

## MINUTES OF LOW MOOR ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION MEETING

HELD AT THE WELLINGTON INN ON 3rd AUGUST 2017

**PRESENT:** Anthony, Chris, Angela, Christine, Helen, Simon, Lindsay, John

**APOLOGIES:** Joe, Darren, Jessica, Julian (PCSO)

1. Minutes of meeting held on 2nd June

These were approved as being an accurate record

2. Matters arising

a. Shop roof clean: this hasn't yet happened

b. Petanque pitch project: this hasn't yet taken place. It was suggested that this could be included in a later volunteer work session so that it could be completed ready for next year

i. Plant sale: there had been little support for this. This was felt to be a pity, as a lot of people appreciated the previous service offered through the shop. Most plants came from the Kids' Plot. A small amount of money was raised. Two suggestions were made; that in future, dates for such sales need to be publicised well in advance, and that ideally someone needs to take this on as a project.

3. Correspondence

We have been notified by 'Make it York' of a horticultural celebration which is being planned in York for 2018. Angela attended a meeting about it. There will possibly be a four-day festival, and mooted dates are 5th-8th July 2018. It may be that there will be opportunities for allotment sites to be involved. Angela will keep us informed about developments

4. Tesco 'Bags of Help' initiative

We will look further in to this. There is apparently money available (to be bid for). We could possibly apply for some to help fund an on-site toilet, something which has been discussed in the past. Helen will check out details of scheme online.

5. Allotment Officer's report

None has been received

6. PCSO's report

None has been received. Some plot-holders have reported damage. The Salvation Army have contacted us because they'd had a report of someone sleeping in a shed. It was stressed that damage/incidents should be logged (incident book in the shop) and individuals affected should report instances to the police.

7. Site Secretary's report

Between May and now, some 14 plots have been let and about 8 vacancies remain.

Christine raised the question of the proposed apiary; so far she hasn't let that plot in case it materialises.

Although originally a council initiative, there seems to be no money for this and it was felt that because of this, the plot could now be let.

The question of mentoring new plot-holders, which has come up in the past, was discussed. It was felt that, on a site with quite a large turnover of tenants, this could be useful. A request for mentors will be included in a future newsletter.

Helen will take steps to add to the website information which used to be issued to new tenants, but which no longer is.

Simon mentioned the possibility of one experienced plot-holder representing a section of the allotments - perhaps a first point of contact for new tenants in that area of the site?

## 8. Shop report

The shop is ticking over. The question of the shop door lock was raised; apparently it doesn't work 100% as it ought to. Chris will obtain a quote for repairing it. Chris pointed out that no one who holds a key should label it 'Allotment key'!

## 9. Financial report

Simon is getting a handle on his role. He and Chris will get together to sort out some procedural details of accounting as regards the shop.

## 10. AGM minutes and matters raised

- a. It was pointed out that the minutes of the AGM cannot be "approved" at committee but issues arising from it can be discussed. The question of the storekeeper's plot rent being paid as a token of appreciation for all the hard work put into the role, was raised. A council representative, consulted as part of the discussion about a revised Constitution, had said this should not be done because "volunteers" should not receive anything that could be construed as payment and that as an unincorporated association we are constrained as to what we can do.. A discussion ensued and the consensus was that it would be good to find a mechanism to make this possible. One suggestion was that the issue could be placed on the agenda, and subject to vote of members annually at the AGM.
- b. Use of shop balances: these could perhaps be put in to a reserve for special purposes. This might avoid the possibility of 'unjustified' profit accumulating. It was felt that it might be good to review the requirement that shop balances can ONLY be ploughed back in to the shop. Several suggestions were made. Chris suggested that the existing stipulation that "shop profits can only be used by the shop" should be removed. This would have the effect of freeing some money for possible projects by the committee, via the association account.

In addition Chris suggested that a minimum of £5,000 be always retained in the shop account, and Angela suggested that £200 should always be held in the association account. If the committee agreed to finance a project, the association account would fund it. If the cost exceeded the money available in the association account, then the remaining monies could be taken from the shop account.

- c. After consultation with Chris, Simon and Anthony will come to the next meeting with a proposal as to how the question of "association" versus "shop" funds might be resolved
- d. Social Events
  - i. The plot crawl went reasonably.
  - ii. Jessica to be asked about progress with her idea of a pumpkin competition
  - iii. There are other suggestions; these will be followed up at the next meeting

## 11. Issues raised at the last committee meeting re the constitution

- a. The question of who should be entitled to vote was brought up again. It was felt that one membership per plot should give the right to one vote.
- b. Recognition of volunteer helpers at the shop: it was pointed out that anyone could offer their services and thereby become entitled to a discount.

## 12. The new structure for York allotments

It was reported that Charitable Status hasn't yet been granted and this was delaying the implementation of the new arrangements. D Meigh is to write to all tenants shortly about the new structure.

## 13. Events and activities planned

- a. The volunteering session on 8th July was poorly supported. Nevertheless Angela felt another one would be worth trying. Several members felt that out-of-season activities might attract greater support (eg the petanque pitch, cleaning the shop). Perhaps November would be a suitable time.
- b. Plot crawl: those who attended enjoyed it.
- c. Pumpkin competition: we need information on this from Jessica.
- d. Summer newsletter: Helen will circulate this to the committee members shortly.

- e. Hedge-laying courses and sessions: these will be taking place again and D. Davies will be contacted about them. November was suggested as an appropriate time. Angela will contact Don to ascertain his availability and possible dates.
- f. Events and activities: Helen will ask via the next newsletter for volunteers for a social secretary.

14. AOB

Date of next meeting: 11th October 6pm at the Wellington.

John G. 16<sup>th</sup> August 2017.