

Notes of the Allotment Site Secretaries Meeting

Thursday 23rd February 2023

Birch Room

ITEM		ACTION
	Present: Richard Miller (Bembrook) Lesley Bickerdike (Lower Torfield) Colin Blackman (BOS Field) Neil McKinnon (Pauls Field) June Walsh (Collier Road) David Jex (Choice) John Funnell (Choice) Colin Anstee (Lower Cornwallis) Steve Allam (Lower Cornwallis) Cllr Ali Roark (Chair) Terry Drinkwater (HBC) Clive Read (HBC) Marian Hollingsworth (HBC)	
	Cllr Roark welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made around the table.	
	Apologies for Absence and non attendance Dianne Huggins (Downs Road), Claire Humm (Fernbank Humm (Fernbank), Sue DeHaviland (Choice), Holly Clamp (Lower Clive Vale), Andrew Johnson (Tivoli), committee member (Marina Allotment)	
1.	Minutes of the last meeting held on 23rd February 2022 Agreed as read.	
2.	Matters Arising <i>Skips:</i> Only had funds to hire in skips for two sites (Lower Torfield and BOS Field). We will continue again with other sites from April 2023. CR will co-ordinate this with site representatives.	CR
3.	Expenditure Progress Report (Circulated prior to meeting) Everything has been completed as per the table distributed. Budget was overspent. Site Secretaries to note.	Note

4.	<p>Condition Survey (Circulated prior to meeting)</p> <p>Sites again will need to be visited and items reviewed – whilst we tried to prioritise jobs, we were unable to complete because of limited funds. Jobs will need to re-priced again.</p> <p>CB (BOS Field) – asked why did the plastic tank cost £200 and felt that this was excessive. CR confirmed that was the price quoted at that time.</p> <p>NMcK (Pauls Field) – asked with regard to the toilet at Pauls Field. This was taken out of commission some years ago. NMCK seeking information on external funding through a lottery grant for a new toilet.</p> <p>CB (BOS Field) informed they pay insurance (£227) every year for the toilet they had installed. The insurance fee was paid through subs collected from their Association members. TD asked if they had a Licence for the toilet. CB confirmed there was no licence. This to be further discussed outside of the meeting.</p> <p>CA (Lower Cornwallis) asked what was HBC doing about the compost toilet at this site. CA noting that the old toilet was in poor condition. CR will take a look and advise further.</p> <p>SA (Lower Cornwallis) asked with regard to the drainage tank as to where it was located. CR informed that it is adjacent to the rear gardens of Lower Park Road. He confirmed that it is only the grill that needs replacing which will come out of the Allotment budget.</p> <p>TD advised that the allotment budget is very small and is subject to resources. As the grounds maintenance contract is coming in house from November 2023, the grounds maintenance specification for each allotment site will be checked and improvements made to problem areas.</p>	<p>CR & TD</p> <p>CR</p>
5.	<p>Allotment Rules</p> <p>This is to remain on the Agenda for any amendments. Anyone that wants to suggest changes to the Allotment Rules is to do so by emailing parks@hastings.gov.uk</p>	<p>All</p>
6.	<p>Tenancy Situation Table (Circulated prior to meeting)</p> <p>459 prospective tenants waiting as at the time of producing the table. A few more has since been added.</p>	

	<p>The average waiting time now for a plot is about 5 years with the exception of one or two sites which is about 3 years.</p> <p>MH informed that we are constantly working towards reducing the numbers on the waiting list by carrying out reviews of each site.</p> <p>In August of last year, there was a total of 560 people waiting. A review was carried out by contacting all the tenants who were waiting up to 31st August, a result of the review was that this number was brought down to 465.</p> <p>Other ways of reducing the number on the waiting list sites is by our usual twice yearly site inspections for non cultivation (June and November). 55 Notices were issued on sites in November 2022. As a result of the Notices, and those that have voluntarily gave up, 30 plots have since been relet.</p> <p>Since April last year, we have divided the size of several larger plots on a number of sites.</p> <p>MH will continue to monitor the waiting lists every year.</p> <p>TD also informed funding from S106 (Section 106) development as part of the Local Plan could be included in the green infrastructure and opportunities to negotiate with the developer projects for community growing.</p> <p>CA (Lower Cornwallis) asked with regard to looking for land for allotments, whether HBC has a register of land ownership. CR to find out.</p> <p>Some site reps muted to the fact that many plots are abandoned after a short time with no cultivation noted by tenants who have taken up the tenancy.</p> <p>Site reps suggested that prospective tenants are shown around the vacant plot by site reps before they take up the tenancy as this may help them in making a decision.</p> <p>HBC to consider this suggestion.</p>	<p>CR</p> <p>MH/TD</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>LB (Lower Torfield) raised the issue of tall trees on individual plots and how to address this? CR advised that he carried out a survey at Lower Torfield of the tall trees. There was a number of plots with unpruned trees. It is the responsibility of the plot holder to reduce/remove the tree. There was one plot which will require a professional arborist to attend.</p> <p>CR will write to the respective plot holders</p>	<p>CR</p>

	<p>Tree work was carried out at Lower Cornwallis allotment on non lettable plots – i.e. adjacent to the rear gardens of Lower Park Road. The residents of the lower park road paid for the pollarding of these trees as some were so tall, they were blocking light into their garden.</p> <p>CB (BOS Field) informed that he is quite happy to carry out work on the allotment site as he has done with rubbish removal and fence repairs. However, he is very restricted as he only has £5M public liability insurance for his small business. HBC insurers requests that only approved contractors can carry out work on HBC land and that £10M is now the min requirement for Public liability insurance.</p> <p>TD informed that HBC has approved contractors in place and we have to comply with the Council's Insurers of a min £10M for public liability insurance. Outside of this we would have to go through the procurement process.</p> <p>CA (Lower Cornwallis) submitted his AOBs, some of which were covered in the notes above.</p> <p>Long term uncultivated plots Response Times from HBC and lack of response times Site Security – using National Allotment society guidance docs.</p> <p>Materials coming onto sites – permissions Complaint procedures. TD explained that items of delivery that are stored on HBC land require HBC permission, prior to delivery.</p> <p><i>Site Security:</i> – CA made reference to the National Allotment society and a link to Leicester Police – Protecting your Allotment. He advised the guidance in this document is very good.</p> <p><i>Materials coming onto sites:</i> Reference was made to the pallets that brought onto site.</p> <p>TD informed that materials could brought onto site and placed in a suitable area for the benefit of plot holders, only if permission is requested prior to delivery. If permission is not sought and materials are brought to site, this is classed as flytip and will be removed by the grounds maintenance contractors (at a cost to the allotment budget).</p> <p>NMcK (Pauls Field) asked what was happening about the rubbish/materials left on the main path into the allotment. CR will arrange to have this removed.</p> <p>Website: TD advised that the notes of this meeting and other relevant documents will be put on the website. MH also advised that plot holders should visit the website to</p>	All to note
		TD
		CR

	look for any announcements relating to their allotment sites. She recently put an announcement on there about allotment water turned on week beginning 6 th March.	
8.	Date of next meeting To be arranged for August 2023	MH