

BRICKHILL

PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of a Meeting of the Allotment & Open Spaces Committee held on Wednesday 30th November 2022 at 7.30pm in the Biffa Room at St Mark's Church and Community Centre, Calder Rise, Brickhill, Bedford.

Present:

Cllrs Holloway, Fitzpatrick, the Clerk (Mrs S Bottoms) and 3 members of the public were in attendance.

Absent:

Cllr Jarman-Webb.

Summary of the meeting: -

Table 1- Minutes

Item	Description	Action By
1.	Apologies for Absence: None.	
2.	Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda: None.	
3.	Public Open Sessions (10 minutes): Requirements on Tenants to fully use their plots: Is it not possible to be stricter with regards ensuring tenants work their plots and removing them if they fail to do so? The Clerk said that the Tenancy Agreement sets out clearly the rules with regards tenants working their plots and the consequences of failing to do this. She also outlined the difficulties in enforcing these rules in practice. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk would review the Tenancy Agreement to seek what could be done to tighten it up and would bring it back to the February meeting. This would enable any action to take place ahead of the new rent year in April.	Clerk



<p>4.</p>	<p>To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 18th November 2020 and 21st September 2022:</p> <p>Both sets of minutes were signed as true records of the meetings.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>To receive a report on the management of Brickhill Allotments to include:</p> <p>a) To note the current spend against budget and agree a proposed budget for 2023-24:</p> <p>This was circulated to all councillors and copies made available to others in attendance. The Clerk noted that the salary figure currently £7,320 has not traditionally fully reflected the true cost of employment e.g. does not include National Insurance, PAYE or pensions.</p> <p>Following discussion, it was agreed, that the Clerk would provide the figure which would be required to reflect these additional costs.</p> <p>Discussion also took place regarding rents charged. It was agreed that for new tenants from the 1st June the charges would be for a full plot £60, concessionary £35.</p> <p>For a half plot £38 and £28 for concessionary.</p> <p>This would apply to all tenants from the 1st April 2024.</p> <p>b) An update on the general management of the site since the last meeting:</p> <p>i) Waiting list:</p> <p>We currently have 22 Brickhill residents waiting for either a full or half plot, 3 Brickhill residents waiting for a just a half plot. 50 non-residents wanting a full or half plot. We have never had so many on the waiting list ever! We have no vacant plots. No change since the Sept meeting</p> <p>ii) Plot deposit returns:</p> <p>Separate paperwork was circulated. No change since Sept.</p> <p>iii) Defensive Planting:</p>	<p>Clerk</p>



	<p>The Clerk has ordered 200 bare root whitethorn from Bedford Borough Council. These are due to arrive early January.</p> <p>The intention is to mainly locate these along those plots which border the industrial estate.</p> <p>The Clerk will put a notice up on the gates and e-mail out to try to get volunteers to help with planting.</p> <p>She understands that Mr Reilly has already discussed the plans with a number of tenants who have plots along that edge of the allotments.</p> <p>c) Any other matters: None.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>To receive a report on the management of Waveney Green to include:</p> <p>a) To note current spend against budget and agree a proposed budget for 2023-24:</p> <p>This was circulated to all councillors and copies made available to others in attendance.</p> <p>Following discussion, it was agreed that the three new benches would not be funded from the 2023-24 budget but rather from Waveney Green Reserves (see bii below).</p> <p>It was also agreed to leave £300 to be spent by the end of March 2023 under the heading of Environmental Initiative as Cllr Fitzpatrick planned to contact the manufacturer of the bird boxes previously installed to manufacture more. The current bird boxes were installed certainly before 2016 and are likely to be rotting. The aim would be to remove any rotted ones but to aim to increase the total number across the Green.</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick was of the opinion that there is also scope to put in more trees towards the wildflower meadow. Cllr Fitzpatrick would like to see more fruiting trees e.g. with apples and berries for the wildlife. He will investigate with the Woodland Trust if there are any free trees available.</p>	<p>Cllr Fitzpatrick</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick</p> <p>Clerk</p>



As there are no longer any hedges or shrub beds, this heading could be removed.

It was hoped to undertake footpath repairs in late Spring/Summer 2023. The Clerk will reference the previous footpath plan and identify when previous work has been done and the current condition and areas requiring works.

**Cllrs Fitzpatrick
and Holloway**

- b) An update on the general management of the site since the last meeting:
 - i) **Play Equipment:** All repairs have been carried out and the new swings should be in by the time of the meeting.
 - ii) **Benches:** The bench which had been identified at a previous meeting as attracting anti-social behaviour has been removed.

The new memorial bench is in place as well as the bench on the section of path heading towards Falcon Avenue.

There are currently four wooden flat benches which are located near the large boulder and towards the green gym. These are gradually disintegrating and the Clerk proposed that these be replaced with three recycled similar styled flat benches from Glasdon.

She circulated photographs of the old benches plus the new version from Glasdon. The cost to replace these benches would be £344 plus £200 installation per bench, therefore an approximate total cost of £1,632.

It was agreed that these should be replaced in the Spring of 2023. The Clerk had included the £1,632 in the budget for 2023-24 but it had been decided to fund these from the Waveney Green Reserve instead (see in a) above.

- c) Any other matters:
 - i) **Tree issues behind Francis Groves Close:**

The Clerk had received and circulated an e-mail from a resident who has had to re-lay his newly laid patio which had become uneven.

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	<p>His landscaper had suggested that this was because of trees which are close to the fence and have roots running through the garden.</p> <p>Discussion took place on this matter. Cllr Fitzpatrick would arrange with Cllr Holloway to visit the area and consider the situation. The Clerk will inform the resident.</p> <p>ii) Request for more wildlife areas on Waveney Green: Cllr Fitzpatrick will be looking into free trees as discussed above.</p>	
7.	<p>To receive a report on the management of the Mowsbury Walk Play Area:</p> <p>The area is regularly checked by the Clerk and any litter tidied up. All works have been carried out and to date there have been no further works needed.</p>	
8.	<p>Date of Next Meeting:</p> <p>Wednesday 15th February 2023 at 7.30pm at St Mark's Church and Community Centre (room to be confirmed).</p>	

Approved and signed by

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Chairman
15th February 2023