



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
WESTERN WARDS ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION
COMMITTEE HELD AT 7:00 PM ON TUESDAY 10TH MARCH 2020
AT THE VICTORY HALL WARSASH.**

Those Present:

Bob Hughes (BH):	Chairman
Phil Pike (PP):	Hon. Treasurer
Mike Roberts (MR):	Secretary
Richard Bastow (RB):	Trustee Representative
Dave Whitlock (DW)	
Robin Green (RG)	
Keith Johnson (KJ)	
John Parsons (JP)	
Sandra Milman (SM)	
Martin Barnett (MB)	
Gill Rock (GR)	

Introduction:

The Chairman welcomed everyone present and thanked them for coming.

1. Apologies for absence:

Ted Weager

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Approved

3. Matters Arising:

None.

4. Chairmans Report:

BH read his report a copy of which was attached to the Agenda.

BH advised that further work was required to the CIO application before it could be submitted and that it was his intention to have the application finalised so that it could be submitted to the membership at the next AGM.

RG advised that in his experience the Charity Commission would raise numerous queries and require extensive re-drafting before approval.

BH reported that documents are now being uploaded to Share Point by PP and MR and that other committee members would be invited to make use of this facility shortly. In response to a query from RG, **BH confirmed that training would be given in small groups and that he would contact committee members shortly to make appropriate arrangements.**

5. Treasurers Report:

PP tabled his report, a copy of which was attached to the Agenda.

KJ raised a number of queries regarding the figures that he had been provided with and it was agreed that these would be discussed and resolved with PP after the meeting.

PP advised that he was dealing with the BACS mandate application which he had downloaded.

General discussions took place about the method of calculating pro rata rent when an allotment is let during the course of the year. It was agreed that this would be left to the discretion of the site managers for the moment but that proposals would be put forward for consideration at the next committee meeting.

PP and BH discussed which financial documents currently held by PP should be uploaded to Share Point. **It was agreed that PP would review and agree with BH.**

6. Managers Reports:

These were as the written reports submitted prior to the meeting and attached to the Agenda.

Additional matters raised were as follows:

- (i) GR advised that she had received good advice from Carters on which strimmer / brush cutter to buy and had settled on a Tanaka. The matter as to the exact terms of the warranty have yet to be resolved. She advised that the strimmer will be available for use by selected plot holders only.
- (ii) JP reiterated that the current suppliers to the shop were ceasing trading but that an alternative supplier had been found. He advised that he had bulk purchased certain items for delivery in September as opposed to December. As a consequence, he anticipated exceptional expenditure of circa £1,200 in the current financial year.
- (iii) MB reported that he had received a telephone call from Environmental Health following receipt of a complaint regarding smoke from a bonfire reportedly on the allotments. He advised that all allotment holders had been reminded of the rules regarding burning waste, but it had been suggested to him that the fire in question might have been in a neighbouring garden.

DW questioned how seriously the EH officer had taken the complaint as there was a significant amount of debris that needed to be burnt at SG and wondered what the consequences might be if the rules were not strictly followed. MB advised that the right to light bonfires might be withdrawn.

BH reminded those present that it was important for managers to follow the rules set out in the tenancy agreement.

- (iv) SM reported no vacancies and 3 waiting. She confirmed that the hedges had been sorted by the Community Payback scheme.

It was reported that the CP charge has now risen to £90.00 per day, but it was agreed that this still represents excellent value for money.

- (v) KJ reported that he had received an application from a fostering organisation for a 5-rod plot. He advised that the applicants were anticipating a maximum of 6 supervising adults and up to 2 children per adult on site at any one time, but little else was known at this stage.

After extensive discussion it was agreed that further detailed information would be sought regarding the number of individuals likely to be on site at any one time, whether it would be the same supervisors who attended each visit, the minimum ratio of supervisors to children, whether they carried appropriate insurance and whether they would undertake a full and proper risk assessment to be agreed by WWAA . Once this information has been received the matter would be referred back to the committee for further consideration.

KJ to speak to applicant.

7. Any Other Business:

- (i) JP questioned what effect being a charity would have on fees payable by the membership and the funds generated by the shop, because at present decisions as to how funds are spent rests with the Committee, subject to the current rules on spending limits etc, but would effectively transfer to The Board on the grant of charitable status.

BH and RB advised that the situation would remain unchanged as the decision on making on expenditure would be delegated by the Board to the Committee under the CIO constitution.

BH outlined the merits of becoming a CIO including the free use of Share Point, which at the moment is subject to a monthly charge per user, limiting the liability of the trustees and opening up the opportunity to apply for funding once the WWAA becomes an incorporated body.

GR expressed reservations about becoming a charity and thereby possibly reducing funding available to other organisations in real need.

- (ii) JP questioned whether the Trustees could currently overrule a decision made by the Committee.

BH and RB advised that the role of the Trustees was to ensure that any decision made by the Committee met with the constitution of WWAA and not to veto decisions reached in committee for any other reason.

- (iii) JP raised concern over the timeline for issuing Trustee meeting minutes as sufficient time is required for committee members to consider matters raised in the minutes for discussion, if required, at the Committee meeting.

- (iv) MR questioned how WWAA communicates with plot holders. He was advised that minutes of the AGM and other similar documents are placed on the WWAA website and that whilst site managers email their plot holders as they think appropriate there is no centralised database of members and no periodic newsletter.

It was reported that Facebook is being used on a number of sites which enables the dissemination of information on an ad hoc basis.

- (v) BH requested authority to place details of the draft CIO constitution on the WWAA website, which was unanimously approved.

BH to liaise with Rona Neilson.

- (vi) BH reported that FBC had requested a rent increase of 5% per annum. PP advised that this was in accordance with the lease terms which states that the rents “shall” be increased at the same rate as the cost of service provided by FBC, which is to be 5%.

After discussion it was agreed that **BH would go back to FBC** and propose a nil increase or an increase in line with inflation as the funds of WWAA, which the proposal was designed to safeguard, are sufficient without an increase in income.

8. Date of Next Meeting: 5th May 2020 at Victory Hall, Warsash.

There being no further matters for discussion the meeting closed at 9:06 pm.