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CHIPPERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

ALLOTMENT MINUTES

The AGM of The Allotment Meeting. The meeting was held on the 6th July 2022 in The Small Hall The Common, Chipperfield WD4 9BS

Councillors present: Cllr Heaphy, Cllr Cassidy, Cllr Flynn, and Cllr Hinton
Also present: Mrs U Kilich Clerk to the Council

12 allotment holders were present.

1. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair, Cllr Heaphy detailed of safety and fire arrangements should the building need to be evacuated.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The following apologies received from; Elaine Dean, Kirsty Thomas, Rachel Hinton, Jane Whittles and Charlotte Clifford (all allotment holders).

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous AGM on the 6th October 2021 was presented.

RESOLVED, proposed by Cllr Heaphy, seconded by Cllr Cassidy to sign the Minutes as true and accurate record. Unanimously agreed.

4. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

- a. A request was made from an allotment holder to host the Allotment AGM via Zoom/Face Time, this was not possible as the Small Hall does not have Wi-Fi for guests. Post pandemic lockdown allowances Council is no longer allowed to hold formal council meetings as Hybrid or Virtual.
- b. Cllr Cassidy informed members that the Council is aware of the list of allotments that require attention, the Clerk has followed up with emails/phone calls reminding members to cultivate their plots, there will be time guidelines with follow up emails.
- c. Cllr Cassidy informed members that the Council has agreed that for anyone facing long term illness/bereavement the council will arrange to cover the cost to cover any allotments that need attention until such time as the allotment holder can resume normal cultivation.
- d. There is a concern over Deer ingress and the Council has established there were some broken fences, the fences have been repaired temporarily around the Blackwells and by the Tennis Court, (new fences on order). The only way to eliminate the problem would be to install metal fencing 6 ft or taller which would be prohibitively expensive.

- e. There has been a request to extend the period that the car park can be used up to November (currently October) but council feel this is not possible. The Council is concerned over the level of churn damage that may cause; however, the Warden and the Clerk will help those needing assistance in moving crops or other things in November.
- f. Cllr Cassidy informed members that at last year's AGM, many allotment holders pointed out that communication was an issue and as a result, the Clerk carried out the exercise of following up with emails and in some cases phone calls to ensure we had connectivity and this along with the issuing rental invoices, which seemed to have reached all, this appears to have resolved the issue. Cllr Cassidy asked members to inform the clerk if they still have an issue on this front.
- g. To aid to the communication further including the allotment What's app group and normal email service, the Council has installed an allotment noticeboard. If anyone needs to post anything, please refer to the Clerk or the Warden.
- h. Sunnyside Rural Trust (SRT) have been engaged on a more formal basis to manage the common areas of the allotments, the Warden patrols the allotment and liaises with the Clerk with any issues and highlight any plots not being cultivated.
- i. The council have agreed to use SRT to prepare plots for new allotment holders by some basic clearance and covering the plot to prevent weed development.
- j. Allotment holders are reminded of their responsibility to manage the strip of common walk way on two sides of their allotments. A member attending the meeting agreed to review the outline plan of the site with a view to highlighting responsibilities of which pieces to keep mowed and to outline the general plot borders. (see below)

5. **ACCOUNTS**

- a. Last year the rent was increased, there will be no increase to be applied for the year 2022/23
- b. The deposit for new allotment holders joining has increased to £75 (£50 previously) to help cover the SRT costs of preparing a plot once it has become vacant.
- c. The Tennis Court rent will remain at £500 this year as this is on a fixed term contract
- d. The Wardens Salary apportioned to the allotment accounts is calculated at 10% this is because Sunnyside Rural Trust are now managing the area from March to October.
- e. Items on the accounts were question and the costings for the IT Support for allotment software is being used, charge for using the Small Hall, Water Rates, and Infrastructure were explained.
- f. It is estimated that there will be rebate for the allotment water rate.
- g. There is a surplus of £419 due to the allotment hedges not being cut this year. Hedge cutting is usually a bi-annual process

Open Forum

- a. The padlock on the gate is not ideal, it was suggested to put it back on the chain padlock. Council agreed to look into the issue and action it.
- b. If the allotment is not being inspected by April/May the chances are the plots will not be cultivated. It was suggested that the Council carry out the inspection around April/May. It was pointed out that the Warden does rounds regularly but Council will perform a formal inspection earlier in the year.

- c. The pathways are not illustrated correctly on the map, an allotment holder offered to draw out the map as it should be. The map will be on the noticeboard once it has been completed.
- d. Inform members to keep the paths being accessible to allotment holders and not to block them. They should not be locked.
- e. To highlight on the map whose responsibility is to keep the area clear.
- f. All the North/East boundary should be carried out by the allotment holders
- g. The Clerk will follow up with Mr Prichard to see when the hedges will be cut back.
- h. Find out from the White House who is responsible for cutting the Ivy back, once it has been ascertained to follow up with cutting back.

Cllr Heaphy

Date

The meeting concluded at 19.35