

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Allotments Committee** held at the Parish Centre, Warboys on 1st November 2021.

PRESENT

Councillors R J Dykstra, Ms L A Gifford, Mrs M H Harlock, J A Parker, Mrs C L Sproats, Mrs S J 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 and P S Potts.

01/21 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Upon being moved by Councillor Dr Withams and seconded by Councillor Dykstra, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor J A Parker be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

Councillor Parker in the Chair.

02/21 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Upon being moved by Councillor Dr Withams and seconded by Councillor Dykstra, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor Ms L A Gifford be appointed Vice Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

03/21 MINUTES

Upon being moved by Councillor Dr Withams and seconded by Councillor Ms Gifford, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15th March 2021 were approved as a correct record.

04/21 MEMBERS INTERESTS

Mr Bellamy and Mrs Dykstra declared disclosable pecuniary interests as tenants of allotments from the Parish Council. Councillor R J Dykstra declared a similar interest as his wife was a tenant of an allotment. A dispensation 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 Bellamy and Mrs Dykstra on matters appearing on the agenda.

05/21 MATTERS ARISING

The Committee noted that there were no matters arising from the Minutes of its meeting held on 15th March 2021 that would not be dealt with under Minute No. 06/21 below.

06/21 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 at a liaison meeting with the Association's representatives on 18th October 2021.

The Committee was informed that the delivery of a further load of 20 tons of soil improver to the allotments in the spring had been greatly appreciated by tenants. This had been an annual occurrence for a number of years with funding provided by Red Tile Wind Farm Trust and the Association's representatives had asked if a further application for grant could be made for 2022.

The Clerk reported that it had been a particularly busy six months since the previous meeting. Several tenants had decided to relinquish their tenancies and notices to quit had had to be served on 5 tenants for non-cultivation. Letters also had been sent to several tenants asking them to tidy up their plots. 11 plots had been let to new tenants and two further agreements had been sent to prospective tenants but not yet returned. A number of people had on the waiting list had changed their minds when offered plots after their names had reached the top of the list and two others had not returned agreements sent to them after they had chosen which plot they would like to rent.

Members were informed that 2 full plots remained vacant currently with 1 person on the waiting list. Plots had been let to two residents of Old Hurst as there were no further Warboys residents on the list at the time.

Mr Bellamy offered to write an article for a future edition of the Diary to attract potential new tenants.

Mrs Dykstra reported on problems with rats at the allotments, with the Handymen having responded to a request for bait to be laid on her plot.

The Association's representatives advised that fuel had been stolen from petrol driven equipment stored in the shipping container. Under the circumstances, it was suggested that notices be posted reminding tenants that equipment and tools were left at their own risk.

It was reported that no further problems had been experienced with the roadway over the summer period, although this tended to be more problematic in wet winters.

The Handymen had been cutting hedges around the village and had had several fires on the Council plot to dispose of cuttings, as a result of which there were no complaints about the appearance of the plot.

A new notice board had been installed at the allotments which had been made by a local craftsman free of charge, except for the cost of materials. The Association's representatives confirmed that this was a great improvement on the previous structure.

The Committee was informed that the Scouts and other organisations had only recently started meeting again in person which had meant that it had not been possible to arrange for the youngsters to become involved in the cultivation of plot 18. However the leaders remained keen to make this a success and involve children in growing crops.

Members were also informed that the Moat House Surgery's Social Prescriber had obtained the tenancy of another plot which would be used to encourage patients to become involved in a healthy lifestyle for their physical and mental well-being. Mrs Dykstra mentioned that the previous tenant had left a number of tyres on the plot when the tenancy had ended which the Clerk was requested to try to dispose of.

Mrs Dykstra also drew attention to the height of the hedge alongside plot 1 which was becoming overgrown. The Clerk advised that it was probable that the hedge had been planted by the County Council when the realignment of Fenton Road had taken place to create the A141 bypass in the early 1980s. The condition of the hedge and boundary ditch had been raised with County Council highways staff previously but they had denied any responsibility for maintenance.

RESOLVED

that an application be submitted to Red Tile Wind Farm Trust Fund Ltd for a further delivery of soil improver to the allotments in 2022/23.

07/21 BUDGET 2022/23

The Committee considered a summary of actual income and expenditure in respect of Hallgate Allotments for 2020/21, together with a forecast for both the current year and 2022/23 (copies of which had been circulated).

Following the increase in rents approved by the Committee for 2021/22, the account was estimated to generate a surplus in the current year of £159, increasing to £342 in 2022/23 if all the plots were let.

Under the circumstances, it was

RESOLVED

that rents be retained at their present levels in 2022/23 of £20 for a full plot and £15 for a half plot.

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

Chairman.