

Rotherham Allotments Alliance

Board Meeting No.30

Meeting Date: Monday 20th July 2020

Meeting Location: Online: Zoom

Meeting Called By: Councillor Brian Steele

Chair: Councillor Brian Steele

Secretary: Jack Taylor (Minutes Donna Bushby)

Present: Directors: - Al Dean, John Palmer, Councillor Brian Steel, Jack Taylor, Mick Hirst, Mohammed Suleman.
Allotment Support Administrator – Donna Bushby

Apologies: N/A

115/07/20 Declaration of Interest
None declared.

116/07/20 Minutes of Board Meeting 29 held 6th July 2020
The minutes were moved as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman (electronically).

117/07/20 Matters Arising
None declared.

118/07/20 Administrator's Report

118.1/07/20 Report was circulated to directors prior to the meeting. Main points were complaints about burning on High Street (a notice for sites is being done), report of some fish being killed on Greasbrough. Still obtaining quotes for capital works to be done and waiting for confirmation from RMBC of submitted quotes so work can be booked in. Also queries from some site secretaries regarding site insurance.

118.2/07/20 BS discussed regarding society secretaries being given an opportunity to discuss any issues in a Zoom meeting. He stated that he has also not received any complaints in writing.

118.3/07/20 Question asked regarding how many societies have now paid and how many tenancy documents we've received back. 1 society left to pay (plus 2 new societies but that is understandable) and 5 agreements received back.

118.4/07/20 Discussion regarding quotes for £100k grant. Some have been sent to Andy Lee and have not received a response. The procedure is still a little unclear as DB needs to know when she can book work in.

118.5/07/20 It was discussed regarding the documents looked at from other authorities/organisations regarding allotment rules. We need to enforce the message that tenants cannot do what they want on site. JT will look at producing an information booklet for the RAA. Discussed regarding the tenant who is suspected of dumping dead birds and conducting a business on site. Policy needs enforcing when people do not follow rules. JT to send the tenant a letter with a final warning. Also need to consider the tenant's right to appeal.

118.6/07/20 DB asked regarding the vine on Lowfield Avenue which hasn't been done – need to see if it can be covered under the capital expenditure.

119/07/20 Financial Matters

119.1/07/20 Interim Statement sent to directors prior to meeting. Total in bank £33,898 to date.

119.2/07/20 Discussed regarding authorizing signatories on the bank account that need changing due to the resignation and additions of directors. It was voted and agreed to add MH to the signature list. AD to organize.

119.2/07/20 An updated insurance quote from Chris Knott has been received with the grazing sites on – just need NAS membership price confirming (*for the purpose of the minutes – DB emailed them and it is £1993.58*). The insurance broker is unable to find any quotes as competitive as this one. It was agreed that the insurance policy will be arranged to commence when the legalities are completed on the lease transfer. The policy will cover the public liability on all sites.

120/07/20 Transfer and Transitional arrangements RMBC to RAA (including SLA)

120.1/07/20 The solicitor quotes were sent to Andy Lee, as discussed in the meeting with him, and awaiting a response as to which company is being used. The process needs to be completed as soon as possible so needs chasing up.

121/07/20 Date and Time of Meetings Change

121.1/07/20 Cllr Steele has been in contact with Cllr Hoddinott regarding attending the RAA board meetings. He has asked Cllr Hoddinott to specify a regular day/time when she can attend board meetings and it will possibly change to accommodate her attendance. It was voted and agreed that Cllr Steele will discuss this again with Cllr Hoddinott as well as her future position on the board in regard to the constitution's requirements of meeting attendance.

122/07/20 Subscription to NAS

122.1/07/20 The RAA is a shareholding member of NAS as confirmed by AD in an email sent to directors previously. Discussed the benefits of individual tenants being members – seed scheme / individual plot insurance etc. DB has spoken to the secretary at Herringthorpe Valley Rd who said that they used to be members. They had a legal issue a few years ago and NAS would not help them. JP stated only 2 personal injury claims have been made to NAS and they were rejected due to fraud. NAS would not allow the RAA to become affiliated members. MH asked regarding the legal aspect of membership – JP explained that NAS cannot represent the RAA if they are representing a tenant in the same case. It was then discussed that in previous meetings it was decided that the decision to join all tenants to NAS had to be voted on in an AGM due to the financial implication – the board cannot make that decision alone. Another difficulty is that we need to have details of all tenants which some society sites have not submitted. The resolution has to be carried in the AGM as it is a change in policy. Discussed regarding when the AGM can be legally held.

123/07/20 Meeting with Societies

No secretaries have requested to have a Zoom meeting. One secretary has sent comments via email which have been answered – JT has offered to go down to that site to speak to the secretary in person – BS offered to go as well. DB speaks to a number of secretaries regularly with no major problems being reported.

124/07/20 Any Other Business

124.1/07/20 Skip requests discussed – can they be put to capital as it for plot clearances as most sites have new tenants? RMBC used to give most sites one skip per year – some did not get them however. There are figures in the financial projection for site clearance which could accommodate this. Some societies pay for their own from society funds. Tenants should not be bringing items onto site that are not allotment related i.e. settees. Need to ensure that tenants burn any wood (considerately) / compost green material, scrap metal should be collected up and arranged to be taken away by a scrap collector and anything else can go in a skip. We need to be careful with them - skips to be left for one day only – tenants notified in advance and given a list of what can go in it. Some sites may need supervision on the day – a director could do this, or ask a tenant on a direct-managed site to do it.. DB to arrange the ordering of the skips. This was voted on and agreed

124.2/07/20 MH asked a question regarding grounds keeping and if sites did it themselves, would there be a reduction in rent? It was stated that this couldn't take place this year and this issue would need debating and would need look into the financial implications and future costs for works to be done. Need to determine what societies actually want before we change the way we operate. Is it viable to employ a handy person? Have to look at the options and the long-term implications.

124.3/07/20 It was suggested that we have should arrange meeting with Andy Lee to discuss the issues raised today.

124.4/07/20 JT has looked at the charitable status application. Need to amend rule 103 in RAA rules – basically a word change plus change the registered address from the PO Box to a permanent address. The address change is easy. The rule change has to be according to RAA rules – rule 57a – must be made by an extraordinary resolution and passed in a meeting by no less than 75% of members – e.g. at the AGM and then witnessed by a notable person and 4 board members. No time limit on the change but can't proceed until we have an AGM. Agreed that paperwork to be drawn up and ready for when it can be completed.

- 125/07/20** **Agenda Items for next meeting**
- **AGM Update**
 - **Site Maintenance – long term**

126/07/20- Date and Time of Next Meeting. (Meetings will be cancelled if not required).
Monday 3rd August 2.00pm on Zoom

BS thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.



Signed (Chair)