



Alton Allotment Association
19 Kings Road
ALTON
GU34 1PZ

Telephone 01420 544630

24th March 2016

Mrs Leah Coney
Alton Town Council
Town Hall
Market Square
ALTON
GU34 1HD

Dear Mrs Coney,

Re: Allotments

Our Association is grateful for your Council staff's continued good cooperation and kind assistance with the administration of the allotments in Alton.

We understand the demands placed on the officers of the Council at a time of financial policy constraints; having to balance the interests of two masters, the public and those whom the public have elected, can be a source of pressure for professional and dedicated public servants.

Alton Town Council's Corporate Strategy Action Plan states "Stakeholder Participation – Ensure clear two way dialogue with local stakeholders, user groups and working parties to engage and resolve concerns to the community and suggesting future opportunities". As the organisation which represent the users of the sole statutory recreational and leisure facility, allotments, we are concerned that your Allotment Officer may not have enough hours allocated, to conduct allotment business as well as a number of other tasks.

Since the beginning of the year, Alton Town Council has invited all ploholders to renew their rent, and to collect membership fees from those who wished to join our Association. We would have hoped that those ploholders who chose not to renew their allotment agreements, would have resulted in these vacant plots being offered to those on the waiting list. Any subsequent correspondence offering plots to prospective tenants would also be shared with our site reps, who could then liaise over access etc. Any such plots not being offered and left neglected, prevents new allotment tenants from having a beneficial start to the growing season.

The Alton Allotment Association is unaware of plots being offered to new tenants, and we have not received information about those ploholders joining us, or received the fees. With our Annual General Meeting on Monday 4th April 2016, an event Alton Town Council's Mayor Cllr. Mrs Pam Jones, has been invited to attend, you can appreciate the urgency of our dependency on your kind assistance in this matter.

We would therefore ask the information requested is provided by early next week at the latest, and that consideration is given to reducing the non-allotment duties of your Allotment Officer, to enable greater staff time to deal with rent collection, allotment applications, site inspection and any subsequent enforcement action. Any recommendation should then could be put through the Allotment Advisory Sub Committee, to the Open Spaces Committee, the Policy & Resources Committee, and if necessary, Full Council.

Yours sincerely,

John Pritchard
Chairman
Alton Allotment Association
Promoting allotment gardening in Alton

www.altonallotments.co.uk
Twitter: @AltonPlots
Facebook: Alton Allotment Association

Cc (via email – Cllr. Matthew Bayliss, Chairman Open Spaces Committee
Cllr. Mrs Sharon Cullen, Chair Allotment Advisory Sub Committee