

RUSTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES: of the (remote) Meeting held on 5 October 2020

PRESENT: Councillors J Bennett, J Ceiriog-Hughes, Mrs K Callaghan, R Grevett and J Street

F Spanton (Rustington Horticultural Association)

In attendance: Ms R Costan (Deputy Clerk) and Mrs C Ward (Clerk of the Council)

Prior to the commencement of the formal business of the Meeting, the Deputy Clerk advised that the Meeting would be being recorded (audio) via Microsoft Teams, for the purpose of ensuring clarity for the Minutes, as well as to enable Members of the Public to have access to discussions on specific items if requested. She said that the recording would be dispensed with as soon as the Minutes had been approved by the Council at its next Monthly Meeting.

The Deputy Clerk also reminded the Committee that due to the current Coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic, this Meeting was being held remotely (via Microsoft Teams) and would be delivered within 'The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2020' that are currently enacted for Meetings on and up to 7 May 2021.

She then advised the Committee that the Chairman would manage the Meeting with clear instructions and requests to Members. She said that Members should indicate their desire to speak on any item, by clicking on the 'raised hand' icon in Teams. This would ensure that anyone wishing to speak on an Agenda Item was given the opportunity to do so.

7/20 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

It was proposed that Councillor Mrs Partridge be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

The Committee RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs Partridge be elected Chairman for the ensuing year.

8/20 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was proposed that Councillor Mrs Broomfield be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

The Committee RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs Broomfield be elected Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.

In the absence of both Councillors Mrs Partridge and Mrs Broomfield Councillor Street agreed to Chair the Meeting.

9/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Broomfield (Holiday), Broomfield (Holiday), Mrs Partridge (Personal Commitment), Mrs Cooper (Other Associated Business) and M Kempson (Rustington Horticultural Association). These apologies were accepted by the Committee.

10/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

There were no declarations of interest by Members.

11/20 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 January 2020 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

12/20 **UPDATE ON ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN**

The Committee considered a Report that had been previously circulated, detailing the activities relating to the Allotments Sites that had taken place during the Covid-19 Lockdown. The Deputy Clerk advised that, at the present time, there was just one vacant plot, with 27 Rustington residents and 13 from residents of other Parishes on the Waiting List.

The Deputy Clerk stated that she had been in touch with all Allotment tenants to undertake a welfare check and had established which plots had not been cultivated during the Lockdown. She added that some of the plot holders were still unable to fully manage the upkeep of their plots.

The Committee NOTED this information.

A copy of this report is attached and forms part of these Minutes.

13/20 **RESUMPTION OF ALLOTMENT INSPECTION REGIME**

The Deputy Clerk stated that the last formal inspection had taken place in November 2019. Subsequently, she had been visiting and inspecting all of the Sites on a regular basis and had instigated any actions as required. She further explained that there were still a number of plot holders who had not yet been able to fully tend to their plots, but who were in regular contact with the Council regarding progress, and their plots were being monitored.

She added that it was anticipated that a number of plot holders would also be terminating their Tenancies at the end of the year and, therefore, there would likely be a larger than normal proportion of new tenants taking on an Allotment from January/February 2021. Taking into consideration the unusual situation that the Covid-19 Lockdown had created, it was suggested that if the Allotment Competition in 2021 was to take place, it should be judged by a small panel of Members in July 2021, as had been the process in the past, and that the Inspection Regime, which included scoring of individual plots, should be suspended for the foreseeable future.

Following a detailed discussion, it was RECOMMENDED that the Allotment Inspection Regime should no longer include the scoring of individual plots for the foreseeable future, and that the Allotment Competition 2021 should be judged in July 2021 by a small panel of Members.

It was further RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Clerk should continue to undertake a monthly inspection of all sites to ensure that the standard of plot maintenance was being maintained satisfactorily.

14/20 **REPLACEMENT OF ENTRANCE GATES – CONBAR AVENUE**

The Committee considered an Estimate previously circulated for the replacement of the main gates at the Conbar Avenue Site.

The Deputy Clerk explained that the gates had previously been repaired on several occasions but were no longer 'fit for purpose'.

Following a brief discussion, it was RECOMMENDED that the Estimate from R J Meaker Fencing Limited in the sum of £1,239.21 excluding VAT, be ACCEPTED.

15/20 **INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR 2019/2020, 2020/2021 AND 2021/2022**

The Committee considered a Report previously circulate by the Clerk of the Council.

Following a brief discussion, it was RECOMMENDED that the Allotments Committee Income and Expenditure requirements for 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 be as shown in the attached

The Committee reviewed the present rents levied and RECOMMENDED that there should be no increase made in respect of the rent for the year commencing 1 January 2022.

16/20 SUPPLY OF MANURE TO THE PENFOLD ALLOTMENT SITE

Councillor Callaghan declared a Personal Interest as her partner is an Allotment Tenant at the Penfold Lane Site. Councillor Callaghan asked whether a supply of manure could be provided at the Penfold Lane Allotment Site. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that this would not be something that the Council would organise or supply. She added that the tenants at Conbar Avenue arranged their own delivery but that it was not known by who and from where.

17/20 TENANCY AGREEMENT

Councillor Callaghan asked if it would be possible for some of the key points relating to Allotment Tenancies could be collated into a sign which could be displayed at the Allotments Sites to act as a reminder to tenants about the do's and don'ts of having a plot. It agreed that the request would be reviewed by the Deputy Clerk and the Clerk prior to the next Meeting.

18/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Clerk advised the Committee that the suggested dates for the 2021 Meetings would be included as part of the 2021 Diary Dates for the Council's consideration at its Meeting on 26 October 2020.

Chairman: **Date:**