

TOGSTON PARISH COUNCIL

At the Meeting of the Parish Council held at Christ Church Hall on 19 July 2021 at 6:00pm.

Present: Cllrs A Cairns, K Farwell, M Farwell, S Jeffrey, F Moore, A Urwin and J Watson (Chairman)

31/21 Apologies for Absence

None received.

32/21 Disclosure of Interests

Cllrs Cairns, K Farwell, M Farwell, Jeffrey and Moore declared an interest in all items on the agenda as they are allotment tenants. Cllr Urwin declared an interest as his wife is an allotment tenant. Written requests for a dispensation have previously been submitted by all except Cllr Jeffrey and accepted. Cllr Jeffrey was granted a dispensation.

33/21 Public Participation

None.

34/21 Service Level Agreement

Cllr Watson provided an update on the Grass Cutting and Landscaping Service Level Agreement. The first cut has been carried out but not to an acceptable standard. Cllr Watson has contacted the service leader at Northumberland County Council who agreed and expressed his disappointment. Operatives will be sent out tomorrow to remedy the work and will be there all day.

35/21 Register of Allotments

- a. The Clerk has prepared a Register of Allotments from the information on file, but there are some gaps, in particular with regards to contact details for tenants and allotment numbers. The Parish Council reviewed the Register and provided some of the missing information. The Clerk will update the Register with this.
- b. It was agreed it is essential to have a plan or map of the allotments. Cllr Jeffrey has previously made one and will supply this to the Parish Council as a starting point.
- c. It was agreed that it would be good to have proper numbered plaques for each allotment. Cllr M Farwell may be able to make these over the winter.

36/21 Allotment Policy – Subletting

The Parish Council discussed the issue of subletting of allotments. It was agreed that the person carrying out the cultivation of the allotment should be named on the Parish Council allotment tenancy agreement. It is very important that allotment rules and regulations are adhered to and that the Parish Council has an up to date record of who is cultivating each allotment for transparency and insurance.

RESOLVED:

- a. The Clerk will write to all tenants, explain that the Parish Council is updating its records and is generally reviewing use of the allotments, any needed repairs and looking to improve the facilities for everyone. The Clerk will ask for current contact details,

TOGSTON PARISH COUNCIL

whether the plot is used for keeping chickens and if so, how many, and whether the tenant has any issues to report.

- b. The Clerk will write a second letter to those known or suspected to be subletting the allotment to someone else. This breaches their tenancy agreement and notice of termination will be given. The tenancy of the allotment will be offered to the person cultivating it in the first instance.
- c. The Clerk will put the allotment rules up on the Togston Parish Allotments noticeboard as well as contact details for reporting issues.

37/21 Water Tap

Cllr Jeffrey volunteered to take responsibility for turning the water tap off in the winter and for taking meter readings.

38/21 Rats

The Parish Council discussed steps which can be taken to discourage rates. It is good practice to cover water butts and compost bins. Chicken feed should be kept in metal lidded containers. The Clerk will put up a notice setting out good practice on the Togston Parish Allotments.

39/21 Cockerels

Cllr Jeffrey has been asked whether an allotment tenant can keep a cockerel on his plot. She informed him that this was not permitted. The Parish Council confirmed this.

40/21 Emergency Repairs

RESOLVED to delegate authority to the Clerk to obtain quotes for and to get emergency repairs carried out.

41/21 Broken Gate

There is a broken gate and post which needs repairs.

RESOLVED Cllr Watson will ask for a quote from the person who carries out similar work for Amble Town Council and will email this round.

43/21 Grass and Hedge Cutting Equipment

The Parish Council owns a lawnmower, strimmer and hedge cutter, used previously to maintain the common areas. Although tenants have previous been allowed to use this equipment, the Parish Council has no legal power to do this. There are also health and safety implications and this would not be covered by Parish Council insurance.

RESOLVED to offer the equipment for sale. The Clerk will put up a notice on the Togston Parish Allotments noticeboard asking for best offers by a specified date. A group of tenants could put in a joint offer if they wish.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 7:43pm.