



## Southbourne Parish Council

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### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SOUTHBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL ALLOTMENT COMMITTEE 29<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022

**PRESENT:** Cllrs: R. Taylor (Chairman), Cllr D. James, Cllr T. Bangert, Cllr D. Riddoch and non-Councillor co-opted members L. Davies, C. Jones and J. Ullman.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** M. Carvajal-Neal (Clerk of Allotment Committee) and 2 allotment holders.

#### 32. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 12:02pm. The Chairman was happy to see a good attendance at the meeting and thanked the two allotment holders for their attendance. The Chairman added that he is pleased that there is a growing interest in allotments in Southbourne.

#### 33. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received.

#### 34. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2022

Members **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Allotment Committee meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and they were signed by the Chairman.

#### 35. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 36. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

*The meeting was adjourned at 12.11*

One Allotment Holder raised the matter of ownership of land at Southbourne Fields, this item is due to be discussed as per Min ref. 40.7 below.

One Allotment Holder asked about the newly installed noticeboard at Southbourne Fields and what it is to be used for, this item is also due to be discussed as per Min Ref. 40.1 below.

*The meeting was re-adjourned at 12.21*

#### 37. TO NOTE THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE TWO SEPARATE SITES AND TO CONSIDER AND AGREE HOW TO MANAGE THE TWO BUDGETS

Members **NOTED** the income and expenditure and **AGREED** to keep the two sites' budgets separate for the remainder of the financial year and will consider revisiting this when agreeing

the budget for 2023/24. Members **AGREED** that this would need additional consideration if the Parish Council were to take on more allotment sites. Members were mindful that they did not wish to increase the workload of Officers.

**38. TO NOTE THE UPDATE REGARDING THE FLANDERS CLOSE ALLOTMENTS WATER SUPPLY AND TO AGREE TO A COURSE OF ACTION**

**MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO CONSIDER ANY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS AND AGREE TO A COURSE OF ACTION:**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1. Members agree to completing the re-service application to determine the cost of a new water supply and further agree to the associated cost of £102 to come from the allotment committee's budget.**
- 2. Members agree to determining the legal costs of pursuing this matter further.**
- 3. Members agree to letting the allotments without a water supply and further agree to consider any changes in rental fees required.**

**38.1** Cllr Riddoch suggested that Members consider asking a resident of Flanders Close if an additional water line could be attached to their supply which would service the plots but have its own meter for itemised billing. Members **AGREED** that the Deputy Clerk make further enquiries regarding this and, if it is possible, contact the resident in question for an informal meeting in the first instance.

**38.2** Members further **AGREED** that should it not be possible to add a water line to a resident's supply then officers should write to the prospective allotment tenants and enquire if they would consider renting the site without water. Members **AGREED** that this would be reflected in the annual rental fees when they are determined.

**38.3** Members additionally **AGREED** that should there be a remaining balance from the NHB funding that this be spent on guttering and water butts for the communal shed for use by the communal plot.

**39. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE UPDATES REGARDING FLANDERS CLOSE ALLOTMENTS AND TO AGREE ON ANY CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDING;**

**39.1 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE AN UPDATE ON PROSPECTIVE TENANTS**

Members **NOTED** the update on the prospective tenants, the 4 'traditional plots' have prospective tenants.

**39.2 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE AN UPDATE REGARDING THE WORKS.**

Members **NOTED** that the contractors are awaiting instructions from the Deputy Clerk as they need direction regarding the water supply. Members **AGREED** to request that the Deputy Clerk instruct the contractors to continue work whilst further enquiries are made regarding the water supply. Members **AGREED** that the contractors complete the work without a water supply in place.

**39.3 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE ANY UPDATES REGARDING THE COMMUNAL PLOTS INCLUDING; TO NOTE ANY APPLICATIONS FOR THE COMMUNAL PLOTS, TO AGREE A COURSE OF ACTION TO FILL ANY VACANT PLOTS AND TO AGREE A MANAGEMENT PLAN.**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1. Officers continue to advertise the vacant plot.**

**2. The vacant plot is reserved until a tenant is identified and once work is complete is suitably covered over until the vacancy is filled.**

Members **AGREED** to both Recommendations;

Members **AGREED** to continue to advertise the communal plot and **AGREED** to contact the Bourne Community College at the Drop-In session on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October. This session has a focus on Youth and Members feel it would be a good opportunity to discuss this matter. Cllr. James to administer this.

Members further **AGREED** that whilst there is a vacancy at the communal site that the beds are covered over to suppress weeds. Members instructed the Deputy Clerk to ask the contractors to carry this out.

In terms of a management plan Members **AGREED** that twice per year inspection in conjunction with the tenancy agreement would be sufficient supervision of the site. The twice yearly inspection will take place alongside the inspections at Southbourne Fields. The next inspection is due March 2023.

