

# HANSLOPE ALLOTMENTS AGM

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**Minutes of the AGM of Hanslope Allotments on Monday 27th January 2020, 7.30pm, at  
The Club, 28 High Street, Hanslope, MK19 7LQ.**

## Minutes

Present: R Simpkins, J Cass (Hanslope PC)  
B Cass, P Cook (Allotments sub-committee)  
G Merry (recording)  
26 Members of the public

1. Apologies and Introductions

Apologies were received from J Cheshire, R May, P Cooper, M Parry. Cllr Simpkins welcomed all and introduced the committee, as above.

2. Allotment Accounts 2019

The accounts had been distributed and Cllr Simpkins discussed these, confirming expenditure for 2019 at £4182.40 and income at £1072.20. The parish council had underwritten the shortfall, in support of the work needed and he thanked the committee for their hard work. He confirmed that the pole rate had been increased to £1.30 a pole and all invoices had been sent out in December. The PC was no longer able to accept cash payments. He confirmed the rules had been amended and sent out and asked for comments. Some tenants had not received their invoices or paperwork and were asked to speak to the clerk at the end.

3. Happenings on the Allotments 2019

Cllr Simpkins outlined the volunteer days that had taken place, including the FCO (Hanslope Park) employees who had given a day for clearance work, in support of the local community. New poles had been bought and installed, with clearer plot-marking carried out. Mr Cass and Mrs Cook were thanked for their work on this. MKC is currently devolving Ground's Maintenance services and Hanslope PC will be managing their own contract for verges, hedges etc from April 2020. The new contractor will be mowing the allotment ridings. A natural verge is being trialled on Newport Road and will take a few seasons to fully establish.

4. Insurance for Plot holders.

It had come to light that although the parish council's Public Liability insurance covers the allotments, this only covers claims where the PC is at fault. Should there be an accident/injury due to negligence by tenants, e.g. if a tenant leaves a rake and someone steps on it, this would not be covered by the PC's insurance. This applies whether the injured person should have been there or not and seems to be the norm with parish council run allotments. Cllr Simpkins cautioned that we live in a society where people sue for many reasons. It was also advised that a Public Right of Way runs through the allotments and means people have the right of access. The PC is duty bound to ensure that Public Liability cover is in place. Cllr Simpkins had researched deals that could keep the price down, if purchased as a group. The cheapest cover is available from the SWCAA (South West Counties Allotment Association) working out at £3.50 per person for the year but must be purchased as a group. This was proposed and generally agreed.

A member of the public commented it would be difficult to keep trespassers out without fences and Mrs Cook confirmed that tenants can fence their plots providing they remove them when they no longer wish to have the allotment.

Cllr Simpkins confirmed the cover is for public liability only and in future, will automatically be added to tenant's invoices. This year, tenants are asked to pay the additional £3.50 ASAP. He added that the insurer will need names and contact details and for this consent would be sought. The clerk confirmed this would be handled according to the PC's Data Protection Policy. Mr Cass added that a minimum of 50 tenants must agree to the scheme, or risk it costing more.

5. Sub-Committee Enlargement.

Cllr Simpkins stated that Mr Cass and Mrs Cook could do with some help on the sub-committee to spread the workload and asked that anyone interested speak to them at the end of the meeting.

6. Future Plans - 2020 and Beyond.

Mr Cass has developed a clear plan of the allotments now, with the borders clearly demarked. 180 posts had been installed but more would be needed. The PC had also bought a heavy-duty strimmer, and this has been used to open up the pathways. Future plans include: -

- Pruning the trees at the 'Tathall End' edge.
- Establishing a communal area under one willow – currently a work in progress
- Larger S106-funded work:

7. S106 Money - Projects for the Allotments.

Mr Cass outlined suggested ideas with costings, using S106 money (money from developers) currently available and due to become available in the future, as follows: -

- Installation of a composting toilet – Mr Cass showed images of this and went into some detail.
- Installation of new gates – a pedestrian gate and vehicular gate were suggested.
- Work to fix the collapsed culvert at the entrance closest to the village.
- Installation of plastic reinforcement bedded into the verges suffering from wear.
- Storage container for storage of the strimmer, grass cutter and possible rotovator.
- More corner posts plus materials for the other S 106 projects and tools.

8. Community Allotment Garden

A Garden Club had been established, meeting on the first Wednesday of the month. There were 60 members and the idea of a community allotment garden had been suggested. This would be especially beneficial to young people and those who do not have the time to take on an allotment. Cllr Simpkins stated volunteers would be needed to guide the community group and asked for interested persons to speak to the committee at the end.

Cllr Simpkins thanked everyone for attending and asked for questions/comments: -

Q: Will the toilet be locked at night?

A: Probably not as no-one would be able to attend every evening and morning. However, a key code system could be investigated.

Q: Allotment tenants have been asking for dip tanks for several years, but this has not been done.

A: This or something similar can be added to the list of items. The current committee had not been aware of the history of this issue.

Q: It just needs the water supply to be connected to an existing cattle trough.

A: This would need to be in a central location.

Q: Tenants could do with a decent rotovator for communal use

A: Storage would be an issue, but it would be added to the list

Q: A water pipe running down the middle of the site can be connected to a central tank.

A: It is not clear where the pipe runs to and the water pressure is not strong enough. It was added that a new water system had been investigated and costed, a couple of years ago and had been found to be exorbitantly expensive. Tenants had been asked to contribute a percentage of the cost but had rejected this.

Q: Dip tanks would negate the need for this.

Q: It was asked whether the Open Garden programme was still running.

Q: This was separate from the parish council but was thought to still be running. Cllr Cass offered to find out and put something on Facebook

Cllr Simpkins thanked everyone for the extra ideas and added this was exactly why the sub-group needed to be expanded. He added that although many tenants had paid their rent for the year, many had not returned their signed forms and asked that this was done before leaving.

Mr Cass added that the contractor for Davidsons had offered topsoil and if anyone wanted any, they should make this known to the committee.