



**Minutes of the Allotments Committee Meeting
held on Monday 26th June 2023 at 7.30pm**

Members Present: Cllr D Smith (Chairman); Cllr E Ellicott (Vice-Chair), Cllr P Gripper; Cllr D Funnell; Cllr A Funnell; Ms Suzanne French (Non-voting member) and Mr Alan Farmer (Non-voting member)

Officer Present: Mr K Watson, Allotments Manager

Members of the public: 4

No decisions were taken by the Parish Council on any item not on the Agenda.

1. **Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting:** None.
2. **To receive and approve apologies for absence:** Apologies were received from Mr Leon Banks (Non-voting member) due to illness.
3. **Declaration of Personal and Prejudicial Interests:** Cllrs Smith, Ellicott and non-voting members Ms S French, Mr L Banks and Mr A Farmer are all allotment tenants. Cllr Gripper has a close family connection with an allotment tenant. Cllr A Funnell and Cllr D Funnell are Committee Members of the Rusthall Bonfire and Fete Committee.
4. **Declarations of Lobbying:** None.
5. **Open session for questions from the public:** A question was raised regarding the very poor and overgrown state of Plot 5 at the Southwood Road Extension site. Cllr Smith confirmed the background for the delays in dealing with this plot will be covered under Agenda Item 10. **Resolved:** Officer Watson was authorised to request Capel Groundcare complete mowing of the plot so that a new tenant(s) can be found for the plot.
6. **Minutes of the last meeting**
 - i. **To approve the draft minutes of the meetings held on 20th March 2023:** The minutes from 1st June 2023 were approved and signed by the Chairman.
 - ii. **Any matters arising from these Minutes which are not already on the agenda:** With regards Item 15, Cllr Ellicott confirmed Mr D Maxwell has been given permission to proceed with weed spraying of the overgrown undergrowth on the north west boundary of the Southwood Road Allotments.
7. **To agree to quotation from Little Loads for north boundary rubbish clearance at Wickham Gardens Allotments:** Cllr Smith provided an explanation to the background for the £1200 quotation and a member of the public clarified the history behind the industrial size wheelie bins being located on the boundary. **Resolved:** Not to proceed with clearance of the site at this time due to cost.

8. **Working Party update on UKSPF Community Grants Programme – Round 2 application for the “All ability” plots at Southwood Road Allotments:** Cllr Smith provided a detailed explanation of the grants programme currently available and the plan produced by the Working Party to establish 4 raised wooden bed troughs (beds) set in a “D” shape and surrounded by an “all ability” pathway. The plan includes provision of a suitable “all ability” driveway to access the beds. The Parish Council would apply for the maximum available £3500 grant to install a compliant pathway costing £3266 + VAT. The remainder of the project works has been costed at £3414 and would be taken from the Allotments Budget for the current financial year. Cllr Gripper is currently exploring with TWBC the possibility of allowing attendees of the project site to use the toilet facilities at Southwood Road Recreation Ground. **Resolved:** The Working Party to proceed with the grant application for £3500.
9. **Working Party update on dropped kerb applications for Southwood Road and Wickham Gardens Allotments:** Cllr Ellicott confirmed a £5000 budget spend was approved at the Full Council Meeting in June 2023 which will be allocated from the Highways Budget specifically to support both applications and the subsequent work, if successful. **Resolved:** Officer Watson to prioritise the application for Southwood Road Allotments.
10. **Rusthall Bonfire and Fete Committee storage requirements update by Cllrs Smith and Ellicott:** Cllrs Smith and Ellicott visited the Southwood Road Extension Allotments to consider the storage requirements request. Plot 5 was considered in view of its size but the location was deemed undesirable for local residents. A further location adjacent to the north west boundary with Southwood Road Recreation Ground was considered but found unsuitable as the Recreation Ground side of the boundary is flanked by established trees and there is no provision for vehicular access. **Resolved:** Our offer to consider the request will be withdrawn.
11. **Allotments Manager discretionary monthly spend budget:** To negate multiple requests to the voting members and to provide efficiency Officer Watson proposed a monthly spend budget for his use. **Resolved:** Officer Watson may spend up to and including £100 in a single transaction subject to a total monthly budget spend of £500.

Date of the next quarterly meeting: Monday 25th September 2023

The Meeting ended at 810pm

Douglas F. Smith

Chairman

20-7-23

Date