

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH

Allotment Working Group Notes

30th August 2022 at 11am - Held in person

Present:

P Nobbs – Rodbourne Farm Allotment Site Rep

N Jackson – CSNPC Allotments Officer

A Briggs – CSNPC Estates

A Reeves – CSNPC Clerk

Cllr M Lucas – Chair

Cllr J Ballman

Notes:

Meeting started at 11am

1) Available Funding Opportunity

A Briggs presented information on an available funding stream. It was explained that the funding stream through Wiltshire Wildlife Community Energy, was principally for engagement with young people for a 'Community Project'. However, that the Parish Council couldn't directly apply.

A Briggs advised that he had been contacted by the Parish Grants Officer, who was proposing the CSNPC Youth Council could apply for the funding to facilitate an Allotment project.

The group held discussion on the idea.

Whilst the group acknowledged funding would be beneficial. They deemed that more work around the project was needed, with specific involvement from the Youth Council.

The group felt there wasn't sufficient time to put a plan together, prior to the need for submitting a funding bid.

That the youth Council would be supported in engaging with the group in future, as to shape projects that would support a bid for available funding.

Action – A Briggs to provide the groups comments, in response to the Grants Officer.

2. Allotment Officer Job Description Review

A Briggs referred to a job description document that had been issued prior to the meeting, and asked for comment.

P Nobbs referred to a comment from an email he had provided prior to the meeting. This was in respect of item 'D', page 2 of the JD. The matter of 'managing plot numbers'.

The group held discussion.

N Jackson advised it had been previously agreed at the last Allotment meeting, that a reminder would be issued with the annual bills, reminding tenants of their obligation to visibly number their plot.

A Briggs commented on the need for a hybrid role, to ensure a consistent workload through the working year.

N Jackson commented that the flexibility to adjust the hours seasonally should be considered and reviewed as part of the process.

The group are advised comments would be provided to the Leisure & Recreation Committee.

No further comments received.

Action – Mass reminder to tenants including with annual invoices, as a reminder that plot numbers must be visible.

Action – Comments to be presented to Sept 22 L&R Committee.

3. Drafting an Allotment Long Term Plan

A Briggs advised current site occupancy was sitting around 97%.

A Briggs advised the meeting was to commence working on the long term Allotment plan. there were a number of reasons provided as to why a long term plan was beneficial, including; applying for funding and allowing the Parish Council to allocate finances during budget setting processes.

A Briggs referred to Allotment strategy documents, produced by other Municipal Authorities. It was explained these documents provide valuable information, as to the framework in drafting a CSNPC Allotment plan.

The group held discussion.

Key points:

- 1) Setting a Vision
- 2) Agreeing Aims & Objectives
- 3) Outlining an Action / Delivery Plan

A Briggs suggested a number of high level aims for the group to consider, including;

- 1) Management & Sustainability
- 2) Green credential & Biodiversity
- 3) Infrastructure
- 4) Site Accessibility
- 5) Engagement, Communication & Relationships
- 6) Increasing Existing Site Capacity & or Explore options for New Allotment Site Development
- 7) Funding

The group held in depth discussion on;

- 1) Bolstering site representatives and active community
- 2) Consultation & satisfaction surveys
- 3) Reducing water consumption
- 4) Improving / maintaining wildlife habitats
- 5) Security matters, such as locking gates.

A Briggs advised that the long term plan should intrinsically link with the established Parish Priorities and Vision, including:

- 1) Promoting inclusivity
- 2) Provide a high standard of services and facilities
- 3) Strengthen communities
- 4) Protect and improve our environment.

It was commented that many of the items raised during the discussion would cross reference these priorities, and that this should be detailed within the plan.

The Clerk confirmed that the Parish did not have any statutory Allotment sites. However that all of the Allotments were held as Freehold by the PC.

A Briggs commented that the plan could include consideration for application to the principal authority for statutory classification. However, this would need further review.

Cllr J Ballman commented on the exploration of funding available to deliver future Allotment projects.

The group discussed site matters. Including; site reps, locking gates and noticeboards.

P Nobbs suggested using an incentive to secure site reps at those sites that currently didn't have representation.

Action – Officers to review noticeboards at all sites.

Cllr J Ballman inquired about the current information available on the Parish website and commented on whether a forum would be beneficial.

A Briggs explained the Parish website was under development and that the new site has a greater detail of information and was more interactive for users.

Cllr M Lucas spoke commented on the need to review available toilet facilities, due to changing demographics and improving / providing inclusive facilities to all users.

A Briggs commented on the need for proactive site reps to maintain additional facilities that are installed.

Cllr J Ballman spoke about the potential of using a shipping container as storage and toilet facilities.

The group held discussion.

Cllr M Lucas raised the matter of site access via the rear of private properties.

The Clerk advised residents would not have implied access. Further, that security / access should be reviewed in full.

Action – Officers to review site provisions (as part of the long term plan) such as toilets and communal spaces and fencing.

Conversation was held around tractor use and staff training and skip provision / waste disposal.

A Briggs recapped the high level objectives.

The group acknowledged and agreed with the points.

A Briggs advised the group that he would commence drafting the Long Term Plan document. It was outlined the plan would be intended for deliverance in 2023. However, there may be some demand against budget setting as to facilitate action points within the plan.

Meeting closed at 12pm.