

ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

AGENDA



Thursday 29 July 2021

at 10.00 am

in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool

A limited number of members of the public will be able to attend the meeting with spaces being available on a first come, first served basis. Those wishing to attend the meeting should phone (01429) 523568 or (01429) 523019 by midday on Wednesday 28 June 2021 and name and address details will be taken for NHS Test and Trace purposes.

MEMBERS: ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors Cranney, Falconer, Fleming, Little, Price, Prince and Richardson.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

3. **MINUTES**

- 3.1 To receive the Minutes and Decision Record in respect of the meeting held on 24 June 2021

4. **BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS**

No items.

5. **KEY DECISIONS**

No items.

CIVIC CENTRE EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

In the event of a fire alarm or a bomb alarm, please leave by the nearest emergency exit as directed by Council Officers. A Fire Alarm is a continuous ringing. A Bomb Alarm is a continuous tone.

The Assembly Point for everyone is Victory Square by the Cenotaph. If the meeting has to be evacuated, please proceed to the Assembly Point so that you can be safely accounted for.

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 6.1 Allotment Communication Strategy - *Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services*

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

No items.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

FOR INFORMATION

Forthcoming meeting dates are set out below. All meetings will be held in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

Thursday 30 September, 2021 at 10.00 am
Thursday 21 October, 2021 at 10.00 am
Thursday 25 November, 2021 at 10.00 am
Thursday 20 January, 2022 at 10.00 am
Thursday 17 February, 2022 at 10.00 am
Thursday 17 March, 2022 at 10.00 am



ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

24 JUNE 2021

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Tim Fleming (In the Chair)

Councillors: Gordon Cranney, Angela Falconer, Sue Little, Darren Price and Amy Prince.

Also present: Christopher Akers-Belcher (Hartlepool Healthwatch), Frank Harrison and Evelyn Leck

Officers: Jill Harrison, Director of Adult and Community Based Services
Gemma Ptak, Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Carl Richardson

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2021

Received.

Reference was made to Minute 24 'Allotment Review Update' and the past issues highlighted by allotment holders. The Director of Adult and Community Based Services restated that the review would involve full consultation with all allotment holders and to this extent the Focus Group had been disbanded as it was considered it did not represent the views of all allotment holders. The previously proposed rules changes had been suspended to allow a full review of the service. The Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services stated that the consultation plan would be submitted to this Committee and would allow all allotment holders the opportunity to engage with the process. Members supported

the comments and looked forward to a more positive and inclusive approach to allotments in the town.

4. The Role and Remit of the Adult and Community Based Services Committee (*Director of Adult and Community Based Services*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide background on the Committee's role and remit to Committee Members.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Adult and Community Based Services, together with the Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services gave a presentation to the Committee outlining the role and remit of the Adult and Community Based Services Committee as set out in the Council Constitution and the service areas that fell under its management. The presentation also included a brief overview of the Council's current budget position.

The presentation outlined Members' role and the specific service issues for Adult Social Care, Preventative and Community Based Services, Commissioned Services and the challenges and priorities the services faced in the immediate future.

Members welcomed some of the new developments highlighted in the presentation and highlighted the development of cycleways in particular.

Members questioned the roll-out of Covid-19 vaccinations to care home staff. The Director stated she would share detailed figures with Members after the meeting but stated there had been a very good uptake of the vaccine so far. There had been no cases of positive Covid-19 tests in care homes in the past two months.

Members acknowledged the concerns around the future budget and referred to the campaign to seek 'levelling-up' funding for Hartlepool.

The Healthwatch representative questioned the hospital discharge process for Hartlepool residents and asked if there was any benchmarking against the national model as there was some concerns being raised with Healthwatch that this was not always being followed and there was particular concern that there were still being some late night hospital discharges. The Healthwatch representative also asked if the roll-out to Community Hubs becoming a first point of contact for social care was still to happen this month. The Assistant Director stated that there had been a

slight delay in the roll-out of the first point of contact due to some staffing issues during the pandemic and an update would be provided to the Committee. In relation to the discharge processes, the Director stated that this was a long-standing challenge and she would ask the Assistant Director, Adult Social Care to contact Healthwatch direct to discuss the issues being reported to them.

A Member highlighted the investment into the Borough Hall and questioned if a similar scheme was proposed for the Civic Centre. The Assistant Director stated that the Civic Centre building fell under the management of the Finance and Policy Committee but that there was an asset management review underway and any issues would be most appropriately raised with the Assistant Director, Development and Growth. A member of the public also highlighted the roof leaks in the contact centre.

Decision

That the presentation and discussions be noted.

5. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

A Member noted that there were no Covid-19 checks on those entering the building, such as temperature tests and asked if these should be implemented. The Director of Adult and Community Based Services indicated that she would pass the comment onto the Director of Public Health but highlighted that a temperature test was not a particularly accurate means of checking for Covid-19. Anyone could, however, collect free lateral flow testing kits from the Middleton Grange Shopping Centre.

