

**South Willlesborough and Newtown Community Council**  
**www.swancc.org.uk**  
**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Allotments Committee held virtually**  
**on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020**

**19:01** RW opened the meeting, and advised members that NT had expressed an interest in Chairing the meeting.

**1/20 Appointment of Chair**

Agreed unanimously to elect NT as Chair.

**2/20 Record attendance and list apologies for absence**

Nirosha Thilagarajan (NT) Nick Cane (NC) Andy Rogers (AR) Steve Campkin (SC)  
 Also in Attendance Stefan Heathfield (SH) Clerks Sarah Evans and Rob Woods

**3/20 Declarations of Interest**

SC declared he has an allotment on Gas House Fields.

**4/20 To review reconciliation of rental income and receipt of tenancy agreements to date.**

A report was previously circulated and the updated rent amounts received to date were confirmed. Outstanding Tenancy Agreements and Payments were reported.

**Resolved: Agreed unanimously to contact by email where possible or letter to chase up outstanding rents and agreements, to offer a prepaid envelope.**

**Actions SE RW to contact tenants by letter to chase payment and tenancy agreements with 14 days notice.**

**5/20 To review immediate short term management items put to Committee by Council to consider.**

**a) Application of Water Policy and Supply**

The Committee discussed that it was time to turn of the water at the stop cock to protect the plumbing and conserve water during the winter. SH clarified the water supply pipe to Gas House Fields also runs to the non-statutory land run by ABC.

**Resolved: Agreed unanimously 1) SH would turn off the stop cock to protect the plumbing until April 2021 2) The need to clarify issues relating to the shared supply of the water supply to the ABC Non Statutory Land area, and to chase the Land and Services for Gas House Fields from Ashford Borough Council.**

**Actions: SH to turn off stop cock, NC to contact Ashford Borough Council**

**b) Key holders and Key holders responsibilities'**

**Resolved: Agreed unanimously Key holders for SWAN would be the Clerks and SC for outside hours. SH is also a key holder in the event of needing access.**

**c) Agree Personnel involved in site inspections and their progressions**

SH reported 10 plots are not being worked and could be classed as proper neglect and suggested starting inspections from January.

**Resolved: Agreed unanimously 1) Subject to a review of the Council's Scheme of Delegation, NC a Clerk and SH would conduct inspections. NT would attend on a quarterly basis if required. 2) Inspections would be monthly. 3) That photographs would be taken of any issues.**

**Actions: 1 RW/SE To investigate the delegation scheme and put forward recommendations to be agreed at Council.**

**2 NC would contact ABC most recent inspection reports and corresponding photographs.**

**d) Documents and Recording for Site inspections, Hazard Risk assessments, Compliance with Terms and Conditions, Plot maintenance and Cultivation.**

SH reported that the items referring to Fruit Trees and Fences were new to the Tenants and this had come as Change, that some Tenants were perplexed by this. He also reported that these amendments could cause longer term issues for the Council when plots are vacated. Despite the caveat in the terms and conditions that any costs in clearing the site would be passed onto the tenant. He advised it would be wise in due course to consider revising the Ts and Cs.

Councillors reviewed the previously circulated inspection list from ABC and weighed it with the Terms and Conditions and the Health and Safety Responsibilities' of being Landlords.

**Resolved agreed to contact Tenants and ask for their Feedback on the Ts and Cs 2) To seek further advice on Health and Safety Responsibilities and Risk Assessment this before agreeing the document.**

**Action: 1) RW /SE to draft a letter to Tenants . 2)RW/SE to follow up membership of National Allotment Society and seek their advice for risk assessments, hazards and documenting Health and Safety and conducting inspections. 3) SC would follow up with Legal Adviser at Ashford Borough Council NC would ask for insight into how Ashford Borough Council manage this.**

**e) Vacant Plot sizes and any adjustments to them**

SH presented the idea of selecting a suitable plot and then running a trial with smaller plot sizes for Tenants and to then offer the option of extending to the tenant.

**Resolved Agreed unanimously SH would select a suitable and to adopt the trial.**

**f) Future Waiting List Terms**

Discussed the inherited waiting list from ABC and to consider applications made . SC options to support applicants with a GP referral for an allotment and this was initially discussed.

**Resolved: Agreed unanimously 1) To prioritise applications from the SWAN area as a priority and then to offer to the wider Borough. 2) To consider mental health support as a longer term item.**

**g) Agree Lock spares**

Cllrs discussed the number and type of locks currently in use the need for a spare lock and consultation with Tenants on changing to Combi Locks, AR offered to purchase the spare lock from ABC Member Grant. Existing locks would be needed for the Cudworth Road vehicle entrance to allow maintenance teams to continue.

**Resolved: 1) Agreed unanimously to accept ARs offer to purchase a spare lock 2) that this would be a COMBI lock. 3) that existing key operated locks to be used for the Cudworth Road entrance barrier.**

**h) Artwork for noticeboard to be agreed.**

**Agreed To investigate the necessary legal requirement and to circulate the suggested artwork from SH which could not be circulated due to technical difficulties.**

**Action RW/SE To circulate SH suggestion and to clarify legal responsibility for wording.**

**i) To agree an Observer for Allotment Working Group.**

Agreed AR would attend and he would email Alison at the council and copy SC and Clerks in.

**j) Any other short term items referred to the Clerks by Members before the meeting**

No further items

6/20 To review items put to Committee by Finance and General Purpose Committee to consider.

Perimeter Fence renewal and Section 106 funding.

Members discussed the fences at GHF and SH advised that any break ins or damages he repairs himself to protect the allotments are of his own goodwill. The terms under which Section 106 funding are earmarked for application were discussed. Members were aware that financing the fences would need to be considered in due course.

**Agreed NC, SC & AR would work together to investigate different fencing options and to obtain at least 3 quotes for the Finance and General Purpose committee.**

7/20 To develop a programme to review the Longer Term Issues identified by Council.

- a) Working with or Observing Ashford Allotment Working Group
- b) Environmental Polices
- c) Options for consulting continually with tenants
- d) How we continue to communicate what we are doing with the community as an ongoing process
- e) Ongoing exercise to determine the latent demand for allotments in SWAN area
- f) Tenders for new fencing and application for Section 106 funding
- g) Complete any goals in line with the Council 5 year plan

**Agreed Clerks would investigate these issues and develop a programme for the Committee to review by email.**

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 9:18pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_

(Chair)