

BRICKHILL

PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of a Meeting of the Allotment & Open Spaces Committee held on Wednesday 17th May 2023 at 7.30pm in the Wren Room at St Mark's Church and Community Centre, Calder Rise, Brickhill, Bedford.

Present:

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

Absent:

Cllr Rani.

Summary of the meeting: -

Table 1- Minutes

Item	Description	Action By
1.	<p>Apologies for Absence:</p> <p>Cllr Rani</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda:</p> <p>None.</p>	
3.	<p>Public Open Sessions (10 minutes):</p> <p>i) Fosters Brow: The tenant was pleased to see that this had been patched and improved removing the potholes. The Clerk reported that this had been organised by Borough Cllr Royden who had applied for a grant via the Borough Council.</p> <p>ii) Additional Bee Hives: A tenant attended to ask for permission to keep two bee hives. She was undergoing training and being mentored by the current resident bee keeper. Permission was granted. The Clerk would ask for Plot 1 to be cut back.</p>	Clerk



	<p>iii) Ivy obscuring the entrance to the first gate: The Clerk will ask for this to be cut back.</p>	
4.	<p>To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 15th February 2023: The minutes were signed as a true record of the meeting.</p>	
5.	<p>To receive a report on the management of Brickhill Allotments to include:</p> <p>a) <u>To note current spend against budget:</u> The Clerk e-mailed out a spend against budget on separate sheet. To date there has been little general spend to date. The Clerk had purchased new padlocks and keys ready to change over the first gate. This spend will come out of the £10,001 reserve.</p> <p>b) An update on the general management of the site since the last meeting:</p> <p>i) <u>Waiting list:</u> We currently have 25 Brickhill residents waiting for either a full or half plot, 3 Brickhill residents waiting for a just a half plot. 63 non residents wanting a full or half plot. We have 1 vacant full plot which needs clearing of a broken shed and two half plots. One of the half plots needs weedkilling and the other is ready to go. The Clerk is working her way down the waiting list to get a replacement tenant. <u>Plot deposit returns:</u> One plot (117) was given up in good condition and the deposit returned. That plot has been re-let.</p> <p>ii) <u>Tenancy agreement and expectations of tenants:</u> As per the Feb Minutes, the Clerk circulated three letter templates for consideration. As agreed, she will revise the tenancy agreement from the 1st April to reflect increases in rent and changes in content. It was not possible to notify existing tenants about the rent increase from 1st April because the Clerk was not able to add that to the rent invoice for 2023. Options include sending a separate letter (some posted out) and putting a notice on the gate.</p>	

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	<p>Changes to the tenancy agreement – make the changes to the Tenancy Agreement for new tenants – circulated an amendment sheet for existing tenants.</p> <p>iii) <u>Water</u>: This was switched on later than the 1st April because of the amount of rainfall. There are problems with the non-return valves on a couple of stand pipes which Shaun is aware of and will repair once he has the opportunity. At the February meeting, discussion took place around whether the water supply in the orchard is still active. Shaun has not checked yet but he points out that it is not clear how the water supply moves around the allotments and so investigation would be needed for which there would be a potential cost.</p> <p>iv) <u>E-mails</u>: To try to reduce the postage expenditure, the Clerk has requested the e-mail addresses for tenants and has been successful in obtaining all but 42. Unfortunately when the rent invoices went out, a number of tenants claimed to not have received them, others were unable to open the pdf document.</p> <p>v) <u>Gardening Competition</u>: Perhaps consider reinstatement as this has not happened since before COVID. Consideration would need to be given to criteria.</p> <p>c) Any other matters:</p> <p>i) <u>Request for permission to keep bees</u>: This had already been discussed under 3. Above.</p> <p>ii) <u>E-mail regarding play equipment on a plot</u>: The equipment has been removed.</p>	
6.	<p>Date of Next Meeting:</p> <p>Wednesday 15th November 2023 at 7.30pm in the Wren Room at St Mark's Church and Community Centre.</p>	

Approved and signed by

Chairman

15th November 2023