

MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1 MARCH 2022 AT 5.30 VIA ZOOM

PRESENT: Susan Pownall (Chair), Sue Johnson (Sec), Tony Whittle, Rich Littlewood, Steven McDonnell, Sue Brophy, Frank Lightfoot, Joyce Ozouaki. SP extended a welcome to Joyce as a new Committee member.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Nicola Francis (Treasurer), Nick Coster.

ELECTION OF MOORSIDE COMMITTEE OFFICERS FOR 2022

SP, SJ and NF were Proposed and Seconded by individual committee members as Committee Officers.

Susan Pownall was proposed and seconded as Chairman and subsequently elected by members present (excluding herself and excluding Frank Lightfoot who abstained); Sue Johnson and Frank Lightfoot were proposed and seconded as Secretary with equal votes resulting in a draw. Sue Johnson was confirmed as Secretary by a casting vote of the Chair; Nicola Francis was proposed and seconded as Treasurer in her absence, with her prior consent to have her name put forward, and subsequently elected by members present (excluding Frank Lightfoot who abstained).

Frank Lightfoot re-iterated his view that electing the Officers at the first Committee meeting following the AGM rather than at the AGM itself was not democratic. The method had been proposed and agreed at the AGM on 21 January 2015 and was contained in the Constitution and Rules. SJ confirmed that a rule change could be proposed at the AGM 2023.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING held on 1 February 2022 had been distributed to the committee and taken as read.

MATTERS ARISING

Repairs to external fencing had been completed. SP had contacted the Allotment Officer to convey the thanks of Moorside Allotments Association. Remedial work was outstanding with regard to trees. Two of particular concern were the poplar on plot 34 and the willow on plot 73a and SP had requested the Allotment Officer to have this work done as a priority as opposed to remaining tree work. It was agreed that the tall laurel hedging at the rear of plot 18 could be cut back to approximately chest height as requested by the plotholder. FL volunteered to make an assessment and carry out the work on behalf of the tenant who is currently unable to undertake this himself.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The collapsed fence at the front of plot 20b was considered a Health & Safety issue and had been removed by SM. The gate had not been removed. SP had noticed that a compost heap inside plot 106 was causing the fence to lean and the tenant would be advised. The skip had been provided and had been quickly filled.

SP reported that Pat Francis was not certain about organising a full autumn show due to the ongoing Covid-19. A Moorside Allotment Competition could be organised in the same way as in 2021 being a low key event with the usual awards. FL reworked the criteria last year and this could be used again. RL would put this on the website. JO suggested a "People's Choice" category to follow the usual ones.

SB suggested that we could consider an Open Day without a vegetable and fruit competition. It was suggested that this could be linked to National Allotment Week

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usually held in August. RL suggested holding a barbecue on the Community Plot. A list of food purchased for past show barbecues had been given to SP by Paul Gaffney who used to run the barbecue with our late secretary, Krys Gaffney.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

There was nothing to report.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Thanks were given to Nicola Francis in her absence for the Income and Expenditure Report for the AGM. Rents had started to be received.

TRADING HUT MANAGER'S REPORT

Takings at the end of February amounted to £504.85. Seed potatoes were available but in addition a supply of more unusual varieties had been obtained from a local farmer and these would attract a premium price. FL queried the prices charged from the shop and SP reminded the Committee that the shop was originally envisaged as a service to plotholders, particularly those with no transport of their own. A percentage was added to the suppliers' wholesale prices and SP also confirmed she shopped around for the best prices to keep prices competitive for shop customers. The end of year accounts showed that not only had the shop covered its costs but had made a healthy surplus for the Association.

SP had received donations of fruit and had been making jam for sale at the shop. Not taking any money for sugar, jam pot labels etc meant she was able to donate all the sale proceeds to the Association.

A delivery of manure was expected on Saturday 5 March. There was a price increase of £10 making the delivery of a load now £90. Monitoring of the number of barrows sold will be made to check that the income covers the expenditure. The fence to the inner manure area must be repaired in advance of the delivery. FL had priced up the work to be done but figures were not available for the meeting. FL was of the view that an extra post was required for the manure outer gate for additional strength to the existing fence.

WAITING LIST AND LETTINGS AND INSPECTIONS

There were no changes to the waiting list and lettings.

FL had walked around and noted that the tenant of plot 75 had done some work. There was a discussion regarding the tenants of plots 10,73b and 108. SP and JO had tried to contact the plotholder of number 10 but without success. SJ had previously written to the tenant of plot 73b. The tenant of plot 108 had spoken to SP and confirmed he was completely fit and well and preparing the whole of his garden for the season ahead..

TW proposed fitting a new lock to the East Lane gate. TW requested that plotholders be reminded of the high cost of lock replacements, currently £180 each. Renovation of old locks could be done at £55 where appropriate. FL commented that the chain on the middle gate is often left very tight or, conversely, the gate is sometimes left open. SP agreed to add all these observations to the monthly news update on the website.

HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

SM was not present at this stage. FL commented that a number of (internal) fences were leaning over. FL offered to purchase fence panels and stack them in his garden for sale to plotholders. SJ and SP noted that this had been discussed in the past when space and safe storage had been an issue. FL was thanked for the offer.

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COMMUNITY PLOT

RL would organise a bonfire on the community plot for 13 March with 20 March as an alternative if there were adverse weather conditions on 13 March. He would monitor what was added to the fire. He would put a poster on the website.

URBAN GREEN /NAWG MATTERS

SP had contacted the Freeman regarding a further meeting with them and the Wartime Sites, as had been tentatively suggested at the previous meeting in November 2021, She awaited a reply,.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

SB advised that she and Jean Hannon would tidy up the front perimeter as last year. The willow in the bee garden would be trimmed back when spring flowering (catkins) had ended. FL had sighted a pregnant fox which may be nesting under his shed. JO was researching wildlife cameras.

SP reminded RL that he had offered to make a new notice board at the entrance to the middle lane and that she had approved his costings previously. SP also asked FL for an update on the site taps plan he had previously agreed to undertake.

FL described the alterations to his greenhouses being carried out which will leave one on the right hand side and one smaller one on the left hand side of his plot. The revised sizes did not require further planning permission from the Committee.

SP reported an observation from a plot-holder that non-members should not have access to the private Members Facebook site. SP had noted there were about a dozen participants who were neither Associate Members nor Moorside gardeners. She would send the list to RL to remove them from the site. RL also explained the role of a non-Committee plot-holder who was a joint administrator of the site in that it was useful for the Facebook page in the event that RL had access difficulties but that the joint-administrator could not alter anything or add anyone.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Committee meeting will be held virtually on Tuesday 5 April 2022 at 5.30 p.m. The Committee thanked RL for once more facilitating the meeting by ZOOM.

The meeting closed at 6.51 pm

SJ

7 March 2022