisade fencing and gates. A Condition Report for each allotment site is attached at Appendix a

##### Occupancy, Waiting Lists and Reported Incidents

There are currently 2 vacant plots across all sites.

The table below provides the current number of people on the waiting list and the number of reported security incidents at each site over the last 12 months. The incidents reported tend to be shed break-ins.

SITE	WAITING LIST	REPORTED INCIDENTS
Alan Moss Road Phase 1&2	15	1
Beacon Road	13	1
Castledine St Ext.	7	0
Great Central Road	18	7
Ingle Pingle	14	1
Lodge Farm	11	6
Meadow Avenue	16	1
Mountfields	19	3
Park Farm	15	3

### Budget

The direct costs/income for providing the allotments is set out in the table below:

ITEM	BUDGET
Buildings-R & M	0.00
Fencing/Gates	400.00
Mtc of Trees, Shrubs	0.00
Metered Water Charge	2,000.00
Equipment Etc P/R&M	1,500.00
MOS Contract - Basic	10,500.00
MOS Contract - Variations	0.00
Rent - Land	-8,400.00

This provision of allotments is also supported by a considerable amount of officer time.

### Improving Security

The Council's current security standard is for each site to have 2 metre perimeter palisade fencing and gates. This is not currently being met across all sites and the revenue budget does not allow for large scale improvements to be made. Officers have requested that £35,000 is added to the Capital Programme starting in April 2020 for general allotment improvements. Some of this will be spent on improved fencing and gates.

The installation of CCTV at allotment sites to improve security is not considered to be necessary or proportionate to the level of crime that is being committed. There is a feeling that some allotment holders might not welcome being put under surveillance whilst they are attending to their plots. The installation of CCTV would also be cost

prohibitive with an estimated cost of £8k per camera. The income from all of the plot holders only equates to £8.4k per annum.

Plot holders found to be stealing from other plot holders would be given notice on their plot and would not be permitted to go back on the waiting list.

Officers' advice would be for plot holders to report any issues to the police and the Council. Theft is a criminal act which can be investigated by the Police.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Allotment Security and Incidents

Officer to contact:

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