

Questions by Members of the Council under Procedure Rule 10.0

Council – 24 January 2022

Questions from Councillor Trebar Received on 18 January 2022

Question:

With regard to the new expenditure for the much needed allotment provision in Watford, please can the Mayor tell us how much of the funding (which the Council committed to in 2014) remains set aside for the re-provision of the lost Farm Terrace Allotments, which have not yet been fully delivered.

Answer:

Background

In January 2013, Watford BC gave approval for an investment of £750k to facilitate both the re-provision of Farm Terrace and the relocation of the tenants on the site at this time. In July 2014, the Council approved a comprehensive compensation package to support Farm Terrace allotment holders through the process of relocation and help establish them on new plots on alternative sites. This included financial compensation as well as help with relocation. Those who chose not to continue as Watford allotment holders were also entitled to financial compensation.

Use of budget

The £750k, therefore, was used to cover the cost of:

- 50 new allotment plots at Paddock Road – this proved to be more expensive than originally budgeted as the work needed to bring them up to allotment standard (such as bringing in topsoil) was more extensive than originally estimated
- Compensation to Farm Terrace allotment holders – payments to both those giving up their plots and those moving to new plots
- Relocation costs – all those moving to new plots were offered support in moving and relocating items as well as, in some cases, help in getting the new plots ready for cultivation

Allotment supply

The council has been managing allotment vacancies, which, until the recent increase in demand which arose during the pandemic, were more than sufficient to meet

requests for plots. With the rise in demand, we are now allocating additional budget (£550k over three years) to support exploring potential new provision and then, where feasible, to creating the plots for our residents looking to be part of our very vibrant and enthusiastic allotment community. We will continue to monitor applications to understand the demand for plots.