

Agenda Item 13

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Date	4 th February 2014

Ward (s) affected	Leatherhead	Key Decision	No
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Subject	Leatherhead Pools Allotments
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RECOMMENDATIONS

To allow vacant plots to be offered to new tenants until a decision is reached on whether the site is to be developed.

* CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Access to Services – Helping residents to access the services they need

1. Improve the way we engage with our Customers and listen to our communities. Having engaged with the Leatherhead Poor's Allotment Society their Committee has requested that we open the site to new users.

Value for Money - Delivering quality, value for money services

1. **Develop and agree a Medium Term Financial Strategy through to 2020.** Helps maximize the income through increased use of allotments.

The Executive has the authority to determine the Recommendations

1.0 BACKGROUND

On 30th July 2013 when approval was given to entering into a Development Agreement with Barratt's, a decision was also taken to freeze the availability of vacant plots on the site. In part this was to allow for consultation with the then newly formed allotments association and to manage expectations of tenants who might only get two growing seasons from their plot.

From the views that have been received it is clear that the Leatherhead Poor's Allotment Society's committee and other correspondents that the vacant plots on site should be made available and future tenants made aware of the potential development.

There appears to be no downside to this decision as it allows residents to enjoy use of vacant plots, protects income, reduces the Councils costs in maintaining vacant plots and helps create a clear picture of demand.

Financial Implications – the income to the allotments account will increase for every plot let and the potential additional costs in maintaining vacant plots will be reduced.

Legal Implications

As the Council proposes to enter into a Development Agreement with a developer which includes the allotment site at Barnett Wood Lane, it would be sensible to review the terms of the allotment licence agreements to ensure that the Council has the right to terminate the licences at the appropriate time (or is not precluded from doing so) in order that the Council may comply with its contractual obligations with the developer.

The Council must make any enquiring prospective allotment holder aware in writing of the development proposals, the proposed relocation sites, and the limited time period/growing seasons for which any allotments on the current site may be available. A statement and acknowledgement to this effect should also be included in the proposed allotment licence agreement.

New allotment holders will need to be included in the consultation processes and included in the ongoing Equality Impact Assessment updates in relation to analysing the impact of any proposed relocation of the allotments at Barnett Wood Lane.

2.0 OPTIONS

Option 1

To accept the recommendation and open the site to new tenancies.

Option 2

To request further work be undertaken.

3.0 CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Monitoring Officer commentary

All relevant legal implications have been taken into account.

"S151 Officer commentary

There are minor financial implications, both in terms of income and costs, in accepting new tenants. These have been taken into account in this report."

Risk Implications – There are no significant risks in taking this decision. However there would be minimal reputational risk should the decision not be taken as it could appear that the views of the Leatherhead Poor's Allotment Society's committee and other residents had not been listened to.

Equalities Implications – There are no specific equalities issues arising from this report. An equalities impact assessment is being maintained in respect of the overall project.

Employment Issues – There are no employment issues relating to this report.

Sustainability Issues - There are no sustainability issues relating to this report.

Consultation – The Leatherhead Poor's Allotment Society's committee have been consulted and the views of other correspondents have been taken into account.

Communications – The agent for the site and the Leatherhead Poor's Allotment Society's committee will be notified of the decision.

BACKGROUND PAPERS - None

