

COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

19 SEPTEMBER 2012

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS

COMMUNITY GARDEN PROJECT

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek support from Members for the *Grow Your Own Project Melton* and other residents of Melton to use an area in the Country Park which is currently not used and turn it into a community garden where local residents, schools and families can come and grow their own vegetables.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **Members support the use of the area in the Country Park (highlighted in on the map) for the use of a community garden for the residents of Melton.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 A group of Melton residents who want to change unused local land into a space where vegetables can be grown for people in the community. The aim is to transform the land so it is usable, to be able to educate families, groups and children on where vegetables come from and demonstrate ways to cooked and used the produce. Each person who contributes their time to project is able to take away what they put into it.
- 3.2 The project also means that those families who are struggling with the cost of their food shopping can come and grow on the site so that they are able to use what little money they have on other essential things for their family. They also plan to help educate school classes and other local community groups on the food we grow and what can be done with it.
- 3.3 This project strongly links to current policy initiatives such as cutting carbon emissions by 2020 by reducing food miles. Carbon Footprint is a measure of how much carbon dioxide (CO₂) is emitted as a result of a person's activities and lifestyle. Each kilowatt of electricity that we use, mile we drive, and even the things that we choose to purchase contribute to our carbon footprints and thus to our individual impact on the environment. This project is a step for local people to reduce their carbon footprint and do their part towards helping the environment by reducing their food miles by growing their own produce. Food miles are actually a big contributor to carbon emissions. Many of us are quite tempted by fruits and vegetables that are not native to our areas or that are out of season where we live. When we give into temptation and purchase these fruits and vegetables, we are buying something that had to travel hundreds or even thousands of miles to get to our table.
- 3.4 The project will aim to raise awareness, demonstrate the benefits of locally grown food and hope to work with various groups and agencies on promoting recipes for seasonal produce to actively promote the benefits of 'growing your own' and living a little more sustainably. This project is for all members of the community and the group hopes to developed links with local schools and community groups such as

(Learning Hub, Homestart and Mencap) to assist educating people about how to grow their own produce and live more healthily.

3.5 On 7th September the Grow Your Own Project group cleared the site; it was advertised in the Melton Times, Facebook and Twitter accounts.

4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The community garden links into the Melton Corporate Plan. Some of the clear priorities that relate to this project are:

- Improving the well-being of vulnerable people
- Encouraging people to take an active role in their communities
- Improved quality of life for people living in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The land will form part of a licence agreement with the group and as such ultimate responsibility for the land will remain with the Council. The Council has offered the group some in-house support whilst they are getting established.

5.2 The community group have been successful in obtaining the following funding and support:-

- Morrison's - Greenhouse, Seeds, Bags of soil.
- Travis Perkins - 40 pallets, 12 fence panels
- Mars UK - £2,000 plus 25 graduates to clear the site on 7th September
- Melton Building Society - £3,500

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

6.1 Legal implications have been reviewed and a licence agreement has been drawn up between Melton Borough Council and the *Grow Your Own Project*, Appendix B.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1 The location of the community garden is in the There are no direct links in this report.

8.0 EQUALITIES

8.1 This project is inclusive to all Melton residents. The group will encourage those individuals and families who are most in need.

9.0 **RISKS**

9.1 The risks are considered in the table below

Probability



Very High A				
High B				
Significant C				
Low D	1	3		
Very Low E	2			
Almost Impossible F				
	IV Negligible	III Marginal	II Critical	I Catastrophic

→
Impact

Risk No.	Description
1	Grow Your Own Project find issues with the land which requires additional resources from MBC
2	The group decide not to continue with the project
3	There are drainage issues with the land

10.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE**

10.1 Food miles are a large contributor to carbon emissions. This project strongly links to current policy initiatives such as cutting carbon emissions by 2020 by reducing food miles. It is a step for local people to reduce their carbon footprint and do their part towards helping the environment by reducing their food miles by growing their own produce.

11.0 **CONSULTATION**

11.1 This project has been developed in line with current polices and priorities contained in:

- Melton's Corporate Plan 2011 - 2015
- Melton Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2013
- MEAP Action Plan

Consulted with:

- Melton Borough Council (including Environment Team, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods, Funding Officer, Legal Team)
- Residents of Melton – through Community Forum 2012 and Melton Times
- Friends of the Country Park
- Ward Councillor

12.0 **WARDS AFFECTED**

12.1 Newport Ward.

Contact Officer: Emma Trahearn - Community (Policy) Officer
Raman Selvon – Principal Assistant (Environment)

Date: 31 August 2012

Appendices: Appendix A- Site location Map and photo
Appendix B- License Agreement
Appendix C- Equalities Impact assessment

Background Papers: None

Reference: X/C'ttees, Council & Sub-C'ttees/CSA/2012-13/19-09-12/HR-
Community Garden Project