

HANSLOPE PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of The Allotment's Committee held on Thursday 18th November 2021 at 2.00pm the Pavilion, Hanslope Recreation Ground, MK19 7LG.

Minutes

Present: C Walmsley (Chair) R Simpkins
J Cass B Cass
P Cook
G Merry (recording) Members of Public: 0

21.038 Apologies

No apologies

21.039 Declarations of interest

Except for Cllr Simpkins, all members are allotment holders and therefore declared that as their interest.

21.040 Minutes of the last meeting – held 26/08/2021

The minutes which had previously been circulated were agreed and signed.

21.041 Admin.

- i. **Waiting List and availability:** Cllr Simpkins reported there were 3 names on the waiting list and 2 plots available. 68C was discussed and it was agreed the deposit could be returned and the remaining tenant (68b), would be asked to move their shed onto their own plot. This will make 68C available. Plot 12 needs to be cleared and Cllr Simpkins agreed to organise some quotes for this. The tenant at plot 69 wishes to downsize. The clerk agreed to verify this so that it could be spilt, and the other half let out.
- ii. **Rules and Renewals:** The rules had been previously circulated and some minor amendments to the wording were discussed and agreed. The covering letters will go out, also publicising the annual tenant's meeting as being in-person, to be held on Monday January 24th in the community hall.
- iii. **Equipment Hire and Charges:** It was discussed whether to charge a fee for hiring the strimmer, mower and rotavator, or allow tenants usage for free. It was discussed and agreed that a deposit only would be charged, returnable the same day, once equipment is returned in working order. The committee will oversee this. Health and safety guidelines were discussed, and it was agreed there must be a list of Ts and Cs, including a liability disclaimer, which hirers must sign. Appended to this will be individual guidelines for each piece of equipment. This advice sheet would also be available in a laminated format for tenants to take away and bring back. Mr Cass agreed to work on suitable documentation.

21.042 Inspections: follow-up actions

Inspections had taken place in September and 2 tenants had received letters. Plot 28 will be monitored with a view to implementing improvements by the spring. After this there may have to be a formal warning. Plot 66 will be checked again. Mr Walmsley stressed the importance of following up on inspections to ensure actions have been implemented.

21.043 Maintenance and work needed.

- i. **General:** It was discussed and agreed that it is unreasonable to expect one person to carry out all the maintenance needed, and the clerk advised that the PC should be asked to support this by engaging a contractor on an annual basis. Mr Cass presented a list of jobs needed before the spring and each was discussed and allocated. The committee will be able to do some, but a list was agreed to form a specification for local contractors to quote for. There would be a list of immediate jobs plus the longer-term aim of engaging a permanent contractor for the allotments. The need to replace the current noticeboard was also discussed as well as obtaining an additional one. The clerk agreed to obtain quotes for the list of jobs and investigate suitable noticeboards.
- ii. **Corner Posts:** Work had stalled due to the larger project recently concluded. Mr Cass offered to obtain the remaining posts needed.
- iii. **Strengthening of Verges:** Mk Council's refusal of permission to have the verges reinforced was discussed, although the new inside parking spaces will help to relieve parking somewhat. It was agreed the entrance driveway also needs to be widened. It was agreed the longer-term aim would be to get the relevant officer from Highways out for a site visit to discuss both matters.

21.044 Issues

- i. **Hedge Cutting:** The machinery used by the current contractor damages the ridings and options were discussed. Cllr Simpkins suggested bringing forward the cutting date to August as the ground is drier, but the clerk advised checking this is allowable due to the nesting season. It was advised that the parish council cannot keep amending the contract. However, this issue can be looked at again at contract renewal 2023.
- ii. **Health & Safety and Risk:** It was discussed and agreed that the Risk Assessment must be updated annually in the spring. Current risks were discussed, and the clerk had updated the R.A. to include new gate locking arrangements. Mr Cass advised he will address the potential asbestos problem in one shed when he has some time, though it is currently safe unless disturbed.
- iii. **Other:** A tenant had suggested a 'swap plot' for items no longer wanted. It was discussed that this should be plants only, as it would be used as dumping ground for unwanted items otherwise. Mr Cass offered to develop a swap table made from pallets/boards, to be situated adjacent to the water tank.

21.045 Project Update and Future Plans

The need for the committee to be democratic was discussed and it was agreed that volunteers would be sought at the annual tenant's meeting, to carry out tasks, advise plot holders etc.

21.046 Date of next meeting

10/02/2021

Signed: Date:.....