

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

71-73 Elm Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1SP - Tel: 01702 716288
council@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk www.leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk

Chairman: Cllr Richard Herbert
Vice Chairman: Cllr Syrie Cox
Town Clerk: Paul Beckerson



QUALITY
TOWN
COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given that the next meeting of the **Allotments Committee** of the Leigh-on-Sea Town Council will take place on **Wednesday 17th September 2014, Leigh Community Centre, 71-73 Elm Road, Leigh-on-Sea, at 7.30pm**, when it is hoped to transact the following business:

Agenda

1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
3. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS
4. TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS ON 16th JULY 2014
5. CONSTRUCTION OF RAISED ALLOTMENT BED FOR DISABLED USE - LEIGH SITE (Officer's Report subsequent to minute 31 of meeting 16th July 2014)

It is proposed that three raised planters be built on a plot adjacent to the main gate when one becomes available to facilitate disabled wheel chair access to a plot. The raised planters would be 3 deck boards high 1.4m wide and 4.2m long. The material cost will be:

Decking	£204.37
Posts	£ 51.55
Screws	£ 10.22
Batten	<u>£ 25.92</u>
	£292.06 To come from the Maintenance Budget.

Exact measurements can be adapted on site to suite the particular plot that is used. It is estimated that the labour requirement will be approximately 1 day of Janitor time. This can be requisitioned from the General Purposes Janitorial Budget of £2,670.

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Committee agree to the construction of the beds at the earliest opportunity, at a cost of £292.06 from the Maintenance Budget and the Labour of approximately £81 from the GP Janitorial Budget.

6. CONTRACTOR'S HEDGE CUT (Officer's Report)

At present the hedge is trimmed once a year and the price has been confirmed as £825, the price for two cuts per annum would be £1,250.

The Committee is **requested** to consider whether to maintain the once a year cut or to increase it to twice a year.

7. TO SET BUDGET FOR 2015/16 (Appendix 1) (Officer's Report)

The draft budget has been brought to this meeting for approval as there is a possibility that setting the budget could affect the rental charges for 2015/16 of which a year's notice must be given (to go out with the bills for 2014/15 in October 2014).

When the budget was set for 2014/15 there was a net cost to the Council of £5,897 this has increased to £8,755 due to the rebate for water rates agreed at the last meeting (£950) and the decrease in rental income mainly due to discounted tenancies.

The Committee has two options;

To maintain the similar level of net cost £5,661 to 2014/15 budget (would require a rise in rents of between £5 (discounted) and £10 (full) for a full plot

Keep the rents at the same level and accept that the net cost to the Council would rise to £8,559 in the year 2015/16.

The Committee is requested to decide which option it wishes to pursue and **RECOMMEND** the budget to F&GPC.

8. TO SET THE ALLOTMENT RENTS FOR 2015/16 (Appendix 2) (Officer's Report)

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** the rent level to Council for approval.

9. PLANTING OF HEDGE ADJACENT TO THE FENCE ON THE NORTHERN BOUNDARY (Officer's Report subsequent to minute 22 of meeting 16th July 2014)

At the time of agenda preparation there has been no response from South Essex Homes.

One of the options discussed at the last meeting was to plant a hedge adjacent to the northern fence. The Woodland Trust has been approached and they can provide 420 saplings which would provide approximately 120m of hedging (Subject to application and approval). The best pack would probably be the "Wildlife Pack" consisting of (Blackthorn; Common Oak; Hazel; Hawthorne; Rowan; Silver Birch).

The northern perimeter fence stretches for 232m along the service road, if the 120m of saplings are planted from the junction with Randolph Close it will end 24m short of the Manchester Drive boundary with the Leigh Site.

The planting has to be done by the community (Allotment Holders and possibly school involvement).

The Committee is asked to approve the application and give a commitment to the community planting of the saplings.

10. TREE CUTTING – Report 2406/HS (Appendix 3) (Officer's Report)

It is **RECOMMENDED** that no further action be taken unless the committee feel that a 'tidying up' should be done; In which case the plot holder should certainly be asked to make a contribution/cover the costs.

11. WRITTEN REPORTS FROM SITE REPRESENTATIVES ON ITEMS NOT COVERED ABOVE – (Appendix 4)

- a) Marshall Close
- b) Leigh Allotments
- c) Manchester Drive
- d) Orchard

12. BUDGET – Report 2403/Allot 9th September 2014 (Appendix 5)

13. CORRESPONDENCE



Paul Beckerson
Town Clerk
11th September 2014

Any member who is unable to attend the meeting should send their apologies before the meeting.

