

Allotment Report February 2024.

Following the recent Finance Committee meeting the budget for the allotments has been carried forward for 2024/25 and increased overall to £3,200.00. This will allow for the supply and fit of the items previously discussed at Council – Stainless steel stand pipe covers, locks, plot holder marker stakes and fitting as required, in addition to the normal annual costs.

Despite contacting the two plumbers on file neither have come back with a firm quote and we will continue to chase.

It was proposed at the Finance Committee that we increase plot holder fees by £10.00 for a full plot and £5.00 for a half plot. This will bring in a further £260.00 per annum to cover some of the costs of the work above. The current pricing is on a par with fees paid for city council allotments, although City have recently proposed a substantial price increase due to come into effect in 2026.

Our annual review of allotments is due to take place in April and at this time we will look to give the required 12 months notice to increase fees. Our increase will take effect in the financial year 2024/25 with charges being c50% of City Council allotments when their full increase comes into effect in 2026.

Councillor Merriman has asked whether we have any liability insurance to cover the allotments. We have been unable to trace any reference to this in the allotment folder. However, there was a copy of the lease which was agreed for 99 years with a nil consideration, making the Parish Council fully accountable for the site. In our view we should have some form of public liability insurance in place in case of an accident occurring on site. With Council's agreement we would propose that this is added to our general insurance when it is reviewed in May.

We have had another request for wood chippings which has been passed to James.

We are now aware that the stop cock tap which is below ground level is also below the water table, hence it floods. Investigations in the past have been made to brick up the facility and make it dry, unfortunately, it proved a difficult and costly option and was abandoned.

Cllr Rudge and Cllr Forrest