

Rotherham Allotments Alliance

Board Meeting No.43

Meeting Date: Monday 15th February 2021

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

048/02/21 (1) **Apologies:** Emma Hoddinott

049/02/21 (2) **Declaration of Interest**

049.1/02/21 JP declared an interest as a tenant on Barnsley Rd site.

049.2/02/21 AD declared an interest as Secretary of Broom Valley New site.

049.3/02/21 MH declared an interest as a tenant of Avenue Rd site.

049.4/02/21 MS declared an interest as a tenant of Clifton Site.

049.5/02/21 JT declared an interest as Secretary of Wood St site.

050/02/21 (3) **Minutes of Board Meeting 42 – 1st February 2021**

050.1/02/21 JP item raised for min. 038/02/21 – was not present at this meeting so initials removed from the minutes.

050.2/02/21 The rest of the minutes were moved as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman (electronically).

051/02/21 (4) **Matters Arising**

Point was raised regarding the price to be charged to the tenant on High Street who wants to take over the bottom area of the site – directors voted and confirmed a £20 rent would be charged.

052/02/21 (5) **Administrator's Report**

052.1/02/21 **Clifton** – report from resident regarding burning – reported to site secretary.

052.2/02/21 **High Street** – hole in fence reported. Tenant has now repaired it. The fence installation has been delayed due to the bad weather.

052.3/02/21 **Lowfield Avenue Vine** – quote received for the removal. To submit to capital.

052.4/02/21 **Director Nomination received** – from a tenant at Avenue Rd – Has got experience in allotment committees. Same tenant has identified some issues on the site with trees and the tracks. It was discussed that this person would be a very good candidate and an asset to the board. This will be taken to the AGM.

052.5/02/21 **Psalters Lane** – report received of fly-tipping on the RAA side where there is no fence. DB to get a quote for fencing and the rubbish removing. It was discussed regarding who reported this issue and why they had been visiting other sites. JT to address this.

053/02/21 (6) **Financial Matters**

053.1/02/21 **2021 Rents received to date** - £13553.80 – 19.4% of rents. 2 societies have paid.

053.2/02/21 **2020 Rents** - 98.7% of 2020 rents have been paid – £204.84 outstanding. Some of the outstanding will be recovered as the tenant is setting up a payment plan. Where tenancies have been terminated, this amount has already been written off. Any existing tenants who owe rent should be terminated unless they contact us to make arrangements. Discussed regarding extra costs if a collection agency is used.

053.3/02/21 AD sent the January 2021 statement our prior to the meetings. Rents received - £4500, expenditure - £7241 (includes water bill to RMBC). Balance at 31.1.21 is £41,489.

053.4/02/21 Received some final demands for water bills – the original bills have not been received. DB will look into this. BS advised to copy RMBC Officers in.

053.5/02/21 Accounts for 2020 have been finalized and circulated to directors. AD has confirmed John Kirk to audit the accounts for the AGM. DB was unable to source another one. AD has someone in mind and will contact them. MS asked if a reserve amount has been allocated in the accounts. A line should be added to the account to show a reserve amount to be used only in an emergency. The amount was agreed at £10,000. It was highlighted that the Business Plan needs looking at for 2021 and needs to include the financial projection which should include the reserve.

054/02/21 (7) Transfer and Transitional arrangements RMBC to RAA (including SLA)

054.1/02/21 Solicitor update – email received on Friday – further correspondence following questions previously asked. DB to contact our solicitor to ask for timescale.

054.2/02/21 **£100k works** – DB has been in touch with some companies to arrange quotes – will look at organizing site visits in March when the weather has improved.

055/02/21 (8) Society Update

055/02/21 **South Street** – not heard from site secretary following the letter sent. Tenant who emailed before has emailed again. Unable to resolve any of the issues until a site meeting can be held.

056/02/21 (9) Maintenance

056.1/02/21 **Pest Control** – Discussed getting a quote from a person who BS has suggested. Also discussed the cost of the training for individuals. DB has got a cost of some training through NAS which is £59.95 per person plus VAT. DB to confirm how many people have come forward to do the training. Cost of bait also needs looking at. Boxes can be bought for £6 each. JT stated that Wood Street don't currently have boxes but pest control is still being done on the site by RMBC. Discussed regarding what to charge tenants for boxes and if for every site. It was discussed that Barnsley Rd tenants have been shooting rats onsite and whether this is legal or not – needs looking into. It was suggested that we focus on the sites currently receiving pest control and add other sites on if required.