Sheet 4

1st draft of allotments budget 2015/16 17-09-14

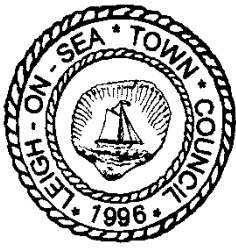
Heading	B/F 2014/15	Income	Expenditure	Rent Increase
Rents				
Manchester Drive		5,294		7,412
Leigh		2,301		3,222
Marshall Close		308		431
MDAS Commission			662	-264
Plot clearance				
Rubbish clearance				
Equipment				
Water Rates		1,810	2,700	1,810
Staff Costs			5,250	
Maintenance			1,000	
Miscellaneous			60	
Training				
Vehicle				
Hedge Cutting			1,000	
Capital improvements*			2,500	
Grass Cutting			0	
Keys			0	
MDAS Grant			3,000	
LA Grant			1,600	
MC Grant			500	
Totals		£9,713	£18,272	£12,611
Nett cost (exp - inc)		£8,559		£5,661

Allotment Rent 2014/15 – 2015/16

	Starter Plot (A/B/C)			Half Plot (E/W)			Full Plot		
	Rent	Water	Total	Rent	Water	Total	Rent	Water	Total
Discount	£7.00	£2.00	£9.00	£10.50	£3.00	£13.50	£21.00	£6.00	£27.00
	£8.50		£10.50	£13.00		£16.00	£26.00		£32.00
Full	£14.00	£2.00	£16.00	£21.00	£3.00	£24.00	£42.00	£6.00	£48.00
	£17.50		£19.50	£26.00		£29.00	£52.00		£58.00

Tenacy Deposits **£15.00** **£25.00** **£50.00**

Key Charges **£5.00** Leigh Site and Manchester Drive Site
£10.00 Marshall Close Site



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Report 2406/HS

Allotment Officer's Report

Cut tree on common ground

Information and photographs were received regarding branches cut from a tree, which indicated and did show that the tree was cut clumsily. Concern was raised as to whether the tree had been damaged by such action but on reference to an independent source who viewed the photographs, it was felt that no lasting damage had been done.

Resulting investigations identified the potential plot holder and they were telephoned and questioned. It would appear that the branches had been over hanging their shed and whilst they pruned the lower branches neatly, the weight of the upper branches when partly sawed, led them to snap. It was explained to them that they should have referred the matter to LTC to deal with as the tree is on common ground. The plot holder was extremely apologetic, especially as they realised their inexperience led to the unsightly result and it was certainly not their intention to do any damage. It was felt the apology was most genuine and in this matter it was just a complete oversight on their part to think that the Council need not know.

The plot holder was advised that the matter would have to be reported to Committee and that in the new tenancy agreement due to be sent to all plot holders with their 2014/15 invoice a new condition does state that the tenant must not 'cut or prune trees on common ground without prior written consent from the Council'. They assured me they will heed to this new condition.

Having viewed the older tenancy agreement that applied, no such condition has applied in the past.

Their apology was very genuine and they have been informed that should the committee decide to have their 'cutting' made good then there may be a cost involved for them. The plot holder expressed concern as to whether they would lose their plot.

Recommendation

No further action be taken unless the committee feel that a 'tidying up' should be done. In which case the plot holder should certainly be asked to make a contribution/cover the costs.

Marshall Close September Report

A quiet time in Marshall Close, with preparation underway for winter crops and the end of summer fruits and vegetables

All new plot holders working well, with all plots now cleared or being worked. We only have one plot unworked, and are waiting for them to return their key.

Our neighbour has completed his new fence, which has made the site look a lot neater.

Anne Scobie
10th September

LOSALGA

Leigh on Sea Allotment

Association

and Leisure Garden

Weekly mowing of the tracks has been necessary over the last few weeks and brambles cut back on an almost daily basis.

A sticking ball valve in a water butt caused a small overflow but was easily fixed.

A few plots have been let to new tenants and we currently have a waiting list although some plots are becoming available soon.

Untended plots have once again become a nuisance to adjacent plot holders.

Yet another successful barbeque held at 'The Greenhouse' and our AGM also a great success with a good turnout enjoying a free lunch.

Whilst there are still plenty of crops still being harvested many plots are being prepared for the 'off' season, with ground cover becoming prevalent.

Alan Ashdown
Chairman Leigh Allotments

MDAS

MDAS activity report for LTC allotments committee meeting

September 17 2014

The MDAS site is, essentially, full at the moment with a waiting list of 16. There remain three very rough plots at the north end of the site which we have not yet attempted to let.

