

## Proposed Self Management Trial - Halewick Lane Allotments, Adur

### Report by the Director for Communities

#### 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report proposes to introduce Self Management at Halewick Lane Allotments for an initial one year trial period managed by Halewick Allotments Horticultural Association (HAHA) who have formed out of the tenants at the Allotment Site at Halewick Lane, Sompting.

#### 2.0 Background

- 2.1 Presently this allotment site is one of 14 Adur District Council (ADC) sites across the District owned by ADC and managed by the Environment Support team within the Environment Division.
- 2.2 Included in Catching the Wave and the Council's Parks and Open spaces strategy is the aim to promote and facilitate increased community participation wherever possible.
- 2.3 The aim of the self management trial is to gauge for both parties the effectiveness of the Halewick Allotment Horticultural Association (HAHA) in managing the allotment site over the next twelve months. This will allow HAHA the opportunity to forge a working partnership with both the members of the association in day to day running and managing the allotments.
- 2.4 This follows a presentation to allotment overseers on 17 May 2016 at the Shoreham Centre by Andy Edwards, Head of Environment; supported by Councillor Emma Evans - Executive Member for the Environment.
- 2.5 At this meeting, Mrs Sheila Inwards Overseer of Halewick Lane allotments expressed an interest in considering a trial of self-management at their allotment site.
- 2.6 A subsequent meeting took place on 7th September 2016 at Lancing Parish Hall which was well attended by tenants from Halewick Lane to hear a presentation by the Head of Environment on the proposal of self-management. At the presentation, it was agreed to offer every allotment tenant the opportunity to vote on the proposal.

- 2.7 Voting took place by post or email which ended on 22 September 2016, results of the vote were 14 allotment tenants voted in favour of self management whilst 2 tenants voted against the proposal. This equates to 87.5% of those who voted being in favour of self management whilst 12.5% were against self management.
- 2.8 A Service Level agreement is currently being drawn up which details the responsibilities and standards expected of Haha going forward and also responsibilities that will remain with Adur District Council. It will also cover financial arrangements and make provision for regular meetings to discuss and raise issues of concern.
- 2.9 The benefits of the self management trial are:
- Community Sense of Ownership
  - Stronger Community spirit
  - Use of “local knowledge”
  - Faster response to repairs and plot turnover
  - In touch with tenants
  - Costs kept down – Use of Volunteers
  - Ability to apply for Grants - Unavailable to the Council
  - Council- reduced maintenance and admin costs
  - The Council would still be performing a Statutory Duty but through Community delivery
- 2.10 If the trial is successful the next logical step would be to consider a longer term self management agreement at the site and to draw up a more detailed Service Level Agreement. The success of the trial would also be used to highlight the benefits of self management at other allotment sites in Adur. A report would be presented to inform the Executive Member of the results of the trial.
- 2.11 If the trial proves to be unsuccessful for either Party, then the Council will resume the management of the allotment site.

### **3.0 Proposal**

- 3.1 To allow the Association to self manage the allotments including waiting lists, reletting plots, terminating agreements for non cultivation or non payment etc. Safeguards will be in place for ADC Officers to hear appeals as part of the Council's complaints process.
- 3.2 To allow Haha to be responsible for the day to day grounds maintenance operations and to pay for all water used direct and determine what priorities the tenants agree are met using their own labour as volunteers or, buy in services as appropriate.
- 3.2 To support, monitor and review the trial over the next 12 months in order to gauge the success of the trial and to make appropriate adjustments to help secure a positive outcome.

## 4.0 Legal

- 4.1 Pursuant to the provisions of section 123 Local Government Act 1972 the Council has the power to dispose of land held by them in any manner they wish subject to the proviso that this should not be for a consideration less than the best that can be reasonably obtained without the consent of the Secretary of State. This proviso was softened following the General Disposal Consent (England) 2003 which gives consent for disposal of any interest in land which the Council considers will help it to secure the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area.

The criteria derive from the Local Government Act 2000 which states at section 2 (1) that

*“Every local authority are to have power to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve any one or more of the following objects—*

*(a)the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of their area,*

*(b)the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of their area, and*

*(c)the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area.”*

Section 1 Localism Act 2011 provides a general power of competence enabling local authorities to do an anything that individuals generally may do.

Following the introduction of the Act authorities are being encouraged by Central Government to transfer assets to community groups in order to achieve the aims set out by the provisions above and to identify assets of community value. The proposals set out in this report would assist the Council in achieving these aims.

## 5.0 Financial implications

- 5.1 Income from annual allotment tenancy fees will be retained by HAHA = £1,350 per annum. However the overall saving to the Council will be more than recouped by Support Officer time and Grounds maintenance staff time being reallocated to other priorities. Also savings from reduced equipment costs, savings from water bills and other maintenance costs for the Council.

## 6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 **That the Executive Member for the Environment approve the trial allotment self-management of Halewick Lane Allotments for a 12 month period and authorises the Head of Environment to negotiate a Service Level Agreement on behalf of the Council with HAHA.**

**Local Government Act 1972**  
**Background Papers: None**

**Contact Officer:**

Andy Edwards

Head of Environment

Commerce Way

Tel: 01273 263137

e-mail: [andy.edwards@adur-worthing.gov.uk](mailto:andy.edwards@adur-worthing.gov.uk)

## **Schedule of other matters**

### **1.0 Council Priority**

1.1 The proposed scheme helps to contribute to the Council's aim of working in partnership with representatives of the local community to help shape front line services.

### **2.0 Specific Action Plans**

2.1 There is no specific action plan associated with this report.

### **3.0 Sustainability Issues**

3.1 Empowerment of HAHA through greater Community involvement will improve sustainability

### **4.0 Equality Issues**

4.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

5.1 Increased community involvement will lead to a reduction in asb through greater participation at the Allotments

### **6.0 Human Rights Issues**

6.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **7.0 Reputation**

7.1 The Council's reputation will be enhanced through greater Community Engagement and involvement

### **8.0 Consultations**

8.1 Consultation was carried out with the Allotment overseers across all Adur Allotments and following this consultation with the tenants of Halewick Lane specifically on self-management

### **9.0 Risk Assessment**

9.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **10.0 Health & Safety Issues**

10.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

## **11.0 Procurement Strategy**

11.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

## **12.0 Partnership Working**

12.1 Council Officers will work with HAHA to deliver a statutory function through partnership working