

ROOKSDOWN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE HELD ONLINE ON 12 OCTOBER 2020 at 1930

	In Attendance	Apologies	Absent
Cllr Norman Morris (Chairman)	✓		
Cllr Dan Harris	✓		
Cllr Paul Lovett		✓	
Cllr Paul Mahoney	✓		
Cllr Scott Mason	✓		

Clerk:

Martin Whittaker

In attendance:

3 members of the public

Action

- 20/10 **To receive and accept apologies for absence**
Apologies were received from Cllr Lovett.
- 20/11 **To receive and note any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and requests for dispensation for items to be discussed**
None.
- 20/12 **To invite members of the public to address the meeting (up to 15 minutes in total)**
None.
- 20/13 **To receive a report on meetings with tenants**
The Chairman reported that meetings has been held onsite with all the tenants whose plots did not appear to be cultivated according to the rules. As a result:
- 1 tenant has moved to a smaller plot
 - 3 tenants have terminated their tenancies
 - 2 tenants have been given notice to improve by the end of October
- This has shown the value of meeting tenants onsite.
- 20/14 **To consider dividing plot 1 into starter plots (see attached)**
Members felt that having starter plots allowing people to “jump the queue” to a larger plot was too complex, but it would be worthwhile making smaller plots available for those who might want them.
The motion being proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Mason, **IT WAS RESOLVED** unanimously to divide Plot 1 onto 4 Starter Plots.
The Clerk would arrange for the plot to be divided up.
- 20/15 **To receive a report on the formation of an Allotment Association**
This is apparently making progress but no details were available.
- 20/16 **To consider revisions to allotment rules (see attached)**
In view of the large number of detailed changes to the rules, in the revised rules, the motion being proposed by Cllr Mahoney, seconded by Cllr Harris, **IT WAS RESOLVED** unanimously to adjourn this discussion to a later meeting.

Clerk

- 20/17 **To consider the keeping of bees on allotment plots**
1. **Feedback from consultation**
The Clerk reported that all the responses received by email and on Facebook were in favour of beekeeping, provided suitable rules were adopted.
 2. **Decision on whether beekeeping should be allowed**
After a lengthy discussion, a motion was proposed by Cllr Mason, seconded by Cllr Harris, to allow beekeeping on the allotments site, subject to the draft Rules for Beekeeping on Council Allotments v1. This was defeated by a majority vote.
Cllr Mahoney expressed a strong opinion that more consultation was required, and that all tenants should be sent an email asking whether they were in favour of beekeeping on the allotments, in the clear understanding that no response meant they were in favour. The motion being proposed by Cllr Mahoney, seconded by Cllr Mason, **IT WAS RESOLVED** unanimously to so consult the tenants. Clerk
 3. **Approval of Rules**
In view of the above motion, this would be discussed at a later date.
- 20/18 **To consider requests for improvements to facilities**
- Improvement of watering facilities
A tenant had asked for extra water troughs to be provided on the site so that water did not have to be carried by hand.
The Clerk had obtained a cost estimate of £2750+VAT for adding 2 troughs, and there was general agreement that such a cost was not justified. Cllr Mahoney offered to discuss possible watering strategies with the tenant. Mahoney
 - 50% discounts on plot rental for pensioners
It had been pointed out by a tenant that BDBC offered a 50% discount on allotment rent for over 60s. There was a general feeling amongst members that we should offer the same. The motion being proposed by Cllr Mahoney, seconded by Cllr Harris, **IT WAS RESOLVED** unanimously to offer a 50% plot rental discount to over 60s.
 - A table for unwanted items – it was concluded that this was best provided by an Allotment Association.
 - Events, competitions and social events - it was concluded that this was best provided by an Allotment Association.
- 20/19 **To consider applications for installation of play equipment on plots**
Requests had been received for a trampoline on plot 9a and a swing on 12a. The motion being proposed by Cllr Morris, seconded by Cllr Mason, **IT WAS RESOLVED** unanimously to allow these items. Clerk
- 20/20 **To consider a request from the tenant of plot 8a to also take on the tenancy of 8b**
The Chairman asked the tenant of plot 8a to present his case. However, members felt that this would not be fair in view of the 27 people on the waiting list, and no motion was proposed.
- 20/21 **Exclusion of Press and Public**
To, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, exclude the public and press for a discussion of the procedure for collecting allotment rents where publicity might be prejudicial to the special nature of the business.
The motion being proposed by Cllr Morris, seconded by Cllr Mahoney, **IT WAS RESOLVED** unanimously to so exclude press and public.
After the closed discussion, the motion being proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Mason, **IT WAS RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the recommendations of the Clerk in

the confidential document “Procedure for collecting allotment rents V1”, with a change requiring the clerk to send a letter as well as an email after 30 days.

The meeting was then reopened.

20/22 **Chairman’s and Clerk’s correspondence**

None

20/23 **Chairman to close meeting**

The meeting was closed at 2150.