We have asked for 7 termination letters to be sent to plot holders who have not responded in any way to our telephone and letter requests for some work to be done. There remain a number of bad plots which may not be renewed in October so we expect to be able to satisfy most of our waiting list.

We have requested quotations for the following work to be done under ASA finance.

- 1) Drainage pipe from the No1 road across the car park into the newly opened ditch. This would be in porous pipe set in aggregate.
- 2) Lay a new main to the top of the site to feed 3 new water tanks. There is no water to this area at present but the plot holders pay water rates.
- 3) Install a waste water outfall from our café into the nearby sewer drain.(MDAS money)

When we have suitable quotations available these will be discussed with LTC to agree standards.

The bridge between the two sites has been removed and it is proposed to lay a 4in pipe across the entrance to allow water to drain across and avoid the flooding which occurred last winter. This would be a joint work party between the two sites.

There was a minor break in on the bottom (brook) fence in July and two piece of equipment were stolen. The damage was quickly repaired and we hope there will be no further attempts. Plot holders have been reminded not to leave capital equipment in their sheds.

The fence along the top of the west field, backing onto the houses, is collapsing in places and the plot holder of plot 138 is concerned that large amounts of the adjacent garden will fall onto her plot. LTC need to review the situation.

We propose the have a further two skips this autumn for rubbish removal and hope to dispose of as much carpet as possible.

The Admirals court care home have provisional taken plot 109 for their members use, MDAS is currently clearing the site for them as it is badly overgrown.

MDAS has won 1 first and 2 second awards in the recent borough competition and regained the society cup for 2014. We have now won the cup 4 times in the last 5 years.

We had a very successful open day on Sunday 31 August, probably the most successful to date and there were several enquiries for plots. The theme this year was the World War 1 centenary. All café staff wore period costumes and the site was decorated accordingly with a few tin hats in attendance. All children's events were free and a record number of scarecrows were made. An attempt to get a Lancaster bomber to fly over had to be abandoned when it was realised that this was a World War 2 aircraft. We did, however, get two the previous Sunday!

The Meet and Greet Wednesday meetings continue to be popular and an apple day is planned for October.

Altogether this has been a very successful growing season with bumper crops but is ending with a very serious attack of Tomato Blight which has decimated many peoples plants. All diseased plants are being incinerated as quickly as possible in an attempt to prevent similar outbreaks next year.

Tony Wilson, Vice Chairman.

LEIGH ALLOTMENTS ORCHARD GROUP

Orchard Report, September 2014

Apple harvesting and distribution is in full swing at the moment with Discovery and Edith Hopwood providing the majority of fruit so far. Another tree with a large crop is what should have been a Red James Grieve but turned out to be an imposter but its apples are good and they appear to be ready to harvest. There have also been reasonable quality windfalls from many trees and many of them have gone to group members.

A rather poorly attended work party was held in August. I suspect many people were on holiday and luckily it was only a general tidying up and apple picking session which achieved its objectives. The next work party will be the big annual grass cut later in October or November.

David Hammond
9th September 2014

Heading	2013/14 B/F	Income Budget	Income to Date	Expenditure Budget	Spend to Date	Commitments	Balance	% Spent
Rents								
Manchester Drive		5,294	560.25				4733.75	10.58
Leigh		2,301	0.00				2301	0.00
Marshall Close		308	54.00				254	17.53
Grants			0.00					
Other Income								
MDAS Agency Fee 12.5%				662	70.03			
Affiliations				0	0.00		0.00	
Water Rates		2,564	262.50	2,700	1,114.40		1,585.60	41.27
Water Rates Rebate				950				
Staff Costs				5,250	1,841.12		3,408.71	35.07
Waste Clearance	3,899			0	£633.34		3,265.99	16.24
Maintenance				1,000	2.50		997.50	0.25
Miscellaneous				60	0.00		60.00	0.00
Training					0.00		0.00	
Hedge Cutting				1,000	100.00		900.00	10.00
ASA - LA				1,600	800.00		800.00	50.00
ASA - MDAS				3,000	1,500.00		1,500.00	50.00
ASA - MC				500	250.00		250.00	50.00
Capital improvements*			1685.00	2,500	3,926.63		258.37	93.83
Keys			110.00	0	187.62		-77.62	
Totals	3,899	10,467	2671.75	19,222	10425.64		12,948.55	54.24
Nett cost (exp - inc)		8,755			7753.89		4,900	
Revenue		1,005			1,986.14			
Capital*		2,500			2,241.63			
Tenancy Deposits	1,622.50		370.00		70.00		1922.50	