

## PILSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MEETING	Pilsley Parish Council
DATE	3 February 2025
ITEM No.	Item
REPORT BY	Parish Clerk
TITLE	Pilsley Allotments

### 1. BACKGROUND

#### Allotment Land Ownership

- 1.1 It is commonly known that the allotment land was gifted to the parish of Pilsley after the first world war to be used in perpetuity as an allotment garden. A statement from a parishioner who took an allotment in 1963 advised that rent went direct to Pilsley Parish Council who have managed the allotments, kept them in good order and paid all the water charges. In 2001 the Barlow Hill Allotment Association was formed and rent was then payable to the Association, who paid an annual rent to lease the land to Pilsley Parish Council.
- 1.2 The Parish Council holds the Register of Title for the Allotment Land, reference DY505160, dated 2/8/2016. The value of the land at that time was £80,000.

#### Allotment Lease

- 1.3 At a Parish Council meeting on 26/3/2003 the Council agreed to offer the allotment Association 1 year lease of the allotment site at a nil rent, with the Council continuing to pay the Water Bill, but recharging the cost. It was agreed the Chair would approach NEDDC to draw up lease and the Council would review arrangements in future years (minute reference (124).
- 1.4 The Chair reported, at a Parish Council meeting on 29/4/2003, that she had approached NEDDC to draw up lease with Allotment Association. The lease was to make clear the allotments remain in Parish Council ownership for allotment purposes (minute reference (minute reference 139).
- 1.5 The Allotment Association made representation at the Parish Council meeting 29/3/2003 and the Council agreed to consider minor amendments to the draft lease (minute reference 79) with the lease being approved at Parish Council meeting on 31/3/2004 (minute reference 146).
- 1.6 The lease was set up from 1/4/2004, for a period of 5 years, with an annual rent of £100 payable from the Allotment Association to the Parish Council. There is a record of a renewal lease in 2009 but nothing since then except a letter from the Chair of the Allotment Association dated 14/9/2020 advising a long term lease had been in place since 2004 and the Association were happy to continue with the arrangement.

#### Allotment Finances

- 1.7 The last rental payment of £100 was received from the Allotment Association on 31/3/2015 for tax year 2014/20.
- 1.8 The Parish Council signed a 15 year phone mast lease with Cornerstone Communications on 20/2/2017.
- 1.9 There were negotiations between the Council and the Allotment Association to agree a financial agreement in relation to the phone mast rent payable to the Council. During 2016/2017 discussions were taking place Based on a decision of the Parish Council at meeting 5/12/2016 (minute reference 146/16) a letter was sent to the Allotment Association offering 3 options<sup>1</sup>. There is no reference to deleting the annual rent payable by the Allotment Association.

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<sup>1</sup> Annual payment of £500; 6m storage container & annual payment of £200; 6m storage container & one-off payment of £1000.

- 1.10 The Parish Council have paid an annual grant of £500 to the Allotment Association since 2018/2019 to date.

## **2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 2.1 There is no formal signed lease in place between the Parish Council and the Allotment Association.
- 2.2 Two requirements<sup>2</sup> in the original lease have lapsed since 2020.

## **3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The lease to be revived from 1 April 2025 following a review of the terms with the Allotment Association between now and then.
- 3.2 Lead Councillors to sit on Allotment Association meetings and feedback to the Council to be agreed.
- 3.3 A review of the Allotment rules be undertaken, if not already done so in the past 5 years, by the Allotment Association.
- 3.4 A schedule of lease renewal dates to be on the Council Business Plan tracker.

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<sup>2</sup> Annual Inspection of the Allotments and 2 Parish Councillors to sit as an ex officio member of the Allotment Holders' Association

