

Rotherham Allotments Alliance

Maintenance Committee Meeting No.4

On Meeting Date: Monday 14th March 2022

Meeting Location: Online: Zoom

Meeting Called By: Brian Steele

Chair: Brian Steele

Secretary: Jack Taylor (Minutes Donna Bushby)

Present: Directors: Brian Steele (BS), Jack Taylor (JT), Mick Hirst (MH), Alice Parry (AP) and Allotment Support Assistant – Donna Bushby (DB).

M023/03/22 ***Late addition to the Agenda:***

Was approached by Helen Francis from Nature Action Rotherham regarding signing up to support them. Helen was invited to the start of the meeting to explain what the organisation does. They are working to improve wildlife in the Rotherham area alongside the Wildlife Trust. They want to commission a survey with RMBC to look at the current state of nature in Rotherham and look at plan for the future. They want to be able to provide resources, funding etc. to local groups to improve wildlife and Biodiversity in Rotherham. They are currently gathering interest in the project so need support from local organisations. 65 organisations including a number of schools have signed up already. It can be joined as an individual or as a group and will be publicised by supporters on social media on 23rd March. The RAA needed to clarify that this was not a political organisation which Helen confirmed it was not. It was advised that this could be discussed at the AGM. DB to contact Helen when the decision has been made.

M024/03/22 **(1) Apologies:** N/A

M025/03/22 **(2) Minutes from previous meeting – 17th January 2022**
Moved as a true record by JT and duly signed by the chairperson.

M026/03/22 **(3) Matters Arising**
Moor Rd Gates – was asked whether claiming the cost back had gotten any further. DB advised that this was passed to Tim Archer by Andy Lee. Tim has advised that he emailed the police officer but not had a response. DB to contact the police officer.

M027/03/22 **(4) Grass Cutting Tender**

- a) DB has advised RMBC that provision will continue from them. The schedule will start in early April and includes 6 cuts – April / May / June / July / August and the following March. Visited Broom Valley Old and remeasured the paths. Advised RMBC regarding the change and also the request to weed kill the areas specified. It was agreed that using weedkiller on the paths wouldn't affect any other parts of the allotment and it had been requested by the site secretary.
- b) DB has received the hedge cutting invoice. Approval to pay was granted.

M028/03/22 **(5) Restorative Justice - Update**

- a) Now working on site Monday – Friday. Been given further jobs to complete.
- b) Roll on/off skip was requested but couldn't get it on the site so 2 8yrd skips were sent instead.
- c) Brambles being removed at the bottom of the site but requested to leave some to act as a security deterrent.
- d) Supervisor on site made a suggestion about having the bottom area of land on the site to use specifically for their service. Bottom area has been untenanted for a long time and sometimes floods. Community Payback could make the land cultivatable again and use it as an incentive for the participants – growing crops etc. The Alliance wouldn't lose any rent from doing this. It was decided that this should be put to a board meeting for a decision but it was envisaged that it wouldn't be a problem.

- M029/03/22 (6) Pest Control - update**
- a) Queen St North added to training list. 3 people have passed so far.
 - b) Need to source the poison / boxes – need to determine how much per box, per visit is required. It would be safer to buy smaller boxes for each site for health and safety reasons. Also need to rotate the types of bait to stop the rate becoming immune.
 - c) DB to look at prices and report back to sub-committee.
- M030/03/22 (7) Volunteer Policy / VAR Kitemark**
- a) It was discussed regarding the revision of the volunteer policy to include aspects of the VAR kitemark. Some areas in the kitemark application form also needed clarifying. It was advised that the RAA may not necessarily get outside volunteers – they would more than likely be tenants on the site.
 - b) Any specific projects taking place on site using volunteers would need to have a risk assessment done first, with volunteers being made aware of it before they start work.
 - c) The RAA would be able to supply PPE equipment such as goggles / gloves / helmets if required. It was then discussed what further items could be required, i.e. waterproof clothing.
 - d) It was agreed that there wouldn't be a need for volunteers to have DBS checks.
- M031/03/22 (8) Risk Assessments**
- a) Risk assessment forms were looked at in 2021 but not finalised. DB / MH to finalise these.
 - b) All DM sites will then be visited and the risk assessment completed.
 - c) Societies will be responsible for doing their own risk assessments but the RAA can send the standard form. If any society is unsure, or needs any assistance with this, the RAA will help them to complete it.
 - d) It was also suggested about having a 'tick-list' of items present on site on the risk assessment so that people can be made aware of them.
- M032/03/22 (9) Other works / special projects**
- Paths – discussion took place on the plan of action for these being completed. AP advised that due to other issues on South St, this could be put lower down the list. It was agreed that Avenue Rd should be completed first due to the paths being in a poor condition. DB to organise with Burkinshaws.
- M033/03/22 (10) Any Other Business**
- a) AP circulated a draft contractor policy for director's consideration. It was suggested that a 'permit to work' clause is added and signed off by the Contractor and RAA. Also need to add item concerning minimum public liability insurance requirement. AP/MH to revise and re-circulate. Will need board approval before being issued.
 - b) Queen St North – tenant complaint about water not being on for the full site. DB to contact site secretary.
 - c) Sandymount – nothing further has been heard from RMBC.
 - d) Moor Rd drainage – The contractor who dug the ditch has advised to get a drainage expert to look at it. DB has contacted RMBC Flooding Officer who said they can take a look at the site when available. BS/MH arranged to visit the site this week to monitor the water flow.
 - e) 'Keep locked' Gate signs – DB got a price of £345 for 50 signs to replace the laminated sheets. Directors agreed that these can be purchased.
 - f) DB also looked at new plot numbers for DM sites – need approx. 300 which quotes have been obtained – cheapest is £1.26 + vat per sign. Will match the one's RMBC already had made but not put on sites. These were approved and DB to order.
 - g) Kimberworth Park – still waiting to get a contractor to fix the brickwork. Conifer felling is being booked in by the society.
- M034/03/22 (11) Agenda Items for Next Meeting**
TBC

**M035/03/22 (12) Date of Next Meeting
Monday**

BS thanked everyone who attended and the meeting was closed at 3.15pm.



Signed (Chair)