

**Minutes of the Allotment Committee Meeting held on
Wednesday 28th April 2021 at 7.30 pm Conducted Online Via Zoom**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllr D Smith (Chairman), Cllr L Ellicott (Vice Chairman), Cllr B Edwards and Miss S French (Allotments Committee)

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mrs S Denne and Mr K Watson

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

Five

- 1. Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting**
No-one present intended to film, photograph and/or record the meeting.
- 2. To receive and approve apologies for absence**
Cllr D Funnell.
- 3. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**
Cllr Smith, Cllr Ellicott and Miss French are allotment plots holders.
- 4. Declarations of Lobbying**
All Cllrs were lobbied with regards Item 9 Complaints.
- 5. Minutes of the meeting held on 21st December 2020**
These were agreed, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Chairman signed them as a true record.
 - 5.1. Matters outstanding from these minutes (not listed as separate agenda item)
None.
 - 5.2. Matters outstanding from previous minutes
None.
- 6. Open session for questions from the public**
Mrs K Hickson-Smith objected to the Full Council request to remove play equipment from Wickham Gardens allotment on the basis it supports social and mental health for parents and children. Mrs V Caney-Anderson also objected to the decision. Mr L Morris objected to the decision and advised he had received support to retain the equipment from several other Wickham Gardens allotment holders. Mrs E Wright supported the previous objections and thought the decision would adversely impact future generations seeking allotment plots. Cllr Smith clarified the decision was made at Full Council Meeting on 12th April 2021 and not via the Allotments Committee.

7. Approve Allotments Working Group amendments to Tenancy Agreement

Cllr Smith presented the amendments proposed by the Working Group which were approved. They are, as follows:

7.1 Page 2 Cultivation and Use. Clause 6.1 will remain unaltered other than additional words “no other purpose” which will be stated in bold type. The need to reference play equipment is therefore not required.

7.2 Conditions of Use Page 5, Clause 2. Now reads “Hedges, Paths and Access”.

7.3 New Clause 2.5 will state “No gated access from adjacent properties to allotments are allowed without the specific written permission of Rusthall Parish Council”. Officer Denne will write to all existing plot holders who enjoy historic gated access to formalise their permission to continue their direct access.

7.4 New Clause 6.4 will state “Plot holder allocation to be a maximum of two times ½ size plots or 1 full size plot”.

7.5 Page 6 Water/Hoses/Fires, new Clause 6.5 will state “All bonfires on Wickham Gardens allotment site must be lit on the community area in incinerators provided”.

7.6 Page 7 General. All new Clauses 10.5, 10.6, 10.7 and 10.8 provided by Officer Watson were approved:

10.2 Tenants will indemnify the Council against all costs, claims and liabilities, which may arise in connection with his or her tenancy.

10.3 The Council accepts no liability for damage or injury caused by or to tenants whilst on an allotment.

10.4 The Council will not be held responsible for loss by accident, fire, theft or damage from an Allotment Site.

10.5 Tenants are advised not to store any items of value on the allotment and to insure and mark any items they do decide to keep on an Allotment Site.

Officer Denne is to contact all allotment holders providing details of the National Allotment Society who offer insurance.

8. Consider purchase of an incinerator for Wickham Gardens allotment

Rusthall Parish Council will purchase an incinerator, if required. They will also purchase two new wheelbarrows for plot holders to use when transporting to the communal incinerator site. Cllr D Smith, Mrs K Hickson-Smith, Committee Member Mr L Banks and Mrs K Cooke all kindly offered their own incinerators to support other plot holders on the site.

9. Complaints

9.1 Usage of new padlocks at Wickham Gardens

The padlock to the main gates was found to be too small and difficult to use. Officer Watson is to purchase a new padlock.

9.2 Installation and usage of children’s play equipment

Plot 30 has a large trampoline which was granted special permission by the Parish Council last year due to Covid-19 restrictions in place at the time. Plot 34 has recently installed large wooden play equipment without permission. Following Full Council approval 12th April 2021 Officer Denne wrote requesting both items be removed which both plot holders object too and the Parish Council has received support communications from other plot holders to this effect. Cllr Ellicott and Committee Member Miss French support the Parish Council decision made at Full Council 12th April 2021. Cllr Smith acknowledged there should be a balance and explained there can be no appeal to the decision to request removal as it was approved at Full Council Meeting 12th April 2021. Cllr Ellicott also observed the Plot 34 equipment was so large that it greatly reduced the ability for the plot to be cultivated. Cllr Edwards and Officer Watson explained there had been several complaints from residents adjoining all three Parish Council allotment sites regarding play equipment hence why the Full Council decision was made 12th April 2021.

10. Fencing at Wickham Gardens

Cllr Smith confirmed very good feedback received from allotment holders and adjoining residents with regards installation of the new fencing by Mr S Large. Officer Denne advised the Parish Council has c£7,000 budgeted for work on all the allotments in this Financial Year.

11. Allotment holders Competition and BBQ 2021

It was approved the prizes would be the same as previously:

- Prizes for 1st and 2nd at each allotment site
- Prizes for the best scarecrows at each allotment site
- Children's Competition at each allotment site (e.g. best planting pot, etc.)

The prize giving and BBQ to be situated at the main Southwood Road allotments with provisional date of Saturday 24th July 2021. Officer Watson is to investigate any date clashes with school fetes planned.

Meeting Closed at 8.20pm

.....*D. Longland*..... Chairman

Dated8-6-2021.....