Report of: Director of Leisure and Wellbeing  
and Director of Development and Regeneration 

Relevant Portfolio Holders: Councillor Y. Gagen & Councillor I. Moran 

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SUBJECT: ALLOTMENT LEASE – RICHMOND AVENUE, BURSCOUGH 

Wards affected: Burscough 

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT 
1.1 To seek approval to extend the lease term for the Councils allotment site at Richmond Avenue in Burscough. 

2.0 RECOMMENDATION 
2.1 That the Director of Leisure and Environment be authorised to take all necessary steps to grant a new lease to Burscough Allotment Society for a term of 25 years from the date of completion of the lease. 

3.0 BACKGROUND 
3.1 In 2010 a report was presented to Cabinet (Operational Assets – Managed Allotment Sites – 16 March 2010) which set out a process for new management arrangements for all of our allotments following a Government White Paper in 2008 entitled "Advancing Assets for Communities". Our report looked to back this initiative by seeking and supporting devolved management for our allotments. As a result of that report, authorisation was given by Cabinet for new management arrangements for allotment societies. These arrangements included setting standard terms for Society leases of 12 months for new societies and 7 years for established and capable societies.
3.2 This process has proven successful with most of our allotments now under some level of devolved management, and all of the sites fully occupied with waiting lists.

3.3 In 2015 a further report was brought to Cabinet to request that the Council granted new leases for a term of 25 years on our sites at Houghtons Road and Liverpool Road, Skelmersdale. Those sites are fully managed by Skelmersdale Horticultural Society and Liverpool Road Allotment Society respectively (Allotment Societies). The new longer term leases will enable the Allotment Societies to take advantage of external funding streams which often require this length of tenure to provide the required security for that funding. Cabinet approved the granting of these leases.

4.0 CURRENT POSITION

4.1 We have now been approached by Burscough Allotment Society (BAS) with a request that their lease on Richmond Avenue Allotments in Burscough be extended to 25 years in line with the leases to the Allotment Societies.

4.2 BAS was established in 2011 and it was granted an initial 12 month lease to establish itself. Having successfully completed this term it was deemed by officers that it was working in a satisfactory manner and it was then granted a 7 year lease. This lease required BAS to undertake all routine maintenance, plot allocation and management, waiting list management, rental collection, water supply, site security and insurance.

4.3 This lease is now coming to an end and BAS have requested a new lease for a term of 25 years to allow them to apply for external grant funding to improve their facility.

5.0 PROPOSALS

5.1 It is the view of the Director of Leisure and Environment that BAS has been managing all of its responsibilities on the allotment site in a satisfactory manner and in order for it to access external funding the term of its new lease should be 25 years, in line with the Allotment Societies, with full management responsibilities.

6.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The provision of allotment facilities provides healthy outdoor activities and promotion of healthy eating for the local community. Community management of the facility will also create empowerment and local ownership of the site which in turn will support its management and function.

7.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
7.1 A new 25 year lease for BACS would give it the opportunity to improve the allotment site by accessing external grant funding without the need for Council investment.

8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 The lease offered to BAS would have the similar terms as the leases to the Allotment Societies mentioned above. The lease would include a clause to allow termination of the lease by the Council should BACS default on the terms and conditions of the lease or, so far as is lawfully possible, if the Council requires the allotment site for other purposes.

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**Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

**Equality Impact Assessment**

There is a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and/or stakeholders. Therefore an Equality Impact Assessment is required. A formal equality impact assessment is attached as an Appendix to this report, the results of which have been taken into account in the Recommendations contained within this report.

**Appendices**

1. Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment