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Town Clerk – Laura Chrysostomou

Notes of the meeting of the Allotment Working Group meeting held in The New Millenium Cahmber, The Manor House, Church Street, Littlehampton BN17 5EW on Thursday 29 May 2025.

Working Group:

Councillor O'Neill (Chair)
Councillor Wiltshire (Vice Chair)
Councillor Worne

Co-opted Members:

Mrs Burke
Mr Farquhar
Ms King
Mrs Oliver
Mrs Mendes
Mr Simmons

In attendance:

Juliet Harris – Assistant Town Clerk
Felix Gillett – Community Resource Officer (CRO)

2025 To 2026

1. Evacuation Procedures

The evacuation procedures were noted.

2. Filming of Council Meetings, Use of Social Media, and Mobile Phones

The procedures were noted.

3. Apologies

There were apologies from Councillor Tilbrook and Mr Lovegrove.

4. Declarations Of Interest

The standing declarations were noted.

5. Notes of the Last Meeting

The notes of the meeting held on 16 January 2025, were confirmed as a true record.

6. Allotment Strategy Action Plan Infrastructure Priorities

- 6.1. The Working Group was asked to consider and make recommendations for the prioritisation of projects in the Allotment Strategy Action Plan using the Allotment Infrastructure Reserve fund. As part of the work to deliver the Allotment Strategy, costed options for works at the sites utilising the Allotment Infrastructure budget, were discussed.
- 6.2. The key considerations regarding prioritising the works were health and safety followed by boundary security. The first priorities identified by the group were enhancements to the South and Southeast boundary fences at the Trinidad site, followed by improvements to the central track on Worthing Road. The remaining works that had been identified would be retained in the action plan for further review and prioritisation in later phases of work. It was observed that risk assessments of the sites would also help inform how future works progressed. If approved by the Community Resources Committee, the next steps would be to finalise the estimates and prepare a timetable for the works. Once available this would be shared with the site representatives.

It was resolved that:

The priorities for infrastructure projects as set out in Table 1 attached to the notes be recommended to the Community Resources Committee for approval.

7. Reports of Allotment Sites

7.1. Overall Update at June 2025

The following updates were noted:

- Growing Season and Maintenance: The growing season was progressing well. Viewings were ongoing and the Amenity Team was working to bring vacant plots back into use. Some maintenance delays were noted, especially at Trinidad and Kingley Gate.
- Occupancy Status:
 - Full: Howard Road, Kingley Gate, Fort Road
 - Partial:
 - Mill Lane: 97.5% (2 vacant)
 - Worthing Road: 92% (18 vacant)
 - Trinidad: 83% (6 vacant)
 - Total: 92% occupancy — 415 out of 441 plots filled, 26 plots vacant.
- Plot Turnover (since January):
 - 51 plots returned (45 terminations, 6 repossessions)
 - 6 tenants relocated within the sites (upsized/downsized)

- Waiting List Activity:
 - 95 applicants removed from the list.
 - 56% (53 people) accepted tenancies
 - 44% declined or did not respond.
 - 50 new applicants added.
 - Current Waiting List: 78 (33 waiting for high-demand sites: HR, KG, FR)
 - The average wait time dropped from 8 months to 4 months.
 - Kingley Gate: ~1 year wait.
 - Howard Road: ~3 year wait.

7.2. Other site matters

- 7.2.1. There was a general discussion regarding the number of uncultivated plots across various sites. Concerns were raised about the overall appearance and usability of these areas. It was acknowledged that current maintenance work had been limited and that, while efforts were made to maintain expectations, reduced staff capacity had contributed to a temporary decline in regular oversight and enforcement. Noting that the LAGA representatives would also be conducting independent site audits, it was recommended that the results of these audits be reported to the CRO so they can be integrated into the LTC inspection schedule and followed up with appropriate action.
- 7.2. Expressing appreciation to the site reps for their ongoing support and patience during this challenging period, the CRO added that the Town Council strived to ensure prospective allotment holders fully understood their responsibilities before taking on a plot. The importance of the probation period and the process for terminating tenancies due to non-compliance was also emphasised.
- 7.3. It was noted that the planning application for the extension to the LALGA Trading Hut at Worthing Road had been validated and that a decision was due by 1st August.

8. Date of Next Meeting - Thursday 14 August 2025.

The meeting closed at 7.34 pm.

Chair

Table 1

Proposed Allotment Strategy Action Plan Infrastructure Priorities			
Priority	Site	Description	Estimated Cost (Inc.labour & materials & Excl.VAT)
1	Trinidad	South and South East Fence	£ 7,707.00
2	Worthing Road	Central Track	£ 9,190.00
3		North Fence and Gate	£ 12,545.00
4	Mill Lane	South Fence Section	£ 1,200.00

Priority to be reviewed	Worthing Road	South Fence	£ 5,950.00
		Entrance Road	£ 10,860.00
		Side Tracks x3	£ 12,490.00
	Trinidad	North Fence	£ 6,750.00
		East Fence	£ 5,757.00
		West Fence	£ 7,362.00
		Green Clearance	To be confirmed
	Mill Lane	North Fence	£ 9,520.00
	Howard Road	Boundary Fencing	£ 17,750.00

£ 107,081.00

	Ist Phase works
	2nd Phase works