



**Minutes of the Allotments Committee Meeting  
held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 7.30pm**

**Members Present:** Cllr D Smith (Chairman); Cllr E Ellicott (Vice-Chair), Cllr P Gripper; Ms S French (Non-voting member) and Mr A Farmer (Non-voting member)

**Officer Present:** Kevin Watson

**Members of the public present:** 11

**No decisions were taken by the Parish Council on any item not on the Agenda**

- 1. Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting:** None.
- 2. To receive and approve apologies for absence:** Apologies received from Cllr A Funnell, Cllr D Funnell and Mr D Clover.
- 3. Election of Chair:** Cllr Smith was elected as Chairman.
- 4. Election of Vice-Chair:** Cllr Ellicott was elected as Vice-Chair.
- 5. Declaration of Personal and Prejudicial Interests:** Cllrs Smith, Ellicott and Non-voting members Ms French and Mr Farmer are all allotment tenants. Cllr Gripper has a close family connection with an allotment tenant.
- 6. Declarations of Lobbying:** None.
- 7. Minutes of the last meeting:**
  - i. To approve the draft minutes of the meetings held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024:**

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.
  - ii. Any matters arising from these Minutes which are not already on the agenda:**

None.
- 8. Open session for questions from the public:**

A request was made by the tenant of Southwood Road Allotments Plot SR34A, Mrs Christine Hyder, to find her a long-term neighbouring tenant. Cllr Smith agreed if a new tenant cannot be found then Plot SR34B will be covered with a suitable membrane.
- 9. Waiting List and vacant plots**

Officer Watson advised there will be 8 vacant plots (Southwood Road Allotments 2; Southwood Road Extension Allotments 1; Wickham Gardens Allotments 5) at month-end. There is only 1 resident left on the Waiting List who will be offered a plot this month. Officer Watson reminded existing tenants of Wickham Gardens Allotments that they may request a second plot. **RESOLVED** Officer Watson to

attach temporary laminates to all 3 allotment sites advising there are “Plots available”. **RESOLVED** All vacant plots to be covered by Landscape Services in accordance with their existing contract.

**10. Auditor’s advice for Committee to annually review rents and future reviews to be included in every March Agenda**

Following a review by the Committee, Cllr Smith confirmed there will be no increase in rents this year. **RESOLVED** Rent reviews will be undertaken at March Committee Meetings in the future, commencing 2025, with any recommendations being ratified at the next Full Council Meeting.

**11. To consider proposed amendments to the Tenancy Agreement:**

- i. **Section 1 4.4 security keys clause revised as per amends in red type**
- ii. **Section 1 5.3 maintenance of allotment paths clause revised as per amends in red type**
- i. **Section 1 5.4 maintenance of gates, notice boards, perimeter boundaries and buildings clause revised as per amends in red type**
- ii. **Section 1 12.4 deletion of “fax” as per amends in red type**
- iii. **Section 2 2.7 new clause regarding “No Mow May” as per wording in red type**
- iv. **Section 2 3.1 existing clause deleted**
- v. **Section 2 3.2 existing clause deleted**
- vi. **Section 2 3.1 security and lone working clause revised as per numbering in red type**
- vii. **Section 2 6.3 contained fires and bonfires clause revised as per amends in red type**
- viii. **Section 2 6.4 open fires clause revised as per amend in red type**
- ix. **Section 2 6.5 bonfires on Wickham Gardens Allotments clause revised as per amends in red type**

All amendments were **RESOLVED**. Officer Watson will provide a copy of the revised Tenancy Agreement to all tenants.

**12. Update on Wickham Gardens Allotments pavilion installation**

Cllr Smith thanked Ms French for organising and helping complete the snagging list for £200. There are 3 more jobs which require completion before Winter: 1) Laying of laminate flooring being kindly donated by Cllr Smith 2) Re-painting of the outside. Officer Watson is currently arranging for 3 quotations to be obtained. 3) Rolling and filling in of the uneven land in front of the pavilion. Little Loads have quoted £600 for the work. Cllr Gripper is to seek an alternative quote from Rusthall Cricket Club. Officer Watson is to seek a third quote.