**39.4 TO CONSIDER REQUESTS FROM A PROSPECTIVE TENANT INCLUDING; TO GROW PLANTS ON THE OUTSIDE OF THEIR FENCE AND TO ERECT STRUCTURES ON SITE AND TO AGREE WHETHER TO APPROVE THESE REQUESTS.**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**IF MEMBERS AGREE TO CONSIDER ON SITE STRUCTURES THAT A MINIMUM SET OF STANDARDS IS DEvised AS A STARTING POINT FOR TENANTS TO CONSIDER PRIOR TO MAKING A PROPOSAL TO THE COMMITTEE TO ERECT ANY STRUCTURE**

Members **AGREED** to the Recommendation; Members **AGREED** that, as per the tenancy agreement, tenants wishing to erect structures on site should contact the Committee for agreement and requests would be considered on a case-by-case basis. Members further **AGREED** to the following guidelines in order to expedite requests from tenants:

- A maximum of 2 structures per plot. Only one of which can be used for storage.
- Each structure must not be more than 8x4ft.
- The structure must not be placed near the boundary of a neighbouring plot or on the same boundary as the orchard trees.

Members further **AGREED** that any tenant shall be permitted to grow plants along their boundary including against and climbing up the fencing, on the inside of the plot only. This shall be permitted providing that the plant does not invade any neighbouring plot(s).

**39.5 TO AGREE TO PRO RATA THE ANNUAL RENTAL FEES**

Members **AGREED** to pro rata the annual rental fees from the start date of the Tenancy Agreement to the end of the financial year.

**39.6 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE AN UPDATE ON THE ORCHARD APPLICATION. INCLUDING TO NOTE THAT THERE WILL BE ONGOING MAINTENANCE COSTS OF THE TREES AND TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE SITE VISIT TO A LOCAL NURSERY.**

Members **NOTED** the update and **AGREED** to the Deputy Clerk contacting the nursery owner with some potential dates to visit:

- Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October AM
- Thursday 13th October AM
- Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October PM

It was **AGREED** that Members would attend according to availability.

Members **NOTED** that there will be ongoing maintenance costs for the trees.

Members further discussed whether to delay the application for trees in case the site was not ready and water was not available. Cllr Bangert highlighted that the grant scheme has a closing date and this should not be missed. Members **AGREED** that providing the trees are ordered ASAP and planting takes place in November then they would only require minimal watering at this time of year. As such, members **AGREED** to go ahead with the nursery visit and to order the trees as soon as possible. Members further **AGREED** that if a water source is not feasible at Flanders Close then Members would organise watering of the orchard trees on an informal basis, similar to that of the grass cutting at Southbourne Fields. See min 40.4 below.

**39.7 TO CONSIDER ONGOING MAINTENANCE COSTS OF THE SITE INCLUDING DE WEEDING, TOPPING UP SHINGLE AND GENERAL MAINTENANCE.**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT MEMBERS COMPILE A LIST OF RECOMMENDED ONGOING MAINTENANCE IN ORDER TO BUDGET FOR THESE ITEMS. IT IS FURTHER RECOMMENDED THAT OFFICERS GAIN QUOTES FOR THESE WORKS AND THIS IS ADDED TO THE BUDGET FOR THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR.**

Members **NOTED** that ongoing maintenance would need to be budgeted for and **AGREED** to consider this at the beginning of the next financial year. Members did not wish to gain quotes at this time.

**39.8 TO NOTE THAT CDC HAVE GRANTED AN EXTENSION OF THE NHB FUNDING UNTIL MAY 2023.**

Members **NOTED** the update.

**40. TO NOTE ANY UPDATES REGARDING SOUTHBOURNE FIELDS. INCLUDING:**

**40.1 TO NOTE THE UPDATE REGARDING THE CARPARKING SIGN, NOTICEBOARD AND GATE, INCLUDING TO AGREE AS TO WHAT TO ALLOW TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NOTICEBOARD AND WHO SHALL HAVE KEY ACCESS.**

The Chairman thanked Cllrs James and Riddoch for the work they had carried out. Cllr James added that he would look to install a bolt through the lock on the gate to secure the gate further. This was **AGREED**.

Members **AGREED** that Cllr James should have a key for the noticeboard, that the noticeboard would be used to display the agenda for Committee meetings and any other related content including literature from the Southbourne Environment Group (SEG). The Chairman from SEG will liaise with Cllr James directly regarding this. The Deputy Clerk to provide Cllr James with a key. This was **AGREED**.

**40.2 TO CONSIDER IF AND WHEN TO CHANGE THE GATE CODES.**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT THE CODE IS CHANGED WHEN A PLOT HOLDER'S TENANCY AGREEMENT HAS ENDED.**

Members **AGREED** to the recommendation that the code is changed when a plot holder's Tenancy Agreement has ended.

**40.3 TO RECEIVE QUOTES FOR WORKS FOR THE MATTING AS PER MIN. 18. TO CONSIDER AN ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF ACTION IF QUOTES CANNOT BE OBTAINED.**

Members **NOTED** that the Deputy Clerk had been unable to secure any additional quotes for work. One contractor had advised that the work to improve drainage would be considerable given that the whole site is on a slope and advised that it was his opinion that it would not be worth the cost.

