

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Allotment & Open Spaces Committee held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 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 2 members of the public were in attendance.

**Absent:**

Cllr Rani.

*Summary of the meeting: -*

*Table 1- Minutes*

Item	Description	Action By
1.	<p><b>Apologies for Absence:</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda:</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Public Open Sessions (10 minutes):</b></p> <p>Memorial Bench for Alison Southern:</p> <p>A tenant attended and thanked the Parish Council for providing this. The Clerk explained that it still has to be assembled and permanently sited and concreted in position.</p> <p>The tenant said he was willing to help with that permanent siting.</p> <p>He would liaise with Shaun.</p>	

	<p>Asian Hornets</p> <p>A tenant on the site who has been attended to discuss the concerns around Asian Hornets.</p> <p>He updated on action being taken nationwide. He is hoping to draw attention to the threat postings via our social media and our noticeboards.</p> <p>The Clerk agreed to put up the posters supplied on the noticeboards in the Spring and if the tenant was to forward a poster via e-mail, she would put it out on social media.</p> <p>Plot strimming etc:</p> <p>A tenant had checked with the Council where he volunteers and he would be covered to help as a volunteer on the allotments.</p> <p>The Allotments Committee are grateful for the work he has done to date with regards strimming occupied plots.</p>	<p><b>Clerk</b></p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023:</b></p> <p>The minutes were signed as a true record of the meeting.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p><b>To receive a report on the management of Brickhill Allotments to include:</b></p> <p>a) To note current spend against budget:</p> <p>The Clerk had e-mailed out spend against budget on separate sheet. She noted that there has been a lot of general maintenance over the Summer which is the first time in a number of years. This includes cutting back the trees around the edge of the allotment and also removing some old structures.</p> <p>b) An update on the general management of the site since the last meeting:</p> <p>i) Waiting list:</p> <p>There are currently 36 Brickhill residents waiting for either a full or half plot, 3 Brickhill residents waiting for a just a half plot. 66 non-residents wanting a full or half plot.</p>	

There are currently 3 vacant full plots and two half plots. The Clerk is working her way down the waiting list to get replacement tenants. Over the Winter she will contact everyone on the list to see if they still want to remain on the list.

ii) Changing over of the rear gate and first gate padlocks:

The Clerk has spent the Summer attempting to supply all the tenants who have plots on the first gate with new keys. The plan is to change the padlocks over to the same as on the Scout Hut gate. This will happen over the Winter.

iii) Gardening Competition: reinstatement.

This was due to happen this Summer but this did not happen. Decisions need to be made as to when this may be reinstated.

c) Any other matters:

i) Complaint about two large trees to the rear of 93/95 Curlew Crescent:

The Clerk has been chasing the Borough Council since July to get some action. Discussion took place around Ash dieback and whether this impacted the trees under discussion. The Clerk will also ask the tree surgeon who is doing work on Waveney Green in the near future to look at the cost of removing the boughs. It was noted that the Parish Council does not know which residents in Curlew Crescent own or lease the land at the rear of their properties. The Clerk will seek that information from Bedford Borough Council.

ii) Land to the rear of 97 Curlew Crescent:

The Borough Council are in the process of taking this back from the current tenants and asked whether the Parish Council would be interested in adding this to the allotments. Cllr Grant agreed to meet with the Clerk and the tenant who is willing to volunteer to have a look at the strip of land to see if it is viable for the Parish Council to take on and also the overhanging tree. Cllr Fitzpatrick will look at the strip of land separately as well. **It was agreed** that the Clerk should respond that in principle the Parish Council would be in support but would want to investigate what is currently on the land before committing.

Clerk

Cllrs Grant,  
Fitzpatrick and  
the Clerk

	<p>iii) Use of E-mails to communicate with residents:</p> <p>The Clerk reported that there remains approximately 40 tenants who are not contactable via e-mail.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting:</b></p> <p>Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024 at 7.30pm in the Wren Room at St Mark's Church and Community Centre.</p>	

*Approved and signed by*

.....

Chairman

21<sup>st</sup> February 2024