

# Rotherham Allotments Alliance

## Finance Sub Committee Minutes

Meeting Name:		Finance Meeting - 13	
Minute Taker:		Jamie Calvert	
Date:	27 November 2023	Time:	14:30
Location:	Clifton Garden House		

Attendees:

Directors: John Palmer Chair (JP), Brian Steele (BS) and Sue Jackson (SJ)  
Support Officer: Jamie Calvert (JC)

Apologies:

Cllr Dave Sheppard (DS)

### 1) Apologies

Apologies from Cllr Dave Sheppard (DS)

### 2) Minutes from the previous meeting

The finance meeting 12 minutes were moved as a true record by BS and duly signed (electronically) by the Chairperson.

### 3) Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

### 4) Budget Forecast Review

A discussion was had about the 2023 budget and forecast for the remainder of the financial year. The following points were raised:

- a. A query was raised regarding the 2023 spend for accountancy fees being zero.  
**ACTION:** (JC) to investigate the billing policy of VAR accountants.
- b. There is a current underspend of £20,000.00 on the 2023 budget. This is mainly attributed to salary savings due to the ASO post being vacant for 5 months and some waste-related spending being delayed. It was suggested that the 2023 surplus be allocated to the following expenses that were identified as outstanding:
  - i. Potential HMRC tax penalty
  - ii. Security fences at multiple sites
  - iii. Access track surface repair at two sites
  - iv. Security cameras

A discussion was had about the 2024-26 budget projections. The following points were raised:

- a. It was identified that there is no adjustment over time for the ASO working from home allowance. It was clarified that this amount is dependant on the rate set by HMRC which has not been changed since the rate was introduced.
- b. A query was raised about the pest control budget increase budget being less than that of the predicted rise in cost of supplies. It was clarified that multiple variables had been identified, including the anticipated reduction due to the efficiency of new pest control methods and the increased cost of new rodenticides. Therefore, the expectation is that the expenditure would unlikely decrease, but it was not reasonable to forecast an above-average increase.

- c. It was noted that the plot clearance budget has increased significantly in line with the RAA commitment to bring unused plots back into use.
- d. It was noted that the waste budget has been maintained to reflect the current policy but that this may result in a surplus due the increase in the plot clearance budget. This is to held under review depending on the effectiveness of the clearance work.

**5) Annual Rent**

- a. The ASO has drafted an annual rent letter to be sent to tenants.  
**ACTION:** Draft to be sent to (JP) for review and addition of introductory statement.
- b. Agreed that this letter will be sent as an attachment with the annual invoices.
- c. It was highlighted that the rent charge per square meter varies across sites. This is due to a historic issue, carried over from the rates charged by RMBC. It was suggested that a recommendation is made to the RAA board to raise future rents proportionately to bring all sites to the same rate.

**6) Any other business**

None

**7) Agenda items for the next meeting**

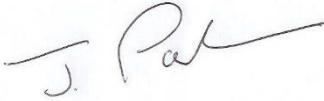
None agreed

**8) Date of Next Meeting**

TBC at next board meeting

The meeting was closed at 15:40pm.

Signed



John Palmer (Chair)

Date

19/02/2024