The meeting concluded at 11.35 am.

H MARTIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 6 JULY 2021

ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

29 July 2021



Report of: Assistant Director (Preventative and Community Based Services)

Subject: ALLOTMENT COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non-key decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide details of the proposed Allotment Communication Strategy which will gather information to support the strategic Allotment Review.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 A report was submitted to Committee on 12 March outlining the need to develop an Allotment Strategy to understand future priorities, identify service design and operations, and ensure access, inclusion and opportunity for all residents who are interested in being part of the allotment community.

3.2 The Allotment Strategy will be customer centric and ensure consideration of viability, desirability and sustainability of allotments and the service model in which they operate. Communication with tenants is a critical part of the ongoing process.

4. PROPOSED STRATEGY

4.1 The overall aim of the proposed Allotment Strategy is to focus on the needs of the current user group and the wider community that the allotments serve. It will look to evolve service operations, encourage a wider demographic to access allotments within the Borough and to make the service more customer focused. It is hoped that by doing this, the service will be more inclusive and accessible, and create stronger links into communities.

- 4.2 The Communication Strategy has been developed to inform the process but also to enable effective two way communication with tenants, partners, associations and the wider community on a sustained basis. A copy of the strategy communication plan is provided at **Appendix 1**.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Allotment Service communicates with tenants, allotment sites and associations through various routes including discussions with site associations, Allotment Focus Group meetings, monthly e-newsletters, regular updates on notice boards and a text messaging service. Whilst these methods support the day to day management of sites, in order to ensure that the Allotment Strategy is reflective of the needs and aspirations of the whole community, wider more proactive consultation is required.
- 5.2 A programme of consultations will be held in order to listen to tenants and build relationships with individuals and associations to understand how best to support allotments sites. In addition it is envisaged that there will be wider consultation with residents on the allotment waiting list, stakeholders and voluntary groups to ensure that voices outside of the existing allotment community can be heard, and provide them with an opportunity to shape the aspirations for the allotment offer in Hartlepool.
- 5.3 Methods of consultation will include;
- Providing hard and electronic copies of questionnaires.
 - Holding drop in sessions on allotment sites and at central locations to capture comments that don't fit within the pro-forma of a questionnaire.
 - Direct approaches to voluntary and community groups, including Allotment Associations.

A social media campaign and series of press releases will inform people of the opportunity to take part in the discussions, along with information about events on site notice boards and via the e-newsletter. Individuals will be incentivised to take part with the offer of being entered into a prize draw.

- 5.4 It is proposed that the consultation will take place from mid-August to the end of September with initial results shared in November. This consultation will feed into the review of the Allotment Service and be the starting point for the development of the Allotment Strategy.

6. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 There are no legal considerations associated with this report.

7. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The consultation and subsequent Allotment Strategy will be delivered within the existing budget. The outcome of the consultation will feed into ongoing considerations regarding how the service can become self-sustaining.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There is a risk that the proposed Allotment Strategy will not be reflective of the needs and aspirations of tenants and the wider community without the involvement of those parties in the process. This risk will be mitigated by the approaches outlined above to encourage participation.
- 8.2 While there are no specific financial risks identified at the present time, it must be noted that it may not be possible to deliver the aspirations of current tenants and potential future users of the service within the available budget and resources. Efforts will be made to minimise this risk through use of more innovative approaches, engagement of the Voluntary and Community Sector and use of social capital to support further development of allotment provision, but it will be important to manage expectations.

9. STAFFING

- 9.1 There are no staffing implications. The Allotment Communication Strategy will be delivered within the existing staff resource.

10. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 Historically, allotments have suffered from crime and anti social behaviour including vandalism, arson, theft and fly tipping. The Communication Strategy is an opportunity to engage with tenants to understand the issues and experiences on site in relation to security and their future priorities.

11. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 Allotments are an important Council asset comprising 38 hectares (94 acres) of public land within the Borough. The service continues to manage the land in the most appropriate, cost effective way.

12. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY

- 12.1 Allotments provide benefits through increasing access to a healthy diet (fresh fruit and vegetables), physical activity, engagement with the natural environment and social interaction, all of which have proven benefits to

health and wellbeing. The Strategy will provide a chance for wider engagement with the community to understand how the service can be more responsive to their needs and consider opportunities for different ways in which the service can be accessed.

13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 Access and inclusion will be a key consideration of the Communication Strategy ensuring that it is available for all who wish to take part.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 It is recommended that the Committee agree the Allotment Communication Strategy.

15. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 It was agreed at Council on 17 September 2020 that a review of the allotment service would be carried out. This Communication Strategy will provide the basis of the evidence gathering which the review will be built on.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Adult and Community Based Services Committee, 12 March 2021, Allotment Review Update.

