



Blackshaw Parish Council

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Draft minutes of Allotments Committee Meeting

7.30pm, Monday 21st October 2024 at Hebden Bridge Town Hall

Present: Cllrs Higginson, Dyter and King, Bob Greenwood, Clare Wells and the Clerk

1. Apologies for absence. Rosemary Daley
2. The Parish Council representatives on the Allotment Committee for this year are Cllr King, Cllr Dyter and Cllr Higginson.
3. Declarations of interest in matters on the agenda. None
4. Confirmed minutes of the meeting of the Allotments committee in March 2024
5. Information about matters arising from the minutes of meeting in March 2024. Discussed whether there is a new combination lock on gate, but it is still a padlock. Agreed key to be cut for padlock for Parish Council to have.
6. Discussed the contract for maintenance of communal areas (and the wall damage). Agreed that there needs to be better communication with the contractor. He has left all the blackthorn that is sprouting up on the grass by the fallen wall. - might it have been unsafe? Clerk to draft an email to the contractor about some of the issues but benefit of staying with him is that he Already knows what is happening. Downside is that he can't be as responsive to weather due to not being based locally. Clerk has received one quote for repair of the wall. As this was above a certain level, needs to get another couple of quotes. A few people noted that it didn't seem excessive but agreed more quotes needed as it was a significant sum.
7. To discuss streamlining of annual rent payments / contract signatures. Clerk had looked at national allotment society contract template and this hasn't significantly changed. Noted that the tenancies were yearly, hence why there is a need to sign every year. Reluctant to deviate from standard allotment contract formula without further research. Agreed allotment group to query this as they are members of the National Allotment Society. Would electronic signatures be acceptable, or rolling contracts?
8. Report of progress from the Charlestown Allotments Group and future action plan:
Scuppered by the weather this year. Still planning to do the fence and the dead hedge is doing okay. Will need some more repairs to the community shed. The fence is a problem against the neighbours and needs reinforcing. Need some postcrete. Fence post at gate still needs doing. And the trees on Plot 8 shedding acidic stuff. Trying to find a day to have a working party. The group got a 'Highly commended' at the Blackshawhead Fete.
PC agreed to look at getting a quote in winter from a tree surgeon to take down the pine tree. Clerk will look at whether it has a TPO (Councillor Higginson checked online and said the TPOs in area were outside the allotment boundary)
Couldn't the identify the issue relating to the neighbour's trees.
Report of site liaison visit circulated.

8.1. Report from Allotments Group on budget and balances. The treasurer is in Cyprus. Nothing changed from the last one.

9. To consider any tenancy issues, the waiting list situation and vacant plots. Waiting list hasn't changed. Clerk raised issue relating to Plot 1 and noted that although following the Site liaison visit, councillors had agreed to issue a Letter of Improvement, this was not done due to the plotholder suffering a bereavement. Instead, after some weeks a letter was written to say that the plot had not passed the inspection, that the adverse circumstances were taken into account when deciding not to issue the Letter of Improvement, but that if the plot failed next year, it would pass straight to termination procedures with no Letter of Improvement. No response to email letter to Clerk to hand deliver another.

10. Financial matters:

10.1. Water bills paid and up to date.

11. Dates and venue of future meetings – 7.45pm March 10th preceded by the allotment group agm.