

HANSLOPE PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Allotment Committee held on Thursday 19th May 2022, 2pm the Pavilion, Hanslope Recreation Ground, MK19 7LG.

Minutes

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

22.016 Apologies

No Apologies.

22.017 Declarations of interest

With the exception of Cllr Simpkins, all members are allotment holders and therefore declared that as their interest.

22.018 Minutes of the last meeting – held on 7/4/2022

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

22.019 Plot Uptake and Availability

Cllr Simpkins reported that there were 2 available plots and no one on the waiting list. The clerk advised that the interested party for plot 55a had not paid, so that may also be available, and this would be monitored. Cllr Simpkins agreed to circulate the handbook sent to new tenants, with a view to updating it. The clerk agreed to re-advertise vacant plots on Facebook and the website.

22.020 Tool Hire update:

- i. **Usage so far:** There had not been a huge amount of uptake and tenants were not always giving a week's notice, but they had found it a useful service. Mr Cass will circulate an advisory note on the difference between the cultivator and rotavator, as people had not been clear. This will also go on the noticeboard. It was agreed to cut down the use of the cultivator to 2 hours, due to the risk of it hurting the user's hands.
- ii. **Staffing:** Getting enough cover for the hiring slots was going to become more of a problem and various options were discussed. It was agreed to circulate further information and request volunteers again. It was agreed 2 new committee members would be sought, one of which would be a parish councillor. The clerk suggested exploring the idea of engaging someone on a self-employed 'as needs' basis, to handle both the admin and the giving out/receiving of equipment. She agreed to approach the suggested people to discuss this. Mrs Cook offered to cover some Saturday slots if she is free.

MOTION: To agree to recommend engaging a paid contractor to manage hiring slots – NOT CALLED. Situation will continue to be discussed and investigated.

22.021 Maintenance

- i. **Ongoing upkeep and maintenance:**

Mr Cass stated there was no reason now why tenants could not keep the ridings mowed around their plots and this would be added to the letter to be circulated. It was discussed and agreed to dispose of the old strimmer, as it is no longer safety compliant. It was agreed Mr

Walmsley would be shown how to replace the belt on the new wheeled strimmer. The regular contractor will also be trained to use the strimmer to maintain the site.

- ii. **Work needed:** Mr Gray will be using MOT to level plot 18a for the new parking area. The clerk agreed to buy some 'P' signs. The ground adjacent to the toilet has been levelled and will be seeded. The main driveway was still deeply rutted, and it was agreed to have this levelled and install MOT. Mr Cass agreed to ask Mr Gray, either as a favour or he could quote a price. The corner posts are still not all in and Mr Cass is discussing the best method of installation with the contractor. Cllr Cass will update the Risk Assessment.
- iii. **Grass and hedge cutting:** Mr Cass reported that when the area by the back fence was trimmed, a significant amount of pathway was reclaimed and he felt the weeds were as a result of grass cuttings being discarded. A few issues with the contractor's standards were discussed, including the hedges. These were now growing in such a way as to push the fences outwards, potentially risking damage. The specification of the contract was discussed and it was agreed that a meeting with the contractors would be arranged at the site, to 'walk through' the issues. Cllr Simpkins agreed to make the arrangements.
- iv. **State of verges and Gigaclear's response:** The verges were still damaged but Gigaclear had stated they had made good and would offer nothing further. It was agreed nothing more could be achieved. Renovation of the main driveway was discussed again but the majority of the splay was Highways owned, and they had previously refused the application.

22.022 Plot inspections/issues with plots

Generally, the main issue was tenants, in particular newer ones, not cultivating their plots. This would be added to the email to go to all tenants. Inspection outcomes were discussed plot by plot and it was agreed where tenants would receive letters. Mr Cass would follow up with the clerk regarding the details.

22.023 Site security

Cllr Simpkins had circulated some straightforward advice for plot holders to follow, originally issued by Northamptonshire Police. The measures were designed to deter, and Cllr Simpkins offered to circulate the information to all tenants. Cllr Simpkins suggested creating a WhatsApp group for tenants only, and this could support communication as well as conversations between them. It would be their choice whether to join or not and the committee would not be involved.

20.024 Date of next meeting

18/8/22

Signed: Date:.....