

MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 4 OCTOBER 2022 AT 5.30 NUNSMOOR CENTRE

PRESENT: Susan Pownall (Chair), Sue Johnson (Sec), Frank Lightfoot, Steven McDonnell, Nicola Francis, Sue Brophy, Nick Coster.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Tony Whittle, Rich Littlewood, Joyce Ozouaki.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING

Agreed, with the exception of the adjustment of the date of next meeting from 1 October to 4 October.

MATTERS ARISING

None

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer met with representatives of the Freeman and Newcastle City Council on Monday 3 October to bid for the area currently used by Moorside Allotments Association. The process was overseen by the current Head of the Steward's Committee of the Freeman and by two surveyors and a property lawyer from Newcastle City Council. The auction proceeded as we hoped, that is, we obtained a lease at the minimum offered annual rent of, initially, £2996.64 being at the rate of £480 per acre as being for 6.243 acres. There will be rent reviews every third and sixth year of the initial seven year lease. The initial rent will be lower than that paid to Newcastle City Council or to Urban Green Newcastle in the recent past.

SP and SJ pointed out that the Freeman expect allotment sites under their direct management to be self-sustainable. The cost of items such provision of skips, fence repairs, locks, taps and insurance will have to borne by the site. In addition, the Freeman do not recognize concessionary rents applicable to the retired or unwaged.

NF commented that the level of insurance required had been questioned and would be examined by the Freeman and City. SJ had noted a difference in the Cultivation Standards expected from those previously advised. This item would be looked at by them.

Trees on site, other than fruit trees, had been a matter of debate several times in the past. It was noted from the meeting on 3 October that the responsibility of such trees would be with Newcastle City Council.

NF advised that while the rent was payable immediately the actual demand would not be made until the Lease is sent to Moorside.

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

Observations regarding the new Lease had been incorporated with the Chairman's Report.

TREASURER'S REPORT

As Secretary's Report.

TRADING HUT MANAGER'S REPORT

The takings for September amounted to £202.50.

There was a particularly difficult problem with an infestation of rats in the Trading Hut and mice in the Shop. The mouse problem could be solved without too much difficulty but rats in the Trading Hut were harder to solve. Compost, sand and gravel had been invaded by rats and subsequently removed by SP and a shop volunteer. Eradication and

MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

control would involve further work. NC and FL would be able to provide traps. NF suggested help should be sought from a group of people to clear the hut and locate the entry point / points and seal off. FL concurred.

SP commented that windows and lids of containers in the shop had not been properly secured.

WAITING LIST AND LETTINGS AND INSPECTIONS

There were no lettings.

SP and SJ had written to several plot holders identified by the Committee previously as necessitating a first warning letter.

The inspections for the beginning of October were discussed in detail being, in addition to those issued with a warning letter at the end of September, numbers 23a, 23b, 27a, 53,62,75,79b, 89/90, 91,108 and 109.

First warning letters had been sent to tenants of 11, 13, 17, 20b, 52,60, 91, and 95. If no work was carried out by the time of the next inspection for the committee meeting on 1 November a second of three letters would be sent.

It was suggested and approved that a final letter be sent to the tenant of 73b following a further inspection of the plot.

HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

SP had been in touch with Newcastle City Council and the former Allotment Officer regarding the willow tree on the East Lane. SP had also reported the query by email. SP received confirmation that a tree survey by the Council will be made shortly.

COMMUNITY PLOT

RL will supply income and expenditure for both the Open Day and Fire Friday after the latter event.

URBAN GREEN /NAWG MATTERS

There was nothing to report

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Committee meeting will be held Tuesday 1 November 2022 at 5.30 p.m virtually, or face to face or hybrid pending investigation of the options.

The meeting closed at 19.01 pm

SJ 15 October 2022