Members **AGREED** that the issue was not severe enough that it warranted the expenditure to the value that had been in the original quote. Members **AGREED** to monitor the situation and re assess at a later date, if required.

#### **40.4 TO NOTE GRASS CUTTING ARRANGEMENTS.**

The Deputy Clerk advised that plot holders had been organising grass cutting arrangements amongst themselves via a WhatsApp group that a plot holder had started. So far this was proving to be successful. J Ullman wished to thank the plot holders who had been regularly cutting the grass and keeping the site looking neat and tidy. The Chairman echoed this. Members **AGREED** to continue to allow plot holders to manage the cutting of the grass and asked the Deputy Clerk to thank the persons who had been undertaking this. The Deputy Clerk will write to plot holders via email.

#### **40.5 TO NOTE THE UPDATE REGARDING THE WATER PROVISION.**

Members **NOTED** the update. There has still been no response from WaterPlus. Members were concerned that a company has been attending to read the meter but the Parish Council had not received a bill. Members **AGREED** to await a response from WaterPlus regarding them carrying out a meter reading.

#### **40.6 TO CONSIDER A PROPOSAL TO REVIEW THE CURRENT RENTAL CHARGES.**

This item was deferred and will be reconsidered at the beginning of the next financial year.

#### **40.7 TO NOTE THE UPDATE REGARDING THE BOUNDARY FROM THE AGENTS OF SOUTHBOURNE FIELDS.**

Members **NOTED** the update and were provided with a map by the Deputy Clerk which showed land ownership. Members **NOTED** the boundaries.

Members are still unclear as to who owns the ditch behind the allotment plots. Cllr Bangert is awaiting a response from CDC regarding this. Members **AGREED** to continue to make investigations to determine who owns the ditch as it needs urgent maintenance work. Members advised that work has previously been carried out in that area but it is unknown who completed it. Members are keen to see this area cleared as soon as possible and considered making arrangements to clear it themselves but Members **AGREED** against this for reasons that they are mindful of not trespassing onto privately owned land and that the waste disposal would prove difficult and potentially costly.

#### **41. TO NOTE THE CURRENT TENANCIES AND WAITING LISTS FOR BOTH SITES.**

Members **NOTED** that there remains a waiting list for allotments. Two persons had declined Flanders Close but wished to remain on the list for other sites. One person on the list was uncontactable, Members **AGREED** to leave this person on the list in case they contact the Parish Council in the future.

#### **42. TO AGREE TO THE TENANCY AGREEMENT FOR COMMUNAL AND 'TRADITIONAL' PLOTS.**

Members **AGREED** to the Tenancy Agreement previously circulated by the Deputy Clerk.

#### **43. CONSIDERATION OF ITEM 5.3 OF THE TENANCY AGREEMENT.**

**TO AGREE TO ANY AMENDMENTS. INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF NOTICE TO QUIT PERIOD, FEES AND SITE INSPECTION DETAILS.**

**43.1 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE DRAFT CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE DEPUTY CLERK AND TO AGREE TO THE APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING CORRESPONDENCE IN RELATION TO THE TERMINATION OF A TENANCY:**

**-TENANCY TERMINATION LETTER**

## **-NOTICE TO QUIT LETTER**

Members received and **NOTED** the two documents and **AGREED** to the two letters of correspondence relating to the Termination of a Tenancy. These are to be issued to Tenants upon request to terminate the tenancy either by the Tenant or the Council. Members further **AGREED** to adopt this process going forward when dealing with Terminations of tenancies. This will formally take effect when the Tenancy Agreements are re-signed for the new annual agreement.

## **44. SITE INSPECTIONS**

### **44.1 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE A REPORT FROM MEMBERS REGARDING SITE INSPECTIONS AND TO AGREE TO ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS REQUIRED.**

The Chairman gave a verbal update. He was very happy to see that almost all plots looked to a good standard. Only two plots were 'slightly behind' but having spoken with the Tenants the Chairman was happy to have received a genuine reason from them as to the condition of the plot and Members **AGREED** that no further action was required at this stage.

### **44.2 TO AGREE ON A COURSE OF ACTION FOR ONGOING INSPECTIONS INCLUDING TO RECEIVE AND NOTE CORRESPONDENCE FROM CDC REGARDING ALLOTMENT INSPECTIONS**

Members **NOTED** the correspondence and **AGREED** the following;

Inspections to reduce to twice per year in line with the growing seasons and the Committee meetings. The next inspection will take place around March 2023.

It was further **AGREED** to follow the advice from CDC regarding inspections being carried out by non-allotment holders only and it was **AGREED** that the Chairman would continue to carry out the inspections together with L Davies.

The Chairman thanked J Ullman for her contribution towards the inspection on this occasion.

## **45. TO NOTE THE DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING AND TO CONSIDER A CHANGE OF START TIME TO ONGOING MEETINGS**

**45.1** Members **AGREED** to change the start time to 10am.

**45.2** The date and time of the next meeting is Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December at 10am.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 1:06pm

Signed.....

Dated.....