056.2/02/21 **Moor Rd Drainage** – quote has been received from the tenant onsite - £9000. Need to look at getting another quote. Another tenant has reported that water is running into the ditch and the dyke has been dredged. The car wash / flats still need looking into as they are a problem – RMBC Flooding Officer is aware of this. The site is the lowest point so water will drain into the allotment.

056.3/02/21 JT has purchased 15 fire extinguishers. They need to be distributed to societies – it was suggested that secretaries should arrange with JT to collect them from Wood St. Old ones should be disposed of by the society. It was discussed that PAT testing is the responsibility of the society as it won't be RAA equipment. The RAA is responsible for testing of the electrical supply to buildings. MH will research quotations for this. RMBC can do the work but it appears expensive. Needs to be done every 5 years.

057/02/21 (10) AGM Update

057.1/02/21 The annual report is still being collated.

057.2/02/21 A resolution needs deciding regarding NAS membership – BS will draft and submit to board members. It was asked whether the board supports this issue or not and whether the cost should be put onto rents or be taken care of by the RAA. It was suggested that it should be identified that the cost of membership would be included this year but it may be added onto rents next year. Societies who can prove they have paid NAS for 2021 will be reimbursed. This does depend on if tenant details have been submitted by the society. DB to contact NAS regarding their membership process. The board agrees to submit a motion to the AGM regarding membership of NAS that directors will have a free vote whether to support or not.

057.3/02/21 A former director has asked to attend the AGM. It was discussed that by resigning from the board, they were no longer a shareholder. It was agreed that they can become an affiliated member by paying the £3 subscription which allows them to attend and vote at the AGM. An application form will be sent.

057.4/02/21 JP brought to the board's attention that existing tenants have not had a new tenancy agreement from the RAA. Has suggested a motion that tenants are made aware that on payment of rent, they agree to RAA's terms and rules. This will be communicated on rental invoices and policies available to view on the website. This will be added to the AGM.

058/02/21 (11) Policy Review

058.1/02/21 Tenancy Agreement – 3 new clauses – agreed by the Board.

058.2/02/21 Allotment Rules – 1 new clause regarding fences and update to permitted buildings – agreed by the Board.

058.3/02/21 Code of Conduct – Director's responsibilities and policy on missing meetings – agreed by the Board.

058.4/02/21 Financial Regulations – need protocol for Internet Banking. AD got in-hand. Needs to be added when confirmed. Buying of goods / services – sometimes difficult to get 3 quotes – add that if 3 quotes are unobtainable, it will be a board decision on the purchase. Need to build up preferred suppliers list.

058.5/02/21 Standing Orders – financial regulations to be added. Proper Officers – amend to the ASA being the designated Proper Officers for continuity. EEC – current legislation – can't change until government change it. All points agreed by the Board.

058.6/02/21 Business Plan – suggest a small sub-group to go through it and arrange a separate meeting.

058.7/02/21 The new sub-committees are to be put forward at the AGM.

058.8/02/21 Question asked regarding a confidentiality policy. One is included as part of the policies. Is there a version where people have to sign to say they agree to it? This to be looked into.

058.9/02/21 BS thanked JP for his hard work on the policies.

059/02/21 Induction for new directors

BS to complete this. DB has done a short summary for the advert which can be expanded.

060/02/21 Future Actions

None specified.

061/02/21 Any other business

061.1/02/21 Scrooby St damaged fencing – BS rang the resident but no answer. Need to check if the fence has been repaired. A reminder letter to be sent to include BS council number. Was given until 1/3/21 to put it right. The brackets that have been removed need fixing back on. The resident has no right of access.

061.2/02/21 JP/MH been working on new society policies – this will be on the agenda for the next meeting. Point raised regarding any leftover finances should a society fold. It was discussed that the RAA take responsibility for any money and be held until another society is set up or spent on the site if 3 years pass without a new society being formed. This was voted by the board and also confirmed that any unspent funding will be returned to the funder. Need to look at storage if equipment is being handed over.

061.3/02/21 Another point was raised regarding depreciation of RAA equipment and being accounted for on the financial report. BS to discuss with DB.

061.4/02/21 It was discussed that if a vote for directors is required at the AGM. Existing directors wishing to stand again should prepare a short paragraph to say why they want to be directors.

062/02/21 Agenda Items for next meeting

- As per this meeting
- 1st March 2021 – security cameras on Wood St
- New Society Policy

063/02/21 Date and Time of Next Meeting. (Meetings will be cancelled if not required).

Monday 1st March 2021 at 2.00pm.

BS thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting was closed at 4.00pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Seal".

Signed (Chair)