



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE LEADER

TOPIC - Proposed conversion of land at Firmstone Road, Winnall into allotments.

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director (Governance), the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other relevant overview and scrutiny committee. In addition, all Members are notified.

If five or more Members from those informed so request, the Leader may require the matter to be referred to Cabinet for determination.

Contact Officers:

Case Officer: Damian Offer, Tel: 01962 848419, Email: doffer@winchester.gov.uk

Committee Administrator: Nancy Graham, Tel: 01962 848235, Email: ngraham@winchester.gov.uk

SUMMARY

It has been proposed that the disused play area at Firmstone Road be converted into an allotment site for the benefit of Winnall residents. Once it has been set up, it is proposed that the site be leased to the Winchester New Allotment Holders Society who already leases other allotment sites from the Council. Cabinet approved the funding for the conversion of the site to allotments and advertisement of this disposal via lease on 9 February 2011 and 14 September 2011. (Reports [CAB2118](#) and [WTF159](#) refer).

The consultation period following the advertisement has now ended and this decision notice details the results of the consultation. This notice recommends that approval be given to the conversion of the site to allotments and that the allotment site be included in the proposed lease of allotment sites to Winchester New Allotment Holders Society outlined in Report WTF159.

DECISION

1. That the disused play site at Firmstone Road be converted into allotments.
2. That the allotment site be leased to the Winchester New Allotment Holders Society as set out in this Decision Notice.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

The site at Firmstone Road was previously used as a play area and is now derelict, as it is unsuitable for this purpose. The site has potential to provide allotments for the Winnall community and Cabinet have agreed to pursue this option following a consultation process.

An article was placed in the Winnall newsletter distributed to over 1,000 homes in the Winnall area during November and Council Officers attended the Winnall Forum meeting during December. There was a low response from local residents to this consultation comprising one phone call, one email and one question raised at the meeting. No opposition to the proposal was received although one resident suggested that parking spaces or more garages could be provided on this land, if there was no demand for allotments.

An advertisement was placed in the Mid Hants Observer on 30 November and 7 December 2011 detailing the intention to dispose of the land on a leasehold basis to Winchester New Allotment Holders Society. No representations have been received to this advertisement. As a result, this decision notice proposes that final approval be given for the conversion of this site into allotments and subsequent lease to Winchester New Allotment Holders Society.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The cost of converting the site into allotments is £12,000 and specific funding for the conversion has already been approved at Cabinet on 9 February 2011.

The site will be leased to Winchester New Allotment Holders Society as part of a lease agreement including sites at Trussell Crescent, Greenhill Road and Princes Place. The total revenue from this lease will be £175 as advised by Head of Estates and agreed with the Winchester New Allotment Holders Society.

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION

The intention to dispose of the open space by way of a lease was advertised in the Mid Hants Observer on 30 November and 7 December 2011. An article was also included in the Winnall community newsletter distributed to over 1,000 homes in the

Winnall area during the last week of November. The proposal was discussed at the Winnall Forum on 6 December 2011.

FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

In response to queries from two Councillors, the Head of Landscape and Open Spaces advised that allotments throughout the town were significantly over-subscribed, with a waiting list for both the Council's and Winchester New Allotment Holders Society (WNAHS) sites.

It has been agreed with WNAHS that first refusal on the allotments at Firmstone Road be given to residents of Winnall and the immediate vicinity (and Winnall residents will be the first to be made aware of the new allotments). Should there remain allotments un-let following this, then WNAHS will open the allotments up to other residents. Experience has shown that in letting allotments people do not want to travel far to access their allotment.

It will be up to the WNAHS to decide on the size of the allotment plots, but it is likely there will be 5 or 6 plots established.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED

N/A

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

N/A

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision: 18.01.12

Councillor George Beckett – Leader