



Rusthall
Parish Council

**Minutes of the Allotments Committee Meeting
held on Monday 4th December at 7.30pm**

Members Present: Cllr D Smith (Chairman); Cllr E Ellicott (Vice-Chair), Cllr P Gripper; Cllr D Funnell; Cllr A Funnell, Ms S French (Non-voting member) and Mr A Farmer (Non-voting member), Mr D Clover.

Officer Present: Linda Neusten

Members of the public present: 12

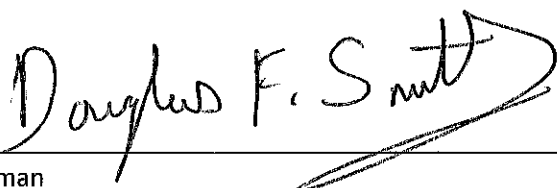
No decisions were taken by the Parish Council on any item not on the Agenda.

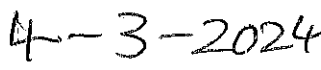
1. **Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting:** None.
2. **To receive and approve apologies for absence:** Apologies received from Officer K Watson.
3. **Declaration of Personal and Prejudicial Interests:** Cllrs Smith, Ellicott, and Non-voting members Ms French, Mr Clover and Mr Farmer are all allotment holders. Cllr Gripper has a close family connection with an allotment tenant.
4. **Declarations of Lobbying:** None
5. **Minutes of the last meeting:**
 - i. **To approve the draft minutes of the meetings held on 2nd October 2023.** The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.
 - ii. **Any matters arising from these Minutes which are not already on the agenda:**
 - a. Cllr Smith stated everyone is very impressed with Crossways' new toilet now installed at Southwood Road site. The new basin and tap have now been installed. Mr Keith Terry from Crossways stated that they would like to reimburse the committee the £130 costs of the new tap and basin. The Chairman thanked Mr Terry for this kind offer.
6. **Open session for questions from the public**
 - a. Cllr Smith started the session by making an apology the allotment holders had not originally received notification of the meeting by email. He stated this would not happen again.
 - b. Would there be a skip available for rubbish? Cllr Smith stated that due to the expense there was nothing planned, however the situation could be reviewed.
7. **All Ability Garden at Southwood Road update:**
 - a. The new concrete path has been poorly laid, and is currently 3 inches below the adjacent areas. The committee **RESOLVED** that the path must be raised to the correct height and that payment would be withheld until the work has been completed satisfactorily.
 - b. Area adjacent to dropped curb at Southwood Road; It was suggested that hawthorn hedging be planted either side of the double gates. It would cost approximately £70 +vat per meter with 3 meters required. The Committee **RESOLVED** to proceed with this.

8. **Waiting List update and vacant plots:** Cllr Smith reported there were 11 vacant plots across all three allotments and 6 people currently on the waiting list.
9. **Consider upgrading padlocks at Wickham Gardens;** Cllr Smith proposed changing the padlocks to the same type of security padlocks as are fitted to both Southwood Road and Southwood Road extension allotments. The cost for padlocks and 65 security keys would be £725 +vat. The Committee **RESOLVED** to go ahead with this.
10. **Consider quotes for tarmac entrance at Wickham Gardens:** Cllr Smith put forward the quotes received which ranged from £2350 to £3210+vat. The Committee **RESOLVED** not to proceed due to expense and would review the situation in 12 months' time.
11. **Consider turning Plot 28 into a wild flower meadow;** The committee **RESOLVED** to create a wild flower meadow on Plot 28; to include a couple of small Crab Apple trees as recommended by Ranger Dan Coulbourne. Total cost approximately £500
12. **Consider in-house production of new plot number signs;** Cllr Smith announced that Committee Member Suzanne French had single headedly sourced the materials and made the allotment number signs for all allotments on all three sites. Cllr Smith offered a vote of thanks and presented Suzanne with a gift to mark the committee's appreciation for having saved hundreds of pounds. To complete this project, volunteers were called for to treat the wooden stakes and then for the signs to be 'planted'. The Committee **RESOLVED** to spend approximately £100 wood treatment
13. **Consider request for Crossways Community to place a sign on the double gates at Southwood Road.** The Committee **RESOLVED** to allow a sign to be put up with the condition it is no bigger than the existing Rusthall Parish Council sign already on the gates.
14. **Review timings of lighting fires:** The committee **RESOLVED** that during the winter months tenants can have fires between 10am and dusk. In the Summer period between 1st May and 1st October fires cannot be lit. Consideration of wind conditions and neighbouring properties must always be taken into consideration.
15. **Date of next meeting:** The next meeting will be on Monday 4th March 2023 at 7.30 pm.

Meeting closed at 8.15 pm

Following the meeting those present enjoyed some festive refreshments.


Chairman


Date