

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a virtual meeting of the **Allotments Committee** held remotely on 15th March 2021.

PRESENT

Councillor J A Parker, Chairman

Councillors Mrs J M Cole. R J Dykstra Ms L A Gifford, Mrs M H Harlock, P S Potts, Mrs S C Wilcox and Dr S C Withams.

P Bellamy and Mrs F Dykstra (Allotments Association).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs C Evans, S J Green and Mrs A R Wyatt.

09/20 MINUTES

Upon being moved by Councillor Dr Withams and seconded by Councillor Potts, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2nd November 2020 were signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

10/20 MEMBERS INTERESTS

Mr Bellamy and Mrs Dykstra declared disclosable pecuniary interests as tenants of allotments from the Parish Council. Councillor Dykstra declared a similar interest as his wife was an allotment tenant but he had previously received a dispensation to speak but not vote on matters affecting the allotments.

RESOLVED

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

11/20 MATTERS ARISING

The Committee considered the following matter arising from the Minutes of its meeting held on 2nd November 2020:-

Tenancy Conditions

Further to Minute No. 07/20, Councillor Mrs Wilcox advised that she had asked the opinion of colleagues as to whether the revised tenancy conditions approved at the previous meeting applied to existing tenants. Due to the very specific nature of allotment law, a definitive answer was unavailable but it was suggested that it was unlikely to be the case.

Councillor Mrs Wilcox felt that existing tenants could be invited to sign new agreements as the change in terms was favourable to them. In view of the time involved in contacting all tenants and the possibility that some might be unwilling to sign, the Clerk advised that he would undertake further investigations into the matter and report back.

12/20 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, Vice Chairman, Councillor Mrs Cole and the Clerk at a meeting with the Association's representatives on 1st March 2021.

Members were informed that Red Tile Wind Farm Trust Fund Ltd had approved an application for grant in the sum of £360 for the supply of soil improver for allotment tenants and the Clerk reported that he would try to arrange for delivery in the week prior to Easter.

It was reported that currently, one full and one half plot were vacant and available to let. Mr Bellamy advised that he had written an article for inclusion in the next edition of the Warboys Diary to try to attract new tenants.

Although it had been reported that problems continued to be experienced with rabbits at the allotments, there did not appear to be a way of eradicating the problem that was acceptable to tenants as traps previously set by the Handymen had been persistently sprung without any animals being caught.

A delivery of 2½ tons of road planings had been delivered to the allotments in November to fill holes in the roadway. Most of the planings had been spread at the time by the Handymen but ruts had reappeared over the winter. As a result the Handymen had spread the remainder of the planings recently to level the roadway.

Members were informed that the Handymen had re-felted the roof of the former railway carriage but that it was unlikely that this would be feasible much longer as the timbers were becoming very rotted and the carriage would soon be beyond repair. Mrs Dykstra pointed out that some felt had been left next to the carriage and she asked whether one of the bins stored in the carriage could be installed for use by tenants to dispose of litter. As it was possible that tenants would use the bin to dispose of weeds and green waste, Members were of the opinion that this was not advisable.

Members confirmed that they had no objection to a request by the Association's representatives for tenants to dig a small drainage ditch of a spade's width and depth at the eastern border of the plots to try to improve drainage and avoid a repetition of the very wet ground conditions experienced over the winter due to the volume of rainfall.

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

Chairman.