

**Minutes of The Allotments Committee Meeting held on  
Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022 at 7.30 pm at The Rackliff Centre**

**Members Present:**

Cllr Doug Smith Chairman; Cllr Liz Ellicott Vice-Chair; Cllr Barry Edwards; Cllr Paul Gripper; Miss Suzanne French and Mr Leon Banks, Committee Members.

**Officer Present:**

Alison Stevens (Locum Clerk)

**Members of the Public:**

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The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced the Locum Clerk and thanked Councillor Ellicott, Suzanne French and Paul Goldsmith for all their hard work.

**1. Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting:**

No-one present intended to film, photograph and/or record the meeting.

**2. To receive and approve apologies for absence:**

Cllr Funnell sent apologies for his absence which were duly accepted by the Committee.

**3. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests:**

Cllrs Smith, Ellicott and Committee Members Miss French and Mr Banks declared Personal and Prejudicial Interests as they are all existing plot holders.

**4. Declarations of Lobbying:**

None.

**5. Minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021:**

These were agreed, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Chairman sign them as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**5.1** Matters outstanding from these minutes (not listed as separate agenda items):

The numbering of plots has been postponed until the Clerk returns.

**5.2** Matters outstanding from previous minutes:

None.

**6. Open session for questions from the public:**

Residents asked;

- i. For the hedges to be cut at the Southwood Road Extension – The Clerk will chase up the Borough Council.
- ii. For another skip – This was covered later on in the meeting (item 8).
- iii. If allotment holders are allowed to cut back tree branches overhanging their allotments. Councillor Smith confirmed they are.
- iv. For it to be noted that three deer have been spotted at the Wickham Gardens allotments. The situation will be monitored.

## **7. Update on padlocks**

New padlocks have been fitted at the allotments which are much larger and more effective than what was there previously. Allotment holders are asked to report any which seize up to Councillor Smith via the Locum Clerk. Councillor Smith will then use a lubricant especially made for the purpose because WD40 dries out and jams the lock.

It was also noted that some allotment holders are failing to mix up the padlock numbers when they leave so the Locum Clerk will send a round robin email out to remind them to mix the numbers up.

## **8. Update on the provision of skips**

The Parish Council supplied two skips for the allotment holders at Southwood Road and the Southwood Road Extension to use following the recent storms. It was not necessary to supply one at Wickham Gardens because there wasn't as much damage.

Councillors resolved to repeat the exercise, but with a slightly larger skip at the Extension, because there is still a lot of rubbish to clear.

## **9. Update on plot allocations and waiting list**

Councillors Ellicott and Smith have spent a lot of time assessing and reallocating the allotments. As a result there is now just one vacancy at the Southwood Road allotments but it is not ready to reallocate. There is one lady on the waiting list. Wickham Gardens has three half size allotments vacant with no waiting list.

It was also noted that the bottom of the Southwood Road allotments (SR50) is being used by Crossways to help those with mental health issues. Crossways is understood to be advertising for a Manager to help develop and maintain their allotment sites

## **10. Update on tree surgery Southwood Road and Wickham Gardens storm damage**

There was some storm damage at each allotment recently, although not as much at Wickham Gardens. Living Forest has been booked to carry out some remedial work on the 29<sup>th</sup> March and will also rectify the security problem.

## **11. Update on tree surgery at the Southwood Road extension**

The Parish Council has written to the owners of the properties whose trees overhang the allotments at the Southwood Road Extension and asked them for permission to reduce the height of them because they are blocking sunlight to the allotments.

The Parish Council has received permission from two owners and will chase the third for a response.

All three areas (two paths and the open area) are due to be cut on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Allotment holders were asked to let the Locum Clerk know if this does or doesn't happen.

## **12. This year's competition and summer BBQ.**

All agreed they were happy with last years' competition. This years' will include an additional category for the 'Best Newcomer'. The competition judge will be somebody neutral and they will be accompanied by a Committee Member.

There will also be a BBQ on the 9<sup>th</sup> July (last years' was cancelled because of the Covid restrictions).

## **13. Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 7.30pm.

IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM ON THIS AGENDA, THE PRESS AND PUBLIC WERE EXCLUDED UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960.

**14. To provide an update to Committee Members**

A claim expected against the Parish Council was not filed, and the case is now closed.

Allotment holders are reminded that they use the allotments at their own risk and sign an agreement to that effect.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Chairman : .....

Dated: .....