

Agenda Item 5

Allotment Rent Levels 2018-19 and Letting Problems

Allotment rent levels have increased significantly over the last 10 years; this was done primarily to bring the rent levels on allotments in Barrowford into line with other parts of the borough and the gap has been significantly reduced over that time period.

Concerns exist over the current level of vacant plots running at 16 (most of which are at Lowerclough) with at least a further 8 across all sites not renewing their tenancy in April. The main reasons for non-renewal are either poor health or old age; allotment letting seems to periodically go through peaks and troughs. Perhaps it is time to leave the rent level at its present rate for 2018-19 and concentrate at letting vacant allotments particularly at Lowerclough Street.

Six of the allotments becoming available are at Pasture Lane, these plots may need remedial work to remove infrastructure built up during their multi plot occupancy, these may need to be removed or redressed before these plots can be let, and may include hut removal or dismantling and some interior fencing.

One plot is situated at Back Church Street with an applicant having been on the list since 2012 for that particular plot and one at Lowerclough. Other allotments will become vacant through May and June through non-payment of rent most these plots tend not to have been cultivated for the previous season.

The Clerk will let the vacant plots on Lower Parkhill in March with the new tenancies commencing from the 1st April, the Clerk showed several people round the last two remaining vacant plots at Pasture Lane but these were not taken. New names have been added to the list since Christmas allowing fresh viewings to be arranged.

Clerks Recommendations:

1. That rents remain at the same level as 2017-18
2. That plastic signage giving the Council's contact details is attached to the larger allotment site's gates.
3. That robust efforts are made to let plots at Lowerclough and other sites.
4. That adequate resources and manpower are made available to turn round newly vacated plots and regenerate badly run down unlettable plots to a lettable condition.