

## COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

18<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2013

### REPORT OF HEAD OF COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

#### COMMUNITY GARDEN LICENCE EXTENSION

##### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on the progress of the 'Melton Grow Your Own' community garden project and seek Members support for renewing/extending their licence

##### 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **Members endorse and support the work of the Melton Grow Your Own Community Garden group to date**
- 2.2 **Members agree to the revoking and reissuing of their current licence as detailed at 3.9**
- 2.3 **Members are requested to give full delegated powers to the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Head of Central Services and Solicitor to the Council in regard to agreeing and adding terms and conditions to any further licences as detailed at 3.10**

##### 3.0 KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 At the Community and Social Affairs Committee of 19th September 2012 Members agreed to grant a two year license to the 'Melton Grow Your Own' Community Garden Project
- 3.2 The Community Garden Project was set up to provide a space for individuals, families, schools and groups primarily to learn about gardening and to grow their own vegetables. The groups' objective is to get people within the community involved and enthusiastic about gardening and for groups and schools to use the Community Garden as a way to teach the benefits of growing and eating local healthy food.
- 3.3 The project has received support from Mars, Melton Building Society and The Melton Times and has attracted interest from groups and schools within the local area
- 3.4 The group have been permitted to utilise a small discreet unused section of Melton Country Park close to the Doctors Lane entrance and despite the adverse weather conditions since their licence was granted, they have managed to make a start on preparing the site for the Community Garden
- 3.5 The initial site clearance included the removal of substantial amounts of Ragwort from the site itself as well as the immediate surroundings with it being mostly taken off site for disposal. Care was taken to minimise any additional spread of the noxious weed during its removal. With the site cleared it is now much easier to immediately identify and tackle any Ragwort re-growth and the group intend to continue managing this unwanted weed through prompt removal and appropriate disposal.
- 3.6 From donations received the project has been able to pay for drainage works and purchase a polythene tunnel. They also managed to secure a community grant which was used to create a raised bed area and a temporary path to ensure the site can be accessed by as wide an ability group as possible
- 3.7 The group have now been offered a substantial Big Society Grant that would provide the

funding needed for a fence to ensure the area is secure and for substantial quantities of topsoil to fill the raised beds and rejuvenate the soil for the main community plot.

- 3.8 The Big Society Funding is conditional on the group being able to demonstrate their intention and commitment to remain as a Community Garden group beyond 2014
- 3.9 The current licence only provides them with the site up until 2014 so accordingly Members are requested to consider the following action that would allow them to access the funding .
- 3.10 To revoke the current two year licence (01/11/13 to 31/10/14) by mutual agreement at the end of one year (31/10/13) and issue a new two year licence (01/11/13 to 31/10/15) thereby giving sufficient length of permitted use of the site and the groups commitment to meet the Big Society Funding condition allowing the group to receive the monies they need for the a further development of the site as detailed at 3.6
- 3.11 Should Members be minded to support this proposal the intention would be prior to the renewed licence expiry date, have an agreed set of termination conditions and clauses to be added to any further licences should they be granted along with any other additional conditions that might be required to ensure the group do not acquire any rights of tenure. Members are requested to give full delegated powers to the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods to negotiate and agree any and all such new licence terms and conditions as may be required

#### 4.0 **POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no direct policy or corporate implications as a result of this report

#### 5.0 **FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no direct financial or other resource implications as a result of this report

#### 6.0 **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS**

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications as a result of this report

#### 7.0 **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

- 7.1 The Melton Grow Your Own Community Garden group have been added to the 'Friends of Melton Country Park's' public liability insurance. They are minded as a priority to ensure the safety of all those participating with the project as well as those visiting the site and are committed to making due reference to all health and safety provisions required of the site and its operation as the initiative develops

#### 8.0 **EQUALITIES**

- 8.1 The Melton Grow Your Own Community Garden group are developing the site with a view to being as inclusive as possible. The developing site is intended to be as accessible as possible and be able to accommodate and facilitate those less able in the community to participate, contribute and have a share in the rewards of the groups combined efforts

#### 9.0 **RISKS**

9.1 **Probability**



Very High A				
High B				
Significant C				
Low D				
Very Low E			1	
Almost Impossible F				
	IV Neg- ligible	III Marg- inal	II Critical	I Catast- rophic

**Impact**

Risk No.	Description
1	The proposal to withdraw and re-issue the licence to use the site is agreed

10.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE**

10.1 'Growing Your Own' methods of food production for individuals and families are generally held to have the lowest carbon footprint of all methods of food production and as such a productive Community Garden would be expected to have a positive impact in regards to climate change concerns

11.0 **CONSULTATION**

11.1 The Melton Grow Your Own Community Garden Project was advertised widely in the area local to the site and as a result the Project attracted and continues to attract a healthy and more than viable number of participants.

12.0 **WARDS AFFECTED**

12.1 The project is in Newport ward and as a local Community Garden group it is mainly but not exclusively that ward that will be affected by the outcome of this report

Contact Officer        Raman Selvon

Date:                    9 September 2013

Appendices :         None

Background Papers:   None

Reference :            X : Committees\CSA/2013-14/18-09-13/HR- Grow Your Own