

## Rotherham Allotments Alliance

# Board Meeting No.26

**Meeting Date:** Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2020

**Meeting Location:** Online: Zoom, phone

**Meeting Called By:** Councillor Brian Steele

**Chair:** Councillor Brian Steele

**Secretary:** Jack Taylor (Minutes Donna Bushby)

**Present:** Directors: - Al Dean (on phone), John Palmer, Councillor Brian Steel, Mike Farrell, Mohammed Suleman, Jack Taylor, Mick Hirst, John Callaghan. Allotment Support Administrator – Donna Bushby, For RMBC – Andy Lee & Tim Archer (for Transitional items only)

**Apologies:** Emma Hoddinott

**073/05/20      Minutes of Board Meeting 25 held 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

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

**074/05/20      Minutes of Emergency Meeting held on Friday 15 May 2020**

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

**075/05/20      Declarations of Interest**

None declared. BS asked that directors should not vote on issues concerning their own site. Everyone voted in favour.

**076/05/20      Administrators Report**

**076.1/05/20**      Report had been sent to all directors prior to meeting and most important points were discussed.

**076.2/05/20**      Lowfield Avenue vine – still needs looking at. MH offered to make a visit – arrange with DB.

**076.3/05/20**      Burning issue at High Street – causing nuisance to residents. MH added regarding speaking to the residents on Saturday and pointing out that a fire engine would not get down the track. Residents have videos of tenants being abusive towards them. It was discussed and agreed that a letter should be sent to all tenants to reiterate allotment rules. DB to draft. Directors authorised a skip for the site or a waste removal company to remove it as long as they are genuine. It was suggested to look at all sites and get a price for all the waste removal.

**076.4/05/20**      New society asking regarding insurance. RMBC still responsible until leases signed over. RAA looking into it. NAS have got a new company – was asked if we need a re-quote? MF to look into.

**076.5/05/20**      Site secretary emailed regarding security of tenant data. It was discussed that the RAA is protected by the new GDPR law – the council have passed tenant information over to the RAA as the responsible body. Concern is regarding no leases being handed over and signed yet. Was stated and discussed that new societies agreements have been done but needs the start date agreeing – should the existing societies be given theirs as well? Date for existing societies voted and agreed at 1/1/20 and new societies 1/4/20. DB to send. Once signed, societies must send their tenant details. It was then discussed if this was correct considering that the Head lease had not been signed. It was agreed that as the RAA had set up new societies and been taking on new tenants, then this is OK. New societies will be given the RAA tenant information once the agreement is signed.

**076.6/05/20**      Stickers for the signs – it was asked regarding the society sites – do they need the RAA details on? It was agreed yes as anything to the RAA will be passed on. Societies to decide on their own signage and what information they share. Question asked regarding having director's pictures on the website? Hi vis vests – directors to supply size required.

## **077/05/20 Financial Matters**

**077.1/05/20** AD sent an interim statement to the Board

**077.2/05/20** Issues with payments with Post Office. AD has spoken to the Co Op bank and hopefully resolved this. BS asked what percentage of tenants / societies have paid. DB can supply a spreadsheet of this. Concern with tenants who want to pay monthly – the tenant needs to set it up with their bank which might be difficult at the moment. Discussed about possibly taking card payments – DB to look into. AD advised that societies can go down to Broom Valley New site on a Sunday morning 10am-12pm to take payments there. Discuss position again in one month's time. Keep an eye on as this is the most difficult task.

## **078/05/20 Transfer and Transitional arrangements RMBC to RAA (including SLA)**

**078.1/05/20** AL went through an email sent to him from BS regarding outstanding items

**078.2/05/20** SLA and Leases – with Polly Hamilton to be signed off. Meeting with her late this week/early next week. Solicitor pretty much signed off to be sent back to RAA. Question asked regarding plans – been sent to BS with the removal of part of Psalters Lane. Will be sent again with the lease. RAA to appoint a solicitor, get the costs agreed by RMBC. RMBC to send costs for water charges and Allotment Support Assistant. Advised that water is being sorted with Yorkshire Water.

**078.3/05/20** Issues need resolving:

**078.31/05/20** – Sandymount Rd – RAA to advise RMBC what they want to do. Possibly not statutory allotment land.

**078.32/05/20** – Greasbrough – now been dealt with. Line agreed with couple – fence can be put up – from £100K.

**078.33/05/20** – Avenue Rd – more complex — proper boundary needs identifying. Needs a pragmatic solution. Not sure if encroachment or not. Leave with AL.

**078.34/05/20** – Hartley Lane polytunnels – TA was working with site secretary to get removed. Can be removed using £100k. Problem been ongoing for some time.

**078.35/05/20** – Moor Road boundary – been resolved – no issue with boundary wall to allotments.

**078.36/05/20** – Clifton flooding – NHS building next door at fault. Resident has claimed a right of access. AL has asked for copy of Deed – difficult to obtain at current time. Historic issues surrounding this – access to back of properties through allotment site.

**078.37/05/20** – Skip provision – premise of agreement is that the RAA is managing the whole operation of the allotments. AL to discuss with Polly Hamilton. AL aware allotments not in best condition, the £100k is available for this e.g. large clearance schemes. The money is still available regardless of the current change in circumstances. Procedure is to get approval from RMBC first before work is done, quotes needed dependent on size of spend.

**078.38/05/20** – MF reported receiving a call from someone from RMBC regarding grants – is it legitimate? AL confirmed the contact works for RMBC. BS thanked TA and AL for their attendance.

**078.4/05/20** The Directors then debated the points discussed when TA and AL had left. MF to speak to NAS regarding the legal advice.

**078.41/05/20** Sandymount Rd – MF advised that Wentworth Estates were not aware of any changes to the allotments. Discussed regarding whether it is worth taking this site on. It was agreed that the RAA should not take on responsibility until RMBC/Wentworth Estates advise what the arrangement is. Wentworth estates have indicated they would like to be part of the RAA. MF to contact them.

**078.42/05/20** It is unlikely the skip situation will change. It was discussed why the RAA should be paying for skips to clear up the previous mess. It was debated that it could come from the £100k.

## **079/05/20 £100K Grant**

**079.1/05/20** Societies were asked in the meeting in February regarding supplying 'wish lists' which need looking at – some have not been returned. Can't expect tenants to take on plots that are very overgrown. The money should be used to get plots cleared to be tenanted. It was suggested that if tenants are guaranteed, then we can get the plots cleared. Discussed looking at which plots/sites were worth doing first on DM sites plus any unlettable plots on society sites. Can be used as an incentive for other sites to become societies. It was questioned regarding societies who are paying for their own clearances – is this fair if other sites getting RAA help? It was discussed that health and safety is still the priority and these sites will still be helped where possible. Need to get on with getting it spent. Proposed that the next course of action will be to ask the new societies what they need doing, assess the DM sites, then existing society sites. Then have a meeting with Officers to produce a report on what needs doing. This was voted unanimous.

**080/05/20 Any Other Business**

No points were raised by members. BS to raise an issue regarding security/confidentiality on the website at a future meeting. BS thanks everyone for attending.

**081/05/20 Agenda Items for next meeting**

To be advised.

**082/05/20- Date and Time of Next Meetings. (Meetings will be cancelled if not required).**

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2.00pm on Zoom



Signed ..... (Chair)