

## MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

### **MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2022 AT 5.30 NUNSMOOR CENTRE AND VIA ZOOM**

**PRESENT:** Susan Pownall (Chair), Rich Littlewood, Frank Lightfoot, Steven McDonnell, Sue Brophy, Nick Coster, Tony Whittle via Zoom, Sue Johnson (Sec) via Zoom

#### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Nicola Francis. Prior to the meeting Joyce Ozouaki sent an email to the Committee Members to advise that she decided to resign from the Committee who noted, with thanks, her contribution.

#### **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING**

Agreed, with a couple of minor amendments.

#### **MATTERS ARISING**

SP had been in touch with Newcastle City Council regarding the willow tree on the East Lane. A survey will be carried out shortly by the Council.

Other trees which ought to be considered were a conifer hedge between plots 52 and 53 which had been reduced on a previous occasion, some on plot 10 and a large tree on plot 3.

#### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

SP proposed that a discussion regarding rent levels would be brought forward for December, anticipating that the Treasurer would be able to be present. This was particularly pertinent following the new Lease with the Freeman. However, some Committee members present raised queries regarding both concessionary rates and the lower rate of site rent payable to the Freeman compared with that previously charged by the Council and, latterly, Urban Green.

SP explained the method of concessionary offset. SP noted that although the site rent will be lower the Association will have ownership of expenditure which previously had been undertaken by the Council / Urban Green. SP advised that a member having difficulty paying a plot rent has always had resource to a confidential discussion and this will continue.

SM thought that a rent increase should be considered only if it were deemed necessary. RL agreed that a justification would have to be made. FL considered that there no need for changes. SP pointed out that it was important to not give members a false sense of security.

SP advised that on some sites the Committee had regular oversight of the financial situation and this would be helpful going forward.

#### **SECRETARY'S REPORT.**

The attendees at the Auction were given to understand that the new Lease with the Freeman would be sent within a month from the Auction but that had not happened. SJ would contact both the Council and the Freeman. The Lease was being prepared by the Legal Department of the Council.

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

There was nothing to report.

## MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

### TRADING HUT MANAGER'S REPORT

The takings for October amounted to £289.10.

The volunteer team would open the shop for one hour only on Saturdays and Sundays for the winter, beginning in December. SP advised that she would man the shop for the second hour. The shop would be closed on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

SP would carry out the stock-take by the end of November. TW noted that stock was low on some items.

SP thanked FL for setting a rat trap in the Trading Hut. FL reported that the food had been taken but there no sign of a rat or mouse.

### WAITING LIST AND LETTINGS AND INSPECTIONS

TW advised that 4 plots only had been let since the closure of the waiting list. He recommended keeping the list closed until rents were due in 2023.

SP had spoken with the tenant of plot 46 regarding the household having a second garden on a different site. The two plots were in different names. The tenant advised SP that the household would prefer to remain on Moorside and would be leaving the other site, thanking SP and the Committee for their patience.

NC advised that several plots, namely 11, 17, 27b, 53, 60, 75, 91 and 108. had improved since the previous inspection.

SP had spoken with the tenant of 75 regarding a recent construction which she was told was temporary. SM noted that the garden was tidy but not being used for growing.

The tenants of plot 10 had "stalled" (TW) after a good start.

NC had noted that that work was needed on plots 18, 20b, 52, 73b and 79b. SJ advised that a letter had been sent to the tenant of 20b regarding removal of wood which was a Health & Safety hazard to the tenant.

Several plots merited regular inspection, namely 10, 21, 23a, 80a, 83b, 85, 89/90, 95, 107b and 110. It was noted that the tenant of 95 had been away.

SP had spoken with the tenant of 13 and 50 (both half plot size). The tenant wished to retain both plots.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

SM commented that plot holders should be encouraged to carry out any outstanding repairs before the onset of winter weather. SP will itemize this in the monthly newsletter.

### COMMUNITY PLOT

Good luck was extended to RL for Fire Friday on 4 November.

### URBAN GREEN /NAWG MATTERS

There was nothing to report

### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

SJ noted that she had been advised that the Plant Scheme income was £612.60, expenditure £89.23 and therefore the net profit was £523.37. (Income included the "float" that is cash in hand of £40). SP thanked SJ and her team for all their hard work in 2022.

### DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Committee meeting will be held Tuesday 6 December 2022 at 5.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 6.55 pm

**SJ 1 DECEMBER 2022**