

MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

NOTES IN LIEU OF MEETING WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN HELD ON TUESDAY 5TH MAY BUT NOT HELD DUE TO COVID-19

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Susan Pownall Chair, Tony Whittle, Richard Littlewood, Frank Lightfoot, Steven McDonnell, Sue Brophy, Nicola Francis Treasurer, Nick Coster and Sue Johnson, Secretary

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING held on 3rd March 2020 had been distributed to Committee members.

MATTERS ARISING

SP noted that omitted from the minutes was a discussion at the March meeting regarding the Wartime sites management to be transferred from the City Council to the Freeman. It appeared that one year's notice was a legal requirement with the Freeman serving notice on the Council to terminate their current mutual agreement. This should have taken place in April 2019. However, the formal termination notice did not take place, so it seemed likely that the Wartime sites would remain with either the City Council or Urban Green – yet to be decided. This would again depend on whether a year's notice had been given in April 2020 by the Freeman to terminate the agreement in time for a 2021 takeover. SP had asked the Allotments Officer for clarification on the current status and he was endeavoring to get an update. He was currently on furlough.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

SP reported on items that had come up on the Moorside Allotments during April. She had received Urban Green official Guidelines surrounding the current COVID 19 pandemic, which she had posted on the website, placed on notice boards and put appropriate notices on the gates particularly concerning safety measures when handling locks, keys etc. She had received a further update from UGN on 20th April following the Government's decision to extend the lock-down. The guidelines were emailed to each plotholder for their information.

SP had also had information from UGN that at the moment the City Allotment Show and Garden Fete was still on their events calendar but would of course depend on health issue nearer the time. The suggested weekend for the show was the third weekend in September.

There had been further break-ins over recent weeks and FL had had some seeds taken from his shed. Other plotholders had reported intruders but in general nothing seemed to have been taken. The Police were notified directly by one plotholder whose shed had been broken into and belongings taken.

SP had received an application for a greenhouse construction on Plot 30. Plan attached. The applicant was asking for a 6 x 8 ft professionally manufactured construction in the top left corner of her plot. Comments, please as soon as possible – approval or otherwise.

There was also a submission for a small shed in the top left hand back corner of Plot 85. The size was not specified precisely but would be probably 4ft x 7ft. Again, comments, please – approval or otherwise.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The potting shed on plot 110 is another casualty of Covi-19 as it cannot be repaired at the moment.

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TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer received the request for the first half of annual rent payable to the City Council. This amounted to £2543.67 but the amount payable is £2111.67 taking into account a reduction for concessionary receipts. As at 10th May 11 people had not paid their rent.

TRADING HUT MANAGER'S REPORT

SP had closed the shop following the health crisis and had put a system in place to run a remote click and collect service for ploholders wishing to purchase remotely. This was done in a safe, secure environment for all concerned and she had disbanded the volunteer shop team for the duration. The majority of payments had been via BACS using an invoicing system and those paying by cash had been encouraged to make payment with their invoice through the red letter box. Shop proceeds in March 2020 amounted to £818.47. April proceeds were £929.05. The shop had benefited as garden centres were closed, so demand on the MAA shop had been particularly high. A very large wholesale delivery had been received at the end of April, including tomato growbags, now in particular demand.

HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

SM reported that he carried out the easier risk assessments and that there were no issues relating to the gardens. Nothing was reported regarding a new notice board.

In addition, SP reiterated she had received guidance notices from Urban Green Newcastle (UGN) concerning safe and responsible behaviour from ploholders during the current COVID-19 pandemic. These included the good news that allotments were to remain open for gardeners to tend their crops as well as taking exercise for mental and physical wellbeing. The news had been received with general pleasure and relief and on Moorside, the plots were looking in the main spectacular.

COMMUNITY PLOT UPDATE

No information has been received but, in any event, the garden will be closed to activities during the Covid-19 crisis.

PLANT SCHEME 2020

Sales of compost were made until the shop was able to receive a delivery. Some plants and packets of seeds were sold and a number of people responded to SJ's email for plants which are available in small quantities. Initial sales, including compost, amounted to £195.45 but not all money was received by the end of April. SJ will continue to grow a few plants in limited space from home.

WAITING LIST, LETTINGS AND INSPECTIONS

There are 37 people on the waiting list. Plot 34 is vacant. Half plots 60a and 60b were let as a whole, now plot 60. Plots 32, 14 and 72 were let. All lettings took place before lockdown due to Covid-19. UGN will not be forwarding applications for plots throughout the city and advocated that no lettings take place during the C-19 crisis.

NAWG MATTERS

There was nothing new to report and no meetings are currently being held.

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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- SB has continued work on the bee garden and the planters indoor and out, with the kind help of the tenant of 74.
- **SB drew attention to a treehouse built on plot 85. Does anyone have a view about this and could I have a response by 21st May, please?**
- **Applications for greenhouses to be built on plots 30 and 32 have been received, also for a shed on plot 85, plans attached. Could you all please let me know if these have your approval by 21st May.**
- **No plans have been implemented for a Moorside Show this year. Taking into account the ongoing Covid-19 situation, could you all express your views on holding a show, please by 21st May.**

SJ

14th May 2020