

DUNOON AND DISTRICT ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION.

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report gives Members updated information regarding the potential provision of a site for use by the Dunoon and District Allotment Association.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider this update on work undertaken to date and make recommendations on the future progression of this matter.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 Members will recall that for a considerable period of time the Council has been working with the Dunoon and District Allotment Association to facilitate the development of an area of ground suitable for the provision of allotments. The Association has a number of members in the area who are awaiting this provision and who have expressed an interest in having an allotment.
- 3.2 Since the Council has been working with the Association, a total of 33 sites have been investigated for potential use, but none has been able to be progressed to completion, either because the landowner has not been willing to sell or lease the ground, or the Association have deemed the ground unsuitable for their purposes.
- 3.3 Despite the difficulties which have been experienced, when the matter was last discussed, in August 2009, it remained the wish of the Area Committee that the provision of ground for allotments be progressed.
- 3.4 Over the course of autumn 2009 an area of ground was identified at Rashfield, by Dunoon which it was felt could be suitable for the provision of allotments. The ground is owned by Forestry Commission

Scotland, but early indications from them were that they would be agreeable to the land being used in this way.

- 3.5 A visit to the site was carried out by the Area Chair, the Customer Services Manager, and Forestry Commission representatives. Unfortunately, members of the Allotment Association were not in attendance, though they subsequently viewed the ground independently.
- 3.6 Forestry Commission staff undertook a significant degree of work in drafting a draft lease of the ground to the Council. They were agreeable that this would be at minimal rent, and were also agreeable that the ground, once leased to the Council, could thereafter be leased on to the Allotments Association for them to develop.
- 3.7 Informal discussions with the planning department of the National Park Authority indicated that it was likely that the use of ground for allotments would be broadly acceptable.
- 3.8 There appear to now only be two members of the Allotment Association who are carrying out work on behalf of the group in taking their quest for ground forward, and meetings have been held with them on a number of occasions over the winter and spring. They have expressed doubt about the suitability of the ground at Rashfield, primarily due to the amount of work which they feel will be required to render the ground capable of cultivation, and due to the costs which they envisage this might involve. In April, they agreed to canvass their members on the matter; on 26th June notification was received that the Association do not wish to proceed with the ground at Rashfield, as they feel that it would be far too much work to take on, and that in the present financial climate it could be very difficult to obtain funding to take such work forward. They further confirmed that it is only this piece of ground which they do not wish to proceed with at this time, but that if the Council can identify something more suitable they still aim to provide allotments for their members.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

Members are asked to note this updated information, and make recommendations on the future progression of this matter.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

Policy: None
Financial: None
Personnel: None
Equal Opportunities: None

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