

Rotherham Allotments Alliance

Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Name:	Board Meeting - 86		
Minute Taker:	Jamie Calvert		
Date:	15 January 2024	Time:	13:00
Location:	Clifton Garden House		

Attendees:

Directors: Brian Steele Chair (BS), Sue Jackson (SJ), and Richard Watson (RW).
Support Officer: Jamie Calvert (JC)

Apologies:

John Palmer (JP), Mick Hirst (MH), Jack Taylor (JT), Cllr Dave Sheppard (DS) and Mohammed Suleman (MS).

001/01/24 Apologies

John Palmer (JP), Mick Hirst (MH), Jack Taylor (JT), Cllr Dave Sheppard (DS) and Mohammed Suleman (MS).

002/01/24 Declarations of Interest

SJ declared an interest as a tenant of the Rectory Fields site.
RW declared an interest as society treasurer on the Clifton site.

003/01/24 Minutes from the previous meeting

Board meeting 85 minutes were moved as a true record by SJ and duly signed (electronically) by the Chairperson.

004/01/24 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

005/01/24 Admin report

- a. Vacancies as a result of plots surrendered at the end of 2023 were discussed. It was noted that current waiting lists are sufficient to fill the vacancies.
- b. It was noted that a complaint had been received since the admin report was produced, relating to cockerels on Rectory Fields allotments. ASO to write and email the tenant to remove the bird/s with immediate effect.

006/01/24 Financial matters

The treasurer reported the balances of the RAA bank accounts as of 01/11/2024; current account £49196.92, Deposit account £24553.16.

- a. A request had been made for consideration of rent concession on Moor Road allotments due to previous flooding. It was agreed that as previous concessions have been made and significant investment has been made to the site drainage, no further rent concessions would be offered. This decision would be reviewed at the end of the rent period, taking into consideration the efficiency of the new drainage.

007/01/24 Finance - 2023 underspend allocations

- a. A discussion was held regarding the underspend of the 2023 budget. It was identified that after allocating funds for existing commitments and due payments, the amount carried forward was £23,600.00.
- b. Site improvement and repair works outstanding from 2023 at Broom Valley New, Broom Valley Old and South Street allotments were discussed, and it was agreed to ringfence a total of £3,400.00 for those projects. This figure was determined based on estimated values.
- c. It was agreed that in line with the 2023 budget commitment, £1,200.00 was allocated to the following areas:
 - i. Marketing – plot vacancy banners for use across all sites, (£200.00)
 - ii. Health and safety – PPE equipment for ASO and volunteers, (£400.00)
 - iii. Site security – portable CCTV equipment (£600.00)
- d. It was agreed that £7,000.00 be allocated to road and path repairs after a needs assessment is completed across sites.
- e. It was agreed that £12,000.00 be allocated to plot clearance as follows:
 - i. £6,000.00 allocated to RAA directly managed sites. Site assessments to take place by (BS) and (JC) ASO, for discussion by the maintenance subcommittee.
 - ii. £6,000.00 allocated to society-managed sites. Societies to identify the cost for plot clearance work and submit a request in writing to the ASO for presentation to the board.
- f. A summary budget of the allocations was created to be reviewed at the finance subcommittee and enable appropriate application of the funds. (table 1.)
- g. It was discussed that community payback work carried out via the probation service may be applicable on society sites where suitable facilities can be accessed, including toilet and rest facilities. It was agreed that this is a viable option for reducing labour costs for road and path repair work.

ACTION: (JC) ASO to contact and discuss with existing probation service contacts to check if they have the capacity and the type of work that is suitable.

008/01/24 Business plan

- a. It was agreed to refer this agenda item to the next finance subcommittee meeting, on 19/02/2024. The subcommittee will then return the final draft to the board for approval.

009/01/24 Policy review – drafts for AGM

- a. Draft policies and amendments discussed at board meeting 85 were reviewed and discussed. The following points were made:
- b. Waiting list policy. It was agreed that the draft submitted is acceptable with the amendment to section 6 to include “Applicants will receive an update on their position on the waiting list after each waiting list review is completed.”.

ACTION: Draft to be submitted for approval at AGM

- c. Data policy. It was agreed that the final draft of the data policy is acceptable for submission.

ACTION: Draft to be submitted for approval at AGM

- d. The RAA policy regarding burning/fires was discussed. It was identified that a supplementary document has been sent to some tenants and displayed on site noticeboards. It was decided that this document requires review by the board to determine whether it should be integrated as policy or remain as clear guidance.

ACTION: (SJ) to send a copy to (JC) ASO for distribution amongst directors. Review at next maintenance subcommittee meeting, on 05/02/2024.

- e. It was noted that a draft of amendments to the rules is required for submission at the 2024 AGM

ACTION: (JC) to prepare a draft and share with directors for comment in advance of board meeting 87.

- f. Finance regulations. A draft document has been prepared for updates to the finance regulations. Agreed to refer this document to the finance subcommittee meeting, on 19/02/2024.

ACTION: (JC) ASO to share the finance regulations draft with the finance subcommittee agenda.

010/01/24 Maintenance

- a. A proposal was made to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of plot clearance work by investing in ground covering for use on plots cleared but vacant. It was agreed that this would be trialled subject to the cost analysis of sufficient ground cover.

ACTION: (JC) ASO to source quotes for ground cover options and present them at the next maintenance subcommittee meeting, on 05/02/2024.

011/01/24 Any other business

No other business was raised.

012/01/24 Agenda items for next meeting

- a. Business plan
- b. Policy draft sign-off
- c. Marketing strategy and budgeting
- d. New tenant support and tenancy sustainability

013/01/24 Date of Next Meeting

Board Meeting 87 – 26/02/2024 - 13:00 - Garden Room, Clifton Park

BS thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting was closed at 14:46pm.

Signed  Date 26/02/2024

Brian Steele (Chair)

Table 1. Allocation of 2023 budget underspend

Broom valley Old, hut roof repair	£	1,200.00
South Street, fence repair	£	1,200.00
South Street, road surface	£	500.00
Broom Valley New, road repair	£	500.00
Road/path repair	£	7,000.00
RAA direct managed plot clearance	£	6,000.00
Society plot clearance	£	6,000.00
Marketing		
Vacancy advertisement banners	£	200.00
Health and safety		
PPE	£	400.00
Site Security		
Portable cameras (CCTV)	£	600.00
Total allocation	£	23,600.00