

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Allotments Committee** held on 30th October 2017 at the Parish Centre, Warboys.

PRESENT

Councillors Mrs M P Bucknell, Mrs J M Cole, B L Correll, R J Dykstra, Mrs M H Harlock, Mrs J A Tavener, G C M Willis and Dr S C Withams.

Mr A and Mrs B Taylor (Allotments Association).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Ms L A Gifford and P S Potts.

01/17 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Upon being moved by Councillor Mrs Cole and seconded by Councillor Mrs Harlock, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor Dr S C Withams be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

Councillor Dr Withams in the Chair.

02/17 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Upon being moved by Councillor Mrs Cole and seconded by Councillor Willis, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor B L Correll be appointed Vice Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

03/17 MINUTES

Upon being moved and seconded, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3rd April 2017 were signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

04/17 MEMBERS INTERESTS

Mrs B Taylor declared a disclosable pecuniary interest as a tenant of an allotment from the Parish Council. Councillor R J Dykstra and Mr A Taylor declared similar interests as their spouses were tenants of an allotment. Dispensations to speak but not vote on matters affecting the allotments had already been granted to Councillor Dykstra.

RESOLVED

that a dispensation to speak but not vote be granted to Mr and Mrs Taylor on matters appearing on the agenda.

05/17 MATTERS ARISING

The Committee noted that there were no matters arising from the Minutes of its meeting held on 3rd April 2017 that would not be dealt with under Minute No. 06/17 below.

(Councillor Mrs Tavener arrived at the meeting at this point in the proceedings.)

06/17 ALLOTMENTS

A report was submitted by the Clerk (a copy of which had been circulated to all Members), summarising the actions taken since the previous meeting of the Committee and drawing attention to the issues that had been discussed by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs Cole and the Clerk at a meeting with the Association's representatives on 11th October 2017.

The Committee noted that tenants had appreciated the delivery of a larger load of soil improver to the allotments in the autumn compared to the previous year and that this had lasted for almost three weeks before it had all been collected by tenants for use on their plots. Although it had been suggested by the Association's representatives at the liaison meeting that they would welcome a further delivery in 2018, Councillor Mrs Bucknell suggested that a double load be delivered. The Clerk pointed out that this would be dependent upon a grant being awarded for the cost of the material by Red Tile Wind Farm Trust Fund Ltd who had funded the previous two deliveries in full. In addition, two deliveries would have to be made at separate times as the largest vehicle possible to gain access through the entrance gate had been used on the last occasion.

The Chairman reported that she had carried out a visit to the allotment site earlier in the day and had noted that many of the numbers supplied to identify the individual plots were missing. As a result the Clerk agreed to ask the Handymen to make replacement numbers over the winter period.

The Chairman also announced that she had become aware that one of the tenants had won first prize in both the Ramsey and Bury shows for his cabbages which it was agreed should be publicised to encourage prospective tenants to come forward.

It had been reported at the liaison meeting that 5 full and 1 half plots were now vacant and the Clerk reported that a further plot had been given up since that time. The Committee confirmed that there was no objection to other tenants replanting any bushes etc. that remained on the vacant plots. Both the Clerk and Mr Taylor on behalf of the Association undertook to advertise the availability of vacant plots, although the Committee confirmed that tenancies should continue to be restricted to residents of the Parish of Warboys.

With regard to pest control, the Committee concurred with a suggestion arising from the liaison meeting that two rabbit traps be purchased to try to reduce the problem of rabbit

infestation. Councillor Mrs Cole offered to accept any rabbits that were caught for relocation elsewhere.

Mr Taylor advised that one of the tenant's dogs had killed some rats at the allotments. The Clerk reported that bait had been laid in marked tubes by the Handymen and a notice placed on the notice board advising tenants not to handle any of the poison blocks without wearing gloves if they discovered them elsewhere. However Councillor Mrs Cole advised that treated wheat should be used which the rats then ate in the tubes as opposed taking blocks away.

Mr Taylor reported that he intended to try to open some of the vents in the shipping container to reduce the build-up of fumes and that he would replace the notice board with one fitted with a canopy to prevent damage by the weather.

The Clerk advised that a local farmer had supplied some additional planings which had been used by the Handymen to fill in the potholes in the roadway at the allotments.

The Clerk also reported that a local businessman had agreed to supply a number of pallets so work could begin on the construction of the first of the compost bays to be provided with a size of 1.5 m. x 1.5 m and 1.5m height as agreed at the liaison meeting.

Mr Taylor mentioned that the adjoining field was now overgrown as a result of which weeds were spreading on to the allotment plots.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Clerk be requested to purchase two traps for use in catching and relocating rabbits at the allotments;
- (b) that the Clerk be requested to ensure that treated wheat is used as opposed to poison blocks to eradicate the problem of rats at the allotments; and
- (c) that an application be submitted to Red Tile Wind Farm Trust Fund Ltd for two loads of soil improver in 2018/19..

07/17 BUDGET 2018/19

The Committee considered a summary of income and expenditure for Hallgate Allotments for 2016/17 and a forecast for both the current year and 2018/19.

Members were informed that the anticipated balance to be carried forward at the end of the current year was £698 and that, if rents remained unaltered, the balance at the end of 2018/19 was estimated to be £472, assuming all of the plots were let.

RESOLVED

that rents be retained at the same level in 2018/19 at £15 for a full plot and £10 for a half plot.

08/17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Clerk asked if the Committee could re-arrange their next meeting due to personal circumstances and in identifying an alternative date, it was suggested that the meeting of the Leisure Areas Committee be deferred until the receipt of the annual safety inspection report.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the date of the next meeting of the Allotments Committee be brought forward to 19th March 2018; and
- (b) that the Leisure Areas Committee be invited to consider deferring their next meeting scheduled to be held on 19th March until a later date when the report of the annual safety inspection was anticipated.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed.

Chairman.