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Preventative and Community Based Services

Allotment Communication Strategy



Content

1. Introduction

2. Current Communication Methods

3. Proposed Consultation

4. Budget and Resources

5. Data Analysis

6. Future Actions

Communication Strategy

1 Introduction

Good communication and building relationships with site associations and individual tenants is essential to strengthening links with the allotment community. This document sets out ways in which the service will gather the thoughts and suggestions of tenants, residents, stakeholders and the voluntary and community sector, and feed these into the development of a strategy for the service. The feedback will be the base for future working, in partnership with tenants and associations.

The objectives of the strategy are:

- Understand the aspirations of tenants.
- Gain knowledge regarding the current and future requirements for allotment sites in order to develop a Strategy for the allotments.
- Building relationships in order to support the delivery of the Allotment Strategy.

2 Current communication methods

The Allotment Service communicates with tenants, allotment sites, and associations through the following routes:

- The site associations pro-actively report issues affecting their site from time to time.
- The Allotment Focus Group meets on a quarterly basis for the consultation and communication of allotment information with a view to making comments and assisting in information dissemination to the sites its members represent.
- A monthly e-newsletter is distributed to all tenants and associations with a registered email address, reaching approximately half of the tenants registered.
- Regular updates are posted on site notice boards with information and communication releases.
- Text messaging service with updates and requests for information.

Whilst these methods of communication have been sufficient to support the day to day management of sites, it is considered that a wider, more proactive consultation is required in order to understand the aspirations of tenants, residents, stakeholders and the voluntary and community sector, for allotment sites across the town.

3 Proposed Consultation

A programme of consultation will be held in order to listen to tenants and build relationships with individuals and associations to understand how best to support allotments sites. The programme will include:

Participants

The following will be invited to take part:

- Tenants and partners on allotment sites.
- Voluntary and community groups, including associations.
- Residents with an interest in allotments, for example those on the waiting list for sites.

Subjects for consultation

The consultation will cover the following topics:

- Demographic of allotment holders and those interested in taking up an allotment.
- Aspirations for design of plots.
- Aspirations for sites, including site infrastructures and amenities.
- Partnership working, mentoring and community groups.
- Routes to becoming a site user.
- Management and security of sites.
- Communication methods with tenants and partners.

Data collection

The following methods will be used

Drop in Sessions:

- A session will be held at each allotment site with over 10 plots in order to listen to the views of tenants.
- Where a site has less than 10 plots, those allotment holders will be invited to the next nearest allotment site.
- On sites with over 100 plots, two sessions will be held, one during working hours and one on an evening or weekend.
- Each session will have a minimum of two officers available, who will provide a questionnaire for completion and be there to capture issues which are not covered by the pro-forma.

One to One Discussions:

Discussions will be held with site associations and groups linked to sites at mutually convenient times to consider;

- practical issues, in particular in relation to site infrastructure, and
- opportunities for self-management of sites.

Voluntary and community groups will be approached to discuss opportunities for developing the service.

Direct Consultation:

- All tenants will be provided with a hard copy of the questionnaire via the post for completion.
- All tenants on email will receive a link to the questionnaire online as an alternative method in which to provide feedback.
- All partners and prospective tenants on the waiting list will receive information regarding the consultation and invited to take part online or by picking up a hard copy of the questionnaire from key locations, such as the Civic Centre or Central Hub.
- The consultation will be widely publicised in order to enable residents who do not have a direct connection with a site, but have an interest in allotments to enable them to contribute.
- At least two drop in sessions will be held in a central location to provide an opportunity for those who can't make sessions at their own sites or, other residents, to ask questions and capture information they may not be able to submit via a pro forma.

It is envisaged that the programme of sessions and data collection will be held from mid-August through to the end of September.

Raising awareness of consultation and offering incentives

Alongside individual letters to tenants and key stakeholders, a media campaign will publicise the consultation. This will include:

- Press releases on the opening of the consultation, mid-way through to remind people of the consultation and prior to the closing date.
- Social media campaign with information on the Allotments Facebook page.
- Information in the Allotments Newsletter.
- Notices on all boards at sites.
- Automated/group messaging service reminders to tenants.

It is proposed that those who respond will be entered into a prize draw in order to provide an additional incentive to take part. Prizes of vouchers to a local garden centre will be offered to three individuals drawn from all of those who have responded.

4 Budget and Resources

Funding and staff resources will be drawn from the allotment service.

5 Data Analysis and Evaluation

On the closure of the consultation, evaluation will be carried out of the response rate in order to determine,

- if any further evaluation is required, and
- any lessons that can be learnt from the techniques used.

It is proposed that the data will be collated and a summary of the results shared with those parties who took part in November. This will be accompanied by a timeline of future actions

6 Future Actions

The information from the consultation will be used to shape the Allotment Strategy. It is also hoped that this will begin an ongoing conversation with parties who are interested in creating a shared vision for sites across the town.