

**Bradwell Road Allotment Committee Meeting**  
**Stantonbury Parish Council**  
**Held on**  
**Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020**  
**At 7.00pm**  
**Using Zoom Video Link**  
This meeting was recorded by audio  
For the purpose of transacting the business as set out below

**MINUTES**

	<p><b>15-minute session for members of the public to speak.</b></p> <p>DO raised the point that water troughs recently installed on the allotment site do not have lids and that in SPC T&amp;Cs it states that the water butts should have lids on. PH responded that if it is stated in the T&amp;Cs that the troughs need to have lids on then SPC would need to review the T&amp;Cs.</p> <p>GAD pointed out that with lids the troughs would be difficult to use, and if rested on top could be blown away. PH advised the meeting that the troughs were designed not to take a lid and if necessary SPC would have to design one.</p> <p>DO pointed out that this could be a H&amp;S issue especially with children present at the allotment. He also enquired if the troughs are going to be tested for Legionnaires Disease due to the stagnant water.</p> <p>PH stated that if a trough appeared not be used then it will have to be reviewed as to whether it should therefore be removed from site. PH will seek advice regarding Legionnaires Disease.</p> <p>RW praised the work of the work carried out by the PRs on the installation of the troughs, however commented on the size of troughs which he thought had been reduced, that no balancing system had been installed and that a non-return valve had not been fitted, which he thought was mandatory. They were, he implied, basically drinking troughs for animals in the field.</p> <p>GAD advised that SPC will take advice on the non-return valves and will remedy if required.</p> <p>RO also commented on the Minutes from the last Allotment Committee meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019, item A40/19 - he stated that SPC listed fees against the allotment, he asked why this had been provided and if SPC were you going to back charge allotment holders or is this for the Parish Council own information?</p>	<p><b>PH</b></p> <p><b>PH</b></p> <p><b>GAD</b></p>
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	<p>GAD advised that it had been BATs who had asked for this detailed information. SPC's accounting system does not generate detailed costings.</p> <p>RO asked the Committee if they accept that these costings are only estimates and which are wholly inaccurate, an efficient accounting process would know these costs?</p> <p>He referenced his work as a former parish councillor. He was able to produce a detailed account of the staff costs for hosting Thames Valley Police, asserting that certain proprietary software allows for detailed examination of costs.</p> <p>He went further to use as an example the subsidy provided by Bishop Stortford Council of £8000 for 10 allotment sites. He questioned the £2600.00 estimate of costs for the 61 plots provided by the Stantonbury Parish Council.</p> <p>RO asserted was that this was not being office efficient and queried if this is being passed onto allotment holders?</p> <p>GAD advised that when the TVP costs were produced SPC had a different accounting system to that which we have now. He also advised that we now have a new RFO who is looking at the allotment charges which are reflected in the agenda. The current costs for the allotment site are absorbed by the current system in place. However, GAD agreed the council could produce a more forensic accounting system if needed. He pointed out that in terms of accuracy, the Parish Council's accounts are independently audited through the AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Review) acting on behalf of the electorate and our auditors are satisfied that the Parish Councils accounts are properly managed. We will continue to review charges, prices and costings.</p> <p>GAD advised that these water charges and maintenance were put together last year in September 2019 and SPC did not know what the charges were going to be or the maintenance costs at the time.</p> <p>RO then referred to the Draft Minutes of 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019, A40/19 (final paragraph) on the alleged comments made. He stated that because you seem to have pending litigation about these comments "I don't feel personally you can accept these minutes as they stand, as later in your present agenda you will asking these minutes to be accepted?" RW also stated that NALC and MKC tend to agree with him that with the litigation pending, unless your committee members at that time have sworn affidavits, it will be inappropriate to either accept the minutes as they are or to just let them stand for the time being.</p> <p>GAD advised that SPC has taken legal advice on the comments made and the content of the minutes. The Committee can or cannot accept the minutes at this meeting.</p> <p>RW questioned if they a true representation of the meeting.</p> <p>GAD replied that is for the Committee to decide tonight.</p> <p>DO enquired as to what has happened to the Section 106 money – GAD replied that this has been spent on the troughs.</p>	
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	<p><b>Present:</b>  Cllr A Anwar  Cllr GA Davison (Chair)  Cllr S Kennedy (entered the meeting at 19:210)  Cllr L Morgan  Cllr A Ronaldson</p> <p>6 members of the public logged onto the Zoom meeting</p>	
A01/20	<p><b>Apologies:</b>  Cllr M Millen</p> <p><b>Accepted by 5 votes for</b></p>	
A02/20	<p><b>Chairs Remarks</b></p> <p>a) <b>Election of Chair – update</b>  The Coronavirus Act, which the government introduced on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020 postpones any elections that were due to be held in May 2020 until 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Any other electoral events such as the council or parliamentary by-elections, will also be postponed until May 2021. Therefore, the committee participants will remain until the legislation is withdrawn.</p> <p>b) <b>Payment of allotment invoices</b>  GAD informed the meeting that the way in which payment is made for allotment rent has changed. To prevent potential transmission of the Covid-19 virus to staff SPC cannot accept cash payments. The invoices for the forthcoming year are currently being sent out to plot holders.  Payment will now be made either by card payments (a link can be sent by text, email or SMS), BACs payments and cheques. Chip and pin by appointment only at the Parish Office.</p> <p>c) <b>Trolley for carrying water</b>  GAD is aware that some people are struggling to carry water from troughs to plots. PH to source a suitable trolley.</p> <p>d) <b>Removal of produce from other plots</b>  SPC have been advised that a tenant on one of the plots is removing produce from other plots. GAD requested evidence before we can take any action.</p> <p>e) <b>Shed on D1</b>  DO advised the meeting that BATs are looking at purchasing a replacement shed or a small self-build container next to the toilet block, but with the current situation as it is, they do not have funds to buy at present.  GAD suggested that SPC look at the shed to establish if it can be repaired, PH advised that the felt on the roof needs to be replaced and the shed could be fenced off from the plot. PH to review if the shed is stable and could be repaired.  DO asked if the door could be reversed to face the car park entrance.</p>	<p><b>PH</b></p> <p><b>PH</b></p>
A03/20	<p><b>Minutes:</b>  To approve and sign the Minutes of the Allotment Committee Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019.  The Minutes to the Meeting were agreed as a correct record</p> <p><b>Accepted by 3 votes for, 2 Abs</b></p>	

