

Rotherham Allotments Alliance

Finance Committee Meeting No.6

On Meeting Date: Monday 6th June 2022

Meeting Location: Online: Zoom

Chair: John Palmer

(Minutes Donna Bushby)

Present: Directors: John Palmer (JP), Brian Steele (BS), Mohammed Suleman (MS) and Allotment Support Assistant – Donna Bushby (DB).

F040/06/22 (1) Apologies: Cllr Dave Sheppard and Kris Edwards.

F041/06/22 (2) Minutes from Previous Meeting
Moved as a true record by BS and duly signed (electronically by the Chairperson).

F042/06/22 (3) Financial Report

- a) Bank balance @ 27.5.22 - £76,713.52
- b) Budget v Actual and Balance Sheet Reports sent prior to the meeting. Question asked regarding the format of the report and what they show – can show what's spent / what's remaining / in figures or a percentage. Some figures were explained as they related to accruals from last year's accounts. It was explained regarding some amounts that relate to capital expenditure which were not included in the budget. It was discussed that the budget report should be presented at each finance meeting to monitor expenditure. It needs to be done as an annual report, rather than quarterly, as certain bills are paid at certain times of the year.
- c) 1 outstanding bill to pay – TKL Skips – Scrooby St - £240. Now got more to pay.
- d) Savings account – had an email from bank – still processing application. Has been chased again.
- e) Rents outstanding – approx. £500 outstanding – chased all – awaited replies and now gone down to approx. £200 due to payments being made.

F043/06/22 (4) FCA 2021 annual report submission

- a) 2021 Financial report needs to be submitted to the FCA.
- b) Need to update directors on the FCA – DB to speak to JT.

F044/06/22 (5) Instalment Rent Payments

- a) This was brought up in board meeting regarding tenants who are unable to pay their allotment rent in one lump sum. It was discussed that a Hardship Policy should be added to advise tenants who want to pay in instalments.
- b) It was suggested that an administration fee be added to instalment payments due to the extra work involved. It was discussed how this would be managed in terms of sending reminder invoices / collecting etc. It was suggested that the amount should be 5% when paying quarterly. DB would have to produce a spreadsheet of instalment payments to monitor these payments.
- c) JP to draft a Hardship Policy to be presented at the next board meeting.

F045/05/22 (6) Rent Payment Deadline

- a) This was also brought up in a board meeting as the payment deadline date gives implications for plots being given up / terminated into the growing season for non-payment. This means that plots may end up overgrown.
- b) DB suggested that reminders could be sent following the initial invoice. If the payment deadline is changed to the end of February, giving 30 day's notice at to quit at this time, will give up to the end of March for the plot to be paid for / vacated. Allotment law states that tenancies can be terminated if not paid within 40 days of the rent date. This should give plenty of time to collect rents and also allow for plots to be re-tenanted at the end of March / beginning of April. The wording will need to be written for the invoices. It was proposed that this should be presented to the board meeting.

F046/06/22 (7) Avenue Rd Society Bank Account

- a) It was suggested in a previous board meeting regarding the money that is in the now disbanded Avenue Rd society account. The Minute suggests to give 18 months for a new society to be established which would give until April 2023. There was another Minute from another meeting which suggested 12 months which gives until October 2022. Neither relate to dating it from when the society actually disbanded which was December 2020.
- b) Need to find out how much is in the account. The named person on the account are Davina Williams, Scott Barron and Mick Hirst.
- c) It was suggested that if societies disband in the future and don't re-establish within 3 months, the money should be transferred to the RAA to be held for future expenditure on that site. this will also ensure the safeguarding of the money. This needs to be written into a policy and/or the society constitution.
- d) It was then discussed regarding societies appointing trustees to be responsible for finances. This is included in the NAS-format constitution. DB showed a copy of the RAA model constitution on the screen which confirms that funds should be transferred to the RAA to be held for a new society and/or spent on the site. DB then showed a copy of a constitution from one of the societies which confirmed that funds would be shared between members. It was suggested that this be on the agenda for the society forum meeting to compare constitutions and advise how financial assets should be protected for members should a society dissolve. Everyone needs to know what is expected of the RAA, should a society fold. The RAA does not want to take anything over, it aims to safeguard any assets a site has.
- e) It was highlighted that this issue has only occurred with newly-formed societies. The established societies seem to be able to deal with similar occurrences.

F047/06/22 (8) Any Other Business

- a) Solicitor – received an update from the solicitor which was asking about liabilities for contaminated land and environmental issues and ensuring that adequate insurance is obtained. It was then discussed regarding the buildings and having them scheduled in the lease so that it is clear what the RAA is responsible for. DB to ask the question with the solicitor. It was also raised regarding liability insurance for directors / the ASA. The insurance quote does include Employer's Liability insurance. It was noted that all directors need to be included in the insurance and the ASA to be covered. It was also discussed regarding director's indemnity insurance and ensuring that the Trusted Persons cover is adequate for the stipulations in the Co-Op Rules. DB to contact the insurance company to find out.
- b) Broom Valley Old – reported roof damage and needed to know who was responsible. DB to confirm it is the RAA responsible for roof repairs.
- c) Rectory Field – possible encroachment and unauthorised access to the allotment site. Needs to be looked at to decide plan of action.

F048/06/22 (9) Agenda Items for next meeting

To be decided following next board meeting

F049/06/22 (10) Date of Next meeting

Board Meeting: Monday 20th June

Finance Meeting: Monday 1st August

The meeting was closed at 3.15pm and JP thanked everyone for their attendance.



Signed (Chair)