**13. Update on Wickham Gardens Allotments wild flower meadow**

Cllr Smith confirmed the success of this project with various seeds germinated and all 4 trees having blossomed this Spring.

**14. Update on All Ability Garden grant application to Gatwick Airport Community Trust**

Cllr Smith advised we were successful in our application and £2,700 has been granted by Gatwick Airport Community Trust. He thanked Ms French for bringing the opportunity to our attention and Cllr Ellicott and Officer Watson for submitting the application. The grant will cover the cost of 2 new concrete paths being laid by James Thompson trading as JT Building & Landscaping. Officer Watson pointed out that despite commitment by Full Council last financial year to further support the project, and a Cost Centre being raised to cover expenditure, no budget had been agreed for this

financial year. **RESOLVED** Cllr Ellicott will request a specific budget item of £5,000 be included within the next month's Full Council Meeting Agenda.

**15. Update on All Ability Garden new paths**

James Thompson trading as JT Building & Landscaping commenced laying 2 new concrete paths last weekend.

**16. To consider purchase of summer house for All Ability Garden**

Cllr Smith provided a quotation from Topwood Timber for a new 8 x 12 feet summerhouse for a reduced price of £2583.33 + VAT. Further cost for erecting the summerhouse is estimated to be £250. The existing concrete base discovered by Crossways Community is not situated in the right area and cannot be used. **RESOLVED** To purchase and erect the summerhouse.

**17. Update on All Ability Garden publicity**

Cllr Smith introduced and thanked Mr Robert Cobuz, a Wickham Gardens Allotment tenant who is a professional artist. Mr Cobuz has designed a poster at no cost to the Council which can be used to publicise the All Ability Garden in the next Rusthall Life magazine. The poster is to be used as the launch material for the All Ability Garden at the Rusthall Fete on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Mr Cobuz has also offered to update the poster, if it is required, when Phase 3 of the project commences. Phase 3 will include reclaiming further overgrown land and development of the All Ability Garden.

**18. To approve the All Ability Garden User Agreement**

**RESOLVED** The User Agreement was approved with a couple of small typographic errors to be amended by Officer Watson.

**19. Successful application to Woodland Trust for their "Plant a tree" scheme**

Cllr Smith thanked Keith Terry, Crossways Community for bringing the opportunity to our attention. Our application was successful and Woodland Trust will provide a mixture of 100 tree saplings and bushes for use as the All Ability Garden screening at no cost to the Council by November 2024. Officer Watson advised the delivery date is expected to be in the Autumn.

**20. Allotment holders prize winners judging date**

Officer Watson confirmed the prize winners judging date will be 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024. The independent judge will be Mr Dan Colborne, Commons Ranger.

**21. Creation of a vehicle turning circle at Southwood Road Allotments**

Cllr Smith thanked Keith Terry, Crossways Community for providing a turning area for vehicles opposite their Plot SR43.

**22. Review discretionary power spending for the Allotments Manager**

It was **RESOLVED** Officer Watson's discretionary spending power should be increased to £250 for any one single item upto a maximum of £500 per month.

**23. BBQ and prize giving final arrangements for Saturday 6th July 2024**

Cllr Smith provided Officer Watson with the basic food requirements based upon 40 attendees. Committee members are to be on site by 12.00 noon to help set up tables, chairs, etc. Cllr Gripper will lead the cooking, supported by Ms S French. Officer Watson will remind all tenants of the

arrangements via email and WhatsApp this week. Officer Watson is to approach Southwood Road Allotments tenant, Mrs Val Wilson, for the use of her gazebo again this year.

**Date of next meeting: Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2024 at 7.30pm**

**Meeting closed at 8.30pm**

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**Chairman**

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**Date**