

Rotherham Allotments Alliance

Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Name:	Board Meeting – 94 (previously IBM02)		
Minute Taker:	Jamie Calvert		
Date:	14 October 2024	Time:	13:00
Location:	Virtual Microsoft Teams		

Attendees:

Directors: Brian Steele Chair (BS), John Palmer (JP), Jack Taylor (JT), and Richard Watson (RW).
Cllr Dave Sheppard (DS)
Support Officer: Jamie Calvert (JC)

Apologies:

101/10/24 Apologies

- a. none

102/10/24 Declarations of Interest

- a. JP declared an interest as a tenant on the Barnsley Rd site.
- b. JT declared an interest as secretary on the Wood St site.
- c. RW declared an interest as society treasurer on the Clifton site.

103/10/24 Minutes from the previous meeting

- a. Interim Board Meeting 93 minutes were moved as a true record by (RW) and duly signed (electronically) by the Chairperson.

104/10/24 Matters arising

- a. There were no matters arising.

105/10/24 Finance update

- a. The ASO reported the balances of the RAA bank accounts; current account £47,981.88, Deposit account £24,754.20.
- b. It was noted that a cheque for £902.11 was received for the balance of the dissolved Avenue Road Allotment Society. The funds will be deposited to the reserve account and held for works on the Avenue Road site.

106/10/24 Ongoing works

- a. It was noted that suspected asbestos sheets have been deposited on the track at Barnsley Road Allotments. The ASO has not been made aware of this by the Society as additional waste so may be the existing reported materials having been moved.
ACTION: ASO to query with the Society Secretary.
- b. The works at Vicarage Fields are scheduled for 17/10/2024. A query has now been raised by the contractor as traffic control may be required. A permit may be necessary and this will delay the work.
- c. Quotes have been requested from a new contractor for track and clearance work on the Rectory Field site. This will also include a quotation for the waterworks. It was agreed to wait for these quotes before committing to any work.

- d. Grass cutting has now ended. Only 5 cuts maximum appear to have been completed on each site.
ACTION: Confirmation to be requested from RMBC
- e. A request was made by the community plots for funding to repair the wooden building on site for them to take over use of the building. This included £1000 funding for materials and labour. A request was made for reduced rents in exchange for maintaining the proposed car parking area. The board voted to reject both requests.
- f. **ACTION:** ASO to propose material only cost can be provided. Alternatively, the building is to be advertised for sale.
- g. A query was raised regarding the use of solar-powered generators on site. It was noted that there is no rule in place that specifically mentions their use. However, the use of such equipment should consider all other rules and agreements of tenancy.
It was noted that the tenant remains responsible for the safety, security and insurance of the equipment.
- h. An issue has been raised with the RAA by RMBC regarding access to the Greasbrough allotments via the south-west gate. This is due to part access issues over an unadopted road. It was agreed by the board that unless the lease with the RAA explicitly excludes this gate as an access route to the site, efforts should be made to retain it as access.
There is no objection to the use of a barrier to limit vehicle access.
A query was raised as the only vehicle access required by the RAA is for hedge cutting contractors (currently RMBC).
ACTION: ASO to raise the ongoing access issue with RMBC and confirm the position of the board.

107/10/24 Review of rentals for 2025/26

- a. The ASO invited comments or questions on the rent review document, shared with the board in advance of the meeting.
- b. It was noted that there is a discrepancy between rent rates across society sites marked as 'A' or 'B' sites and that directly managed sites pay a higher rate than both. The board agreed that this should be reviewed for the next financial year.
- c. The board voted by a majority for a rent rise of 2% for rents in 2025. This is below the proposed rise of 5%.

108/10/24 Safeguarding policy

- a. It was noted that RMBC had suggested the RAA should have a safeguarding policy in place and shared an example document for consideration of the board. A question was raised about the purpose and benefit of a safeguarding policy and the practical application of the policy.
- b. **ACTION:** (JP) and the ASO to draft a policy template

109/10/24 Any other business

- a. (DS) will chair the upcoming society forum with the ASO support, on 15/10/2024.
- b. Complaints/appeals have been received and ongoing for Herringthorpe Valley Road allotments and Broom Valley Old allotments.
ACTION: ASO to follow up with HVR secretary and (JT) to follow up with the BVO secretary.

110/10/24 Agenda items for next meeting

- a. Rent strategy

111/10/24 Date of Next Meeting

- a. Board Meeting 95 – 18/11/2024 - 13:00 - Garden Room, Clifton Park

BS thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting was closed at 15:00.

Signed  Date 18/11/2024
Brian Steele