

Rotherham Allotments Alliance

Board Meeting No.24

Meeting Date: Monday 16th March 2020

Meeting Location: Garden House, Clifton Park, Rotherham.

Meeting Called By: Councillor Brian Steele

Chair: Councillor Brian Steele

Secretary: Jack Taylor (Minutes Donna Bushby)

Present: Directors: - Al Dean, John Palmer, Councillor Brian Steele, Mohammed Suleman, Councillor Emma Hoddinott. Allotment Support Administrator – Donna Bushby, Andy Lee & Tim Archer for Transfer and Transitional Arrangements from RMBC

Apologies: Jack Taylor, Mike Farrell

052/03/20 Declarations of Interest

None expressed

053/03/20 Minutes of Board Meeting No 22 held on Monday 17th February 2020

The minutes were agreed a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.

(No minutes from meeting 23 on 02.03.20 due to the meeting being inquorate.)

054/03/20 Administrators Report

054.1/03/20 – issues of thefts on a couple of sites and an incident that involved the police and an ambulance. One society site may need help from Board if issue needs escalating. A society member had also been subject to verbal abuse from a tenant. *It was advised that they should put a complaint into the RAA to investigate. The tenant may be evicted for this.*

054.2/03/20 – photo opportunity on Avenue Rd done. They may also have access to some funding for equipment from Ward Councillor.

054.3/03/20 – requote for insurance sent off – awaiting reply

054.4/03/20 – Invoice and mailmerge training done on Colony. Need to create the invoice and letter templates to upload

054.5/03/20 – projected bills for new societies done

054.6/03/20 – started draft of rents letter to DM tenants – will send to BS and JP

054.7/03/20 – Hartley Lane shed roof – awaiting price from maintenance contact

054.8/03/20 – contacted KCM regarding price of skips. Price is different so TA followed up – awaiting a call back

054.9/03/20 – need to go down to a few sites to check on vacant plots

054.10/03/20 – need to purchase printer / paper / envelopes / stamps for invoicing

055/03/20 Matters Arising

055.1/03/20 - Consideration needs taking for the current issues regarding the COVID19 outbreak. It may be that meetings are cancelled. It was discussed and agreed that the AGM should be postponed until further notice. Future board meetings can be done by email if required. EH found a website that allows free conference calling which could be used. Safety on sites will also be an issue. JP suggested that a message should be posted on the website / facebook page with government guidelines etc. Would the self-isolation of the high-risk age group cause any problems for the RAA- tenants not being able to work their plots etc. – could lose the whole season. What if they didn't want to pay their rents?

055.2/03/20 – JP asked about the sites on the website – can they be put into alphabetical order? DB advised they couldn't because it is done through Google Maps which works on distance from the user's current location. JP also commented that DB had done an excellent job with the website.

056/03/20 - Transfer and Transitional arrangements RMBC to RAA (including SLA)

056.1/03/20 – TA and AL were asked regarding where we were with the lease. AL replied that it was still due for completion by the end of March. BS asked regarding being able to get it seen by a solicitor as this would

take time. AL commented that it had been tweaked with Asset Management and will chase it up. The legal check is to be paid for by RMBC so need to find a solicitor and how much it would cost.

056.2/03/20 – water rates – have these been sent? DB has received these. TA has requested an email from the RAA so that Yorkshire Water can be informed of the transfer from RMBC to RAA.

056.3/03/20 – Hartley Lane grazing field – BS - has the tenant been contacted regarding the condition that the field has been left in? TA to follow this up. AL said that the field was part of allotment land so should be transferred to the RAA. However, current tenancies are done through Estates. BS asked if contact details could be made available should Estates/the tenant ever need to speak to the RAA. AL and TA to speak to Estates and ask if it is easier for them to still manage the billing of it and pass the revenue onto the RAA. Each grazing site is on a 364-day lease.

056.3/03/20 – Market Garden area at Broom Valley New – Al asked regarding this. AL said this will be part of the lease. The RAA/society can decide what they want to do with it

056.4/03/20 – JP asked regarding if the transfer takes longer than end of March due to getting the lease checked by a solicitor, are the RAA still able to operate as the legalities won't be completed? What if the solicitor identifies objections? AL confirmed that this was OK. They would work to get things done. JP also asked that as it is apparent that the RAA are taking on sites that need a lot of work, would RMBC impose any rules to say that they aren't operating properly? AL said no – the rules would be followed by all and RMBC would not want the transfer to be unsuccessful at this stage. The SLA states it requires 'good and proper management' – what would RMBC expect?

056.5/03/20 - MS asked regarding the capital. AL has passed on to Finance, examples of what is classed as capital work so includes new/improving roads, fences, clearing asbestos etc. AL said he would set up a budget code for this so the RAA can either submit a request to be reimbursed for works done or for RMBC to settle an invoice direct.

056.6/03/20 – MS asked regarding the 2 board members representing RMBC – is this part of the SLA? AL commented that this was part of the original report and vision for the RAA. The SLA will mirror the council's original decision.

056.7/03/20 – outstanding/ongoing site issues

056.71/03/20 – Scrooby St encroachment – AL has met with the resident. AL agreed the boundary line so the resident will remove themselves from the site as of 1st April. AL advised that the RAA should arrange for a fence to be put up as soon as possible.

056.72/03/20 – Avenue Rd encroachment – still working with estates

056.73/03/20 – Clifton – the issues from the resident are regarding a drain laid by the NHS (which they don't have a record of) and access.

056.74/03/20 – Sandymount Road – is this being managed by the RAA or being passed back to Fitzwilliam Estates?

056.75/03/20 – Moor Road – elderly resident has an issue with a side wall – not on allotment land.

057/03/20 - Financial Matters

057.1/03/20 - Financial Statement – last statement dated 29th February 2020. DB been reimbursed for mobile phone and purchases. AD has looked into postage for sending out the invoices – franking machine? Discussed it was probably not worth it for the amount we are sending. Also suggested to buy stamps before the postage price goes up. DB to let AD know how many required. Items for purchase required by DB were approved.

057.2/03/20 – Insurance – as reported by DB – awaiting updated quote which includes buildings and employer's liability

057.3/03/20 – Share Certification and Policy Rules - JP asked about the proposed policy that was circulated and proposed – all accepted.

058/03/20 – Outcome of Society Meeting

Main issue arisen is that societies were concerned about passing on the tenant information. BS wrote a letter to all secretaries to explain why the information is needed. DB to chase those who have not submitted the information.

059/03/20 – Rent Letter

It was discussed that this can be delayed slightly and the cancellation of the AGM needs to be included. DB has started to write a draft version. Will send to BS and JP for their perusal and amendments.

060/03/20 – AGM

Cancelled/postponed as previously discussed.

061/03/20 – Business Plan

BS / JP / DB went through the plan and made necessary amendments – been circulated and offered for adoption – are people happy with it? It was voted that everyone was happy with it. Financial projections need finalizing and adding. MS asked who was responsible for the financial projection. DB has put this together using previous information but items such as maintenance (what Streetpride used to do) need confirming.

Discussed the financial regulations and JP brought up an issue about ordering/spending power which is not included plus the insurance. Needs to have a paragraph for delegated spending. It was agreed that the ASA can spend up to £200. Anything £200 - £500 needs a director approval (treasurer/secretary/chair). Anything over £500 will require 3 x quotations.

062/03/20 – Repairs and Maintenance Issues

062.1/3/20 – Hartley Lane shed roof – DB asked for quote from maintenance contact.

062.2/03/20 – report of a tree damaging a resident’s fence on Rectory Field. DB asked for resident to send pictures – not received as yet.

062.3/03/20 – JP asked regarding what was happening with ongoing maintenance on sites – grass and hedge cutting etc. the Streetpride contract ends end of March.

062.4/03/20 - BS stated that 30k of the £100k should have already been spent

062.5/03/20 – it was brought up regarding plot clearing and the person who offered their services. BS stated that the person/contractor who does this must be a bone fide business and self-employed. Anyone who is interested must make formal contact

062.6/03/20 – JP asked whether the water leak on Barnsley Rd had been fixed. DB stated that she not heard anything from anyone at the site

063/03/30 – Rotherham Show

AD has been in contact with Sarah at RMBC and booked a space for the RAA. Further discussion is needed about what the RAA wants to do.

064/03/30 - Agenda items for the next meetings.

30th March 2020 – TBC if it will go ahead

- **Administrators report / issues arisen**
- **Transfer and Transitional arrangements RMBC to RAA (including SLA)**
- **Financial Matters**
 - Treasurers financial statement and report.
 - Insurance quotations. (Treasurer and Assistant)
 - Financial projection and budget
- **List of transitional items:**
 - Sandymount Rd
 - Grazing land
 - Sites with boundary issues
 - Streetpride contract
- **Repairs and Maintenance issues**
- **Rotherham Show**

065/03/30 - Date and Time of Next Meetings. (Meetings will be cancelled if not required).

All in the Garden Room, Clifton Park at 2.00pm

Dates TBC pending current COVID-29 situation



Signed (Chair)