

Minutes of Allotment Committee Meeting held in The Rackliff Centre Rusthall on 19th June 2017 at 8:00pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Benoy, Cllr Edwards and Cllr Duncombe (left at 9pm).

OFFICER PRESENT: Mrs S Denne – Clerk

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT: Yes

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN: RESOLVED to elect Cllr Richard Benoy as Chairman of the Allotment Committee.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN: RESOLVED to elect Cllr Barry Edwards as Vice-Chairman of the Allotment Committee.

Cllr Benoy welcomed Cllrs Duncombe and Smith to the Committee

1. **Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting** - None
2. **Apologies for Absence** – Cllr Punyer and Cllr Smith
3. **Declarations of Interest** – Cllr Benoy has an allotment plot.
4. Minutes of the Allotment Meeting held on the 20th March were agreed.
5. **Allotment padlocks** – Due to the problems that some plot holders had with the padlocks and the expense of the keys and padlocks it was agreed to trial two combination locks, one at Wickham Gardens and one at Southwood Road. Clerk to purchase and fit and inform plot holders of code.
6. **Wickham Gardens** – i. **Rubbish**-The Clerk reported that there was considerable rubbish on two of the plots. It was agreed that she would email plot holders at Wickham Gardens asking for volunteers to clear the two plots. Clerk to ask Cllr Clark if his trailer could be borrowed.
ii **Fencing** – Cllr Benoy informed the meeting that chestnut palling, no longer required at Southwood road site, would be used to fix holes in fencing at Wickham Gardens. iii **Five bar gate** – Cllr Benoy to fix new chain to post. It was agreed not to extend the height of the five bar gate at this time as there could be a possibility of CCTV overlooking this area.
7. **Southwood Road** - Primrose area - Cllr Benoy has fixed one of the shed roofs. Cllr Edwards offered extra materials for any further repairs. Clerk informed members that she had had an enquiry about bee keeping; she thought the area would be suitable. Clerk also raised concerns about the electricity going into the polytunnel, would like it disconnected. Cllr Edwards suggested a communal contained bonfire area. The Clerk and Cllr Benoy to carry out an inspection of the area.
8. **National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners Ltd** – The Clerk and Cllr Benoy informed the meeting that TWBC had put in a request for a land swap of part of Wickham Gardens facing the road at the Shirley Grove end for a plot of land at the other end of the allotment site. TWBC would then use the land to build 9 houses. RPC have informed TWBC that they do not wish to agree to the land swap as it would be detrimental to the health and wellbeing of plot holders and local residents. The Clerk put forward to the members that RPC should join the NSALG as they have experienced lawyers who cover allotment issues. This was agreed.

9. **Amendment to Tenancy Agreement** – It was agreed by the members to amend the tenancy agreement in order for clarification, this would take effect immediately and affect all present and future plot holders. *The Tenant must have at least 50% of the plot worked / cultivated by the second week of June.*

10. **Chairman’s Report** – Cllr Benoy informed the members that a skip had been ordered for the extension, to take the rubbish that they had cleared off the site. He also informed the members that the fencing had been replaced around the corner of Southwood road allotments, by the car park and that the ‘Primrose’ gate had been blocked off. Trees to be pruned which overhang the fence. He informed the meeting that Dave Rusbridge had trimmed the trees at the bottom of the SWR site free of charge, greatly reducing the shade in that area. Cllr Edwards stated that the allotment holders had benefitted from RPC purchasing and controlling the allotment sites, not only was the rent lower; £4.75 as opposed to £9 a rod charged by TWBC but also any problems were dealt with more quickly and in person.

11. **Clerk’s Report** – The Clerk informed the members that she had inspected Southwood Road and the extension and three letters were to be sent to plot holders. Wickham Gardens inspection to be carried out later in the week. She also noted that plot 53 of SWR had no access due to the new fence. Possible access points to be looked at when carrying out the inspection with Cllr Benoy.

12. **Open session for questions from the public:** A member of the public thanked the Committee for their hard work.

The Meeting closed at 21.20