A04/20	<p><b>Terms of Reference</b>  GAD advised the Committee of some minor changes Committee to the Terms of Reference  The Committee were asked to vote for the updated Terms of Reference.  <b>Agreed 5 votes for</b></p>	
A05/20	<p><b>Terms and Conditions</b>  The Committee were asked to vote for the updated Allotment Terms and Conditions.  <b>Agreed 5 votes for</b></p>	
A06/20	<p><b>BATs - Chair Report and questions.</b>  DO said that although the last 6 months have been unprecedented it has been good to see plot holders coming down to the allotments and adhering to social distancing.  He reported that this year the annual open day and harvest and craft show had not taken place due to COVID-16.  Most plots have been well maintained however some plots are becoming overgrown.  BATs now have a new Secretary, Jane Kirkham and a new temporary Treasurer, Chris Costello, who has stepped back into the role.  No meetings are being conducted at the moment.</p>	
A07/20	<p><b>Financial Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water charges  GAD advised that water charges are lower than estimated (£537.70) for the year, which included usage of hoses, and consequently SPC will not be increasing the rent in 2021/22 which will remain at .38p m2. With the use of troughs, the water charge should be lower this coming period which the council can absorb. The actual water cost per m2 for this coming period is 0.7p per m2 which again the council can absorb.</li> <li>Rents 2021/2022 to agree rent of .38p m2</li> </ul> <p>To agree vote for .38p m2 water charge for 2021/22  <b>Accepted by 5 votes for</b></p>	
A08/20	<p><b>D1 Community Plot</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>To agree the future plans for use of D1 Community Plot</b>  (Report by Paul Hyde)  It was agreed that GAD and PH will carry out a survey of the shed.</li> <li><b>Council to consider and agree installation of a storage item</b>  Referred to earlier in the meeting. Further investigation to be carried out by PH to identify if structurally sound and look at the internal wood to make sure it is safe.</li> </ul> <p>Defer voting for installing of a storage item until other options are pursued.</p>	<p><b>GAD/ PH</b></p> <p><b>PH</b></p>
A09/20	<p><b>Water Supply</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Installation of water troughs – update</b>  PH has generally received positive feedback from plot holders. Some even now prefer them, and overall, the troughs would appear to be running well.  PH to inspect and undertake a H&amp;S review on the troughs which will be reported back to the tenants.</li> </ul>	<b>PH</b>

	<p>DO suggested that valves should be fitted to individual troughs so that individual troughs can be isolated should it be necessary to. PH agreed to look at this look at as part of his review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Toilet re-opening – to remain closed indefinitely until further notice.</b> GAD confirmed that the toilets will remain closed until further notice. PH advised that he has not received any complaints from tenants regarding the toilet not being open. DO asked why SPC were not re-opening the toilet. GAD advised that SPC are taking the advice of the Allotment Association and as soon as we can re-open, we will and will ensure all COVID-10 sanitation guidance with be put in place.</li> </ul>	PH
A10/20	<p><b>Parish Ranger's Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site Inspections to recommence update The plot inspections will recommence in October and a notice will be put on the allotment notice boards advising tenants when this will take place. PH wanted to record that feedback on the installation of the troughs from the tenants overall was very positive and that plot holders were very helpful when he was installing them. The next step will be to consider what we do in the winter with them. There is still one tap to be replaced on the toilet wall with a non-return valve.</li> <li>• Rubbish amnesty/Skip rubbish removal During the lockdown there had been issues with waste, the tips closed then re-opened but with restrictions. The PRs now have to travel to Newport Pagnell tip, which is a longer process, but it is getting easier. A Skip was hired to remove the rubbish. No one has dumped in the area since the rubbish removal, however moving forward in these times SPC will need to look at how we handle removal of rubbish from the allotment site. DO suggested that perhaps people could email into the parish regarding bulky rubbish and could arrange to collect that way rather than create a big pile.</li> <li>• Plot D1 is on PRs winter schedule the plan is to get digging and clearing and get it back to a rentable plot.</li> <li>• <b>Plot Numbering</b> Lack of plot ID markers is an issue on the site and is something that the PRs are currently looking into. Plot inspections resuming in October. The entrance to the allotment site needs cutting back and pruning. PR to look at the noticeboard on side of toilet will wither be repair it or it will be replaced. DO advised that there is a tenant on the allotment site who has a printing firm so might be worth contacting them for costs. DO to pass onto PH by email. RW reminded the meeting that historically plot numbers should be placed on the right-hand side of the plot and that the path on the right-hand side is the tenant's responsibility. PH agreed these needs reviewing as some paths have got items on them that should not be there. PH to review the paths in between the plots.</li> </ul>	<p>SPC</p> <p>PH</p> <p>DO</p> <p>PH</p>

A11/20	<b>Change of Gate code from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020</b>	
A12/20	<b>Waiting list and plot requests = 21</b>	
	<b>Date for Future Meetings</b> <b>Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021 – 7.00pm</b> <b>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 – 7.00pm</b> <b>Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 – 7.00pm</b>	

Meeting finished at 20.00