

Rotherham Allotments Alliance

Board Meeting No.37

Meeting Date: Monday 23rd November 2020

Meeting Location: Online: Zoom

Meeting Called By: Councillor Brian Steele

Chair: Councillor Brian Steele

Secretary: Jack Taylor (Minutes Donna Bushby)

Present: Directors: - Councillor Brian Steele, Al Dean, John Palmer, Jack Taylor, Mick Hirst, Mohammed Suleman

Apologies: N/A

162/11/20 Declaration of Interest

162.1/11/20 JP declared an interest as a tenant on Barnsley Rd site if the path improvement quote is discussed.

162.2/11/20 AD declared an interest as Secretary of Broom Valley New site in relation to any discussion regarding the improvements requested on that site.

163/11/20 Minutes of Board Meeting 35 – 26th October 2020

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

164/11/20 Matters Arising

164.1/11/20 AD has advised that the online banking has been set up but is currently having difficulty with Co-Op bank with its use.

165/11/20 Administrator's Report

165.1/11/20 Report circulated to directors prior to the meeting. In summary – 3 new plot lets, and assisted with 2 terminations on Herringthorpe Valley road site.

165.2/11/20 Issue reported on Avenue Rd regarding scrap metal being brought onto site. This has been resolved.

165.3/11/20 Report of piece of fence missing at South Street. Spoke to secretary and has been like this for a number of years and isn't a risk currently.

165.4/11/20 Vicarage Fields have requested a skip to remove the waste left on the plot where the asbestos shed was taken down. The board agreed that this was Ok and should be put to capital if possible.

165.6/11/20 Skip booked for Moor Rd. Tenants will be sent a letter. MH will supervise on the day and requires a key – DB to sort.

165.7/11/20 Discussed regarding the Barnsley Rd pathways quote. Needs to have more as detail as to what work it includes. Same company that did the Avenue Rd clearance. Site needs to be checked to ensure that the work has been done correctly.

166/11/20 Financial Matters

166.1/11/20 AD presented a statement of account for October sent to all directors prior to meeting. Opening balance was £44,802, expenditure was £9,180 and received £8060, leaving balance of £43,682. Balance as of today is £42,535. The £7600 received from RMBC was reimbursement for capital works and for the website. There are still some cheques to clear and a payment to the supplier for capital work.

166.2/11/20 The PO Box payment is due at the end of the month. Not yet received a reminder.

- 166.3/11/20** The NAS membership is due - £66. AD has agreed this with the regional representative and will pay it accordingly. The RAA are association members. Individual tenants can join themselves. A lot of the societies are already members.
- 166.4/11/20** JT submitted a receipt for the Information Commissioner's Office fee.
- 166.5/11/20** AD will be contacting MH to sort out the forms for the bank account.
- 166.6/11/20** ASA contract – this is in-hand with BS.
- 166.7/11/20** Predicted funding – we currently have a larger balance in the bank account than expected. However, not yet been invoiced for grounds maintenance and pest control so this will reduce the figure. Need to have a separate meeting to discuss any works to be taken from the revenue account. Have done well considering it is the first year.
- 166.8/11/20** MS suggested that we need to look at projections for next year including cash flow and match funding. Someone needs to look at funding but at the moment funding is focused mainly on covid-related issues.

167/11/20 **Transfer and Transitional arrangements RMBC to RAA (including SLA)**

- 167.1/11/20** Still waiting for the solicitor. BS has got a meeting with RMBC in early December regarding the progress of this project. DB to chase progress with the solicitor. It was suggested that directors have a meeting with the solicitor to discuss any issues.
- 167.2/11/20** JT asked regarding the quote for Queen Street fencing. DB has chased with up with the contractor.

168/11/20 **Society Update**

- 168.1/11/20** Julie from Clifton Garden Society is relatively new to the role and has spent the last few months getting paperwork in order. Society have requested to have a historical pile of rubble removed from the site, to come from capital, this would negate the need for a skip for other rubbish. Currently have got 2 quotes for this job – need a 3rd quote. Access to the job is quite difficult so needs someone with a van. Also had a company to look at the paths and drainage. Julie mentioned regarding sites having the same keys. Was assured that most sites do have different locks and a lot of security issues do come from actual tenants. It was also discussed that past tenants sometimes dump things on site if they still have a key. Julie is also sourcing funding from the Ward for notice boards.
- 168.2/11/20** Discussed regarding Julie's position on the committee – currently acting Chair and acting Secretary – has been difficult to rectify this due to not being able to hold an AGM due to covid. It was suggested to use Zoom but was mentioned that a lot of the tenants wouldn't be able to use this facility. It was suggested that accessibility for all needs to be considered, in-line with constitutions. It was also discussed using different ways to cast votes and to consider the work involved for the secretaries. It was advised that Julie tries to get someone else to act as Chair or Secretary to safe-guard herself in regard to the running of the society as doing 2 roles is very difficult. The RAA will help support this. MH said that Julie and Richard are doing a very good job on the site.

For the purpose of the minutes, BS asked if they had found the meeting useful, to which they replied yes, and thanked Julie and Richard for their input and they left the meeting.

169/11/20 **Maintenance**

JT and DB are visiting some sites on Tuesday to measure the grass / hedge cutting areas. Will be meeting MH at Avenue Rd also.

170/11/20 **Future Actions**

JP asked regarding bills for next year – this is being discussed as part of any other business.

171/11/20 **Directors Attendance Record**

171.1/11/20 It was discussed briefly in the last meeting whether or not to write to directors regarding their attendance. DB created a record of all director's attendance and presented this to directors in the meeting. JP has looked through the regulations and there is no stipulation on removing directors but the Code of Conduct does state that directors must attend meetings and apologies have to be submitted if they can't. It is a difficult situation as certain directors are appointed by the Authority. BS will speak to the RMBC and director in

question to discuss this issue as apologies are not being received. It was expressed that the appointed director is an issue for RMBC. It is important that if directors are given tasks do to, that they carry them out for the benefit and purpose of the Alliance. JT to write to JC following the next meeting, regarding his absence and future interest on being on the board.

172/11/20 Any Other Business

172.1/11/20 Rent / Invoices for 2021. It was agreed in a previous meeting that rents would be frozen at the 2020 rate. It was discussed that direct-managed tenants and societies would be given until the end of March to pay the invoices. The letter that goes out with bills also needs to include the proposed rents for 2022 to give the required 12 months-notice. DB to draft the letters. AD to get more stamps.

172.2/11/20 JT reported that Wood St has had a number of break-ins recently. Is it possible that security cameras can be used onsite? It was discussed regarding the legality of using cameras and the public release of any pictures from them. Could speak to the local PCSOs regarding issues onsite. DB to speak to Andy Lee.

172.3/11/20 AD raised a point about the high-water bill we have received. DB is going to find out the water bills for the last 4 quarters to determine what tenants need to be charged next year. DB suggested that usage may be higher this year due to more tenants being onsite and more plots let. The water bills do need paying by the RAA. BS has requested that DB produces statistics for every meeting to show site occupancy.

173/11/20 Agenda Items for next meeting

- **As per this meeting**
- **SYFAB**

174/11/20 Date and Time of Next Meeting. (Meetings will be cancelled if not required).

Monday 23rd November 2020 2.00pm on Zoom.

BS asked if directors found having a society present useful – directors agreed that it was. DB advised that one society has advised that they work at the time of the meeting so another meeting can be arranged for them if required.

BS thanked everyone for their attendance and participation and closed the meeting.



Signed (Chair)