

Minutes of Allotment Committee Meeting held in

The Rackliff Centre Lower Green Road on 17th December 2018 at 8.00pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Smith (Chairman), Cllr Edwards (V. Chairman), Cllr Ellicott, Cllr Gordon, Cllr Duncombe, Mrs French and Mr Benoy.

OFFICER PRESENT: Su Denne

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT: Yes

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:** None
3. **Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests-** Cllr Smith, Mrs French and Mr Benoy have allotment plots.
4. **Declarations of Lobbying.** None
5. **Minutes -** To resolve that the minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 17th September 2018 were agreed, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Chairman signed them as a true record.
6. **To Consider – i.** Constructing a plot for less able bodied plot holders – Cllr Smith showed the Committee an article about an allotment plot for less abled people and suggested that RPC should perhaps consider having something similar constructed. After much discussion on location, ease of access and the build itself, it was agreed that the Clerk would contact local councils and other organisations that may have already completed such a project. **To be discussed at the March meeting. ii.** Constructing a plot for new plot holders wishing to try out working a plot – This was considered a good idea in theory, Clerk to obtain costings before the March meeting.
7. **Clerk’s Report** –The Clerk informed the Committee that all but four rents had been received. Despite contacting the four outstanding, more than twice, they had not responded. It was agreed that recorded letters would be sent to them and if no response within seven days the plot would be reclaimed by the RPC. The amendment to the tenancy agreement had been signed by all but ten plot holders and only two of those had raised objections. The Clerk informed one of the objectors that guidance had been sort from two solicitors, specialising in allotment law that the amendments to the tenancy agreement were legal. The Chairman instructed the Clerk to write formally to those who were still outstanding, stating that although they had paid the rent, by not signing the agreement they would forfeit their plot if they did not return the signed amendment.

8. Chairman's Report - Cllr Smith informed the Committee and the public that letters had been sent to plot holders requesting that their plots be cleared of rubbish and the grass and weeds addressed. The plots had not been worked for the whole season. They had been given until the 14th January to carry out the work. A member of the public, a plot holder, hoped that the RPC would keep to their word and evict plot holders who ignored the letter. Cllr Smith also informed the Committee that there was little left in the allotment budget for the present financial year but in next year's budget enough had been allocated to, hopefully, cover the cost of extending the fence around Southwood Road thus making the site secure from vandals. Clerk to obtain quotes for the March meeting. Any budget left could, perhaps, go towards one of the projects mentioned in item 6.

9. Open session for questions from the public: A plot holder informed the Committee that the combination lock at the Southwood Site was being left unlocked, perhaps because the numbers were too small, and therefore, anyone could walk in. He also said that he had renovated one of the key padlocks which appears to have rusted. The Clerk informed him that she was having trouble sourcing outdoor combination padlocks that had larger numbers. Cllr Smith to investigate further. A plot holder, from Wickham Gardens, said that despite his previous complaints to the Clerk and her emails to plot holders, the gates were still being left unlocked all day. It was agreed that it was probably plot holders who have chickens. Clerk to write to all plot holders with Chickens.

Date of Next Meeting –18th March 2019

Meeting Closed at 20.40

..... Chairman

Dated