

BRICKHILL

PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Allotments & Open Spaces Committee held on Tuesday 19th November 2013 at Brickhill Community Centre, Avon Drive, Brickhill

Present: Cllrs Crofts, Mulvenney, Waterhouse, 2 members of the public and the Acting Clerk

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| 1 | <p><u>Apologies for absence</u> Apologies were received from Cllr Wilkins</p> | |
| 2 | <p><u>Declarations of acceptance of interest in items on the agenda</u> Cllr Waterhouse declared a personal interest in matters pertaining to the allotment site by way of his allotment tenancy. However, a dispensation has been granted to Cllr Waterhouse with regard to Brickhill Allotments .</p> | |
| 3 | <p><u>Public Open Session:-</u> Has there been a change of policy recently in last 3 months regarding enforcement of tenancy agreement? The Chairman informed the meeting that there had not been a change in policy however staff have been instructed that when a plot becomes vacant it should be inspected and cleared to ensure it is compliant with the terms of the tenancy agreement ie only 1 fruit tree left on the plot and any other trees removed prior to letting to the next person.</p> <p>Where does the council go for legal advice? The Council can obtain advice from the Bedfordshire Association of Town & Parish Networks (BATPC), the Clerk's are members of the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and the council are also members of the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) and if necessary seek advice from a local firm of solicitors in Bedford.</p> <p>Could we email allotment tenants the agenda for future meetings? This is possible but there are only a small proportion of allotment tenants who have provided their email details. The notices will continue to be displayed on the allotment gates 1 week prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Where did the allotment noticeboard go? The notice board has been relocated within the Parish. The notice board was not being fully utilised, most tenants had said they never read the notices unless they were placed on the gates. Notices for tenants would continue to be placed on the main gates.</p> <p>We have not had any wood chippings delivered for a long time has this stopped? No, 3 local firms have a key to the site and have been told they can bring wood chippings onto site to the communal drop off point at any time throughout the year. The Assistant Clerk offered to contact the companies to remind them of the arrangement.</p> | |

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| 4 | <p><u>To confirm minutes from meeting held on Tuesday 20 August</u> It was resolved to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting.</p> | |
| 5 | <p><u>To receive a report on management of the allotment site</u> Prior to the meeting a report had been circulated to all members of the committee. A verbal report was given by the Assistant Clerk and it was noted that currently 8 tenants had still not paid and technically were in breach of their tenancy agreement. The total amount of rent outstanding was £318. The majority of these tenants always paid late and reminders were sent on 5th November. Currently there were 2 vacant plots in addition to plots 138 and 139 which had not yet been fully cleared.</p> | |
| 6 | <p><u>To note the spend against budget for Brickhill Allotments</u> The report was noted.</p> | |
| 7 | <p><u>To consider the draft Allotment budget for 2014/15</u> Members discussed current spend, projected year end spend and then considered the budget for 2014-15. The budget was agreed as follows: Salaries £6,000 Plot clearance £700 General Maintenance £1000 Grass Cutting £450 Water £1300 Plumbing Repairs £300 Skips £380 Security (keys and padlocks) £100 Defensive Planting £500 Pest Control £250 Gardening Competition £60 Allotment Software (annual fee) £120 Maintenance Reserve £1400 Contingency £500 Total budget £13,060</p> | |
| 8 | <p><u>To consider a request to cut back trees from Waveney Green overhanging no 28 Francis Groves Close</u> It was resolved to undertake the works to the trees on Waveney Green which are directly behind 28 Francis Groves Close and to write to the resident of no 28 Francis Groves Close informing them of the council's decision which has been made "as a good neighbourly gesture without prejudice".</p> | Assistant Clerk |
| 9 | <p><u>To consider a request from BLSFC regarding a 24hr charity event on Waveney Green</u> A letter had been received from Brickhill Lower School Football Club requesting permission for a 24hr football match in aid of charity. The club had offered to write to local residents on Waveney Avenue and Francis Groves Close in order to gain support for their event. It was resolved to grant permission for the event providing the club wrote to residents on</p> | Assistant Clerk |

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| | Waveney Avenue and Francis Groves Close and provided a comprehensive risk assessment permission would be granted. | |
| 10 | <p><u>To note the spend against budget for Waveney Green</u></p> <p>The report was noted. It was noted that the amount for footpath repairs (£5K) would not be spent this financial year but that this amount should be put into designated reserves for Waveney Green in addition to the £6K already allocated to reserves for 2013-14. Play area repairs was slightly over budget (£90) and tree maintenance was currently £800 under budget.</p> | |
| 11 | <p><u>To consider and approve the draft budget for Waveney Green for 2014/15</u></p> <p>Members discussed current spend, projected year end spend and then considered the budget for 2014-15. It was noted that any charges from Bedford Borough Council for grass cutting, litter and dog waste bin emptying would increase in line with inflation (approx 3.5%) but the exact amount had not been confirmed by Bedford Borough Council. In addition the charges for pitch marking organised through John O’Conner might increase but would not be more than an inflationary rise (approx 3.5%) and again our contractors had not yet confirmed. Members reviewed the 3 year plan for Waveney Green which originally had a wildflower meadow and wildlife initiative planned for 2014-15. However, the Parish Council have given permission for Bedford Borough Council to trial a wildflower meadow on part of Waveney Green near Falcon Avenue, the agreement is for 4 years and there are no other areas on the Green where a wildflower meadow could be created. Therefore no funding is required for this initiative for this item was required.</p> <p>The budget was agreed as follows:</p> <p>Salaries £1500 Grass cutting £1600 Waste Disposal (bins and dog waste) £3800 Tree Maintenance £1000 Play Equipment Inspection £200 Play Area Repairs £1000 Hedge trimming/shrub beds £500 Pitch Marking £900 Footpath repairs £2500 Waveney Green reserves £6000 Wildlife Initiative and publicity regarding jogging route £1000</p> <p>Total budget £20,000</p> | |
| 12. | <u>To confirm date of next meeting Tuesday 18 February 2014</u> | |

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Approved by Chairman
18th February 2014