

Western Wards Allotment Association

Management Committee 'Zoom' Meeting Tuesday 1st September 2020

Management Committee Members

Alastair Burnett, (Acting Chairman) Site Manager, Hunts Pond Road; (AB)
Phil Pike, Hon. Treasurer; (PP)
Robin Green (Acting Hon. Secretary), Site Manager, Sarisbury Green; (RG)
Keith Johnson, Site Manager, Hunts Pond Road; (KJ)
Martin Barnett – Site Manager, Hunts Pond Road (MB)
Gill Rock Site Manager, Warsash (GR)
Paul Rann, Site Manager, Warsash (PR)
John Parsons, Site Manager, Posbrook and Shop Manager. (JP)

Also in attendance

Richard Bastow, Chairman of WWAA Trustees;
(David Doran gave his apologies for non attendance.)

1 Apologies for absence

- 1.1 Sandra Milam – Site Manager, Lodge Road (SM)
Martin Wheeler – Site Manager, Sarisbury Green (MW) – not able to connect with the Zoom meeting.

2 Declaration of any other business (AOB)

- 2.1 There were no additional items for discussion.

3 Minutes of the 'Zoom' Meeting dated 4th August 2020 for accuracy and content

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting dated 4th August 2020 had been circulated prior to this meeting. There were no comments made by members of the committee and the minutes were accepted as an accurate record by the Chairman.
- 3.2 When edited for data protection purposes, a version would be forwarded by the Secretary to the WWAA webmaster for publication on the website.

4 Matters arising and actions outstanding

- 4.1 Minutes of committee meeting held 4th August – actions and matters arising
- 4.2 Action - Preparation of the postponement notice for the AGM
 - 4.2.1 PP had arranged for a printed notice to be circulated to WWAA members with the rent renewal forms by site managers. Action discharged.
- 4.3 Action - Brief WWAA webmaster re postponement of the AGM
 - 4.3.1 Webmaster had been asked to publish the postponement of the AGM by RG and to include an advertisement for the vacant roles of Chairman and Hon. Secretary which has been completed. Action discharged.

4.4 Action – Job descriptions for posts of Chairman and Secretary to be located by the Hon. Secretary and published

4.4.1 RG confirmed that there was in existence a role description for the role of Hon. Secretary. However, despite enquiry, there was no role description found for the Chair. In that event, a draft role description was developed and shared with the former Chairman who had felt that the document was accurate subject to two minor amendments.

4.4.2 PP expressed the view that both role descriptions were overly complex, inaccurate and unnecessary. He felt that if published, they might put off anyone prepared to serve as Chair or Secretary. He offered and circulated simpler role descriptions which were based on those of a neighbouring allotment area.

4.4.3 RG felt that the descriptions provided by PP were not comprehensive enough and did not reflect the role tasks, but would review his draft version for accuracy and relevance.

Action – RG to review the documents and refer them back for further discussion

4.5 Action - JP and KJ to undertake a 'scoping study' to identify the types of information to be held in a central database

4.5.1 Views on the content of a central database had been collected from committee members and would be considered as the central database was developed.

4.6 Action – KJ to report on SharePoint progress on 1st September

4.6.1 KJ had taken on the responsibility for developing SharePoint as the chosen central database. He had gained access to and adopted the original software from previous Acting Secretary which had been populated with WWAA financial information by PP, at the request of former Chairman.

4.6.2 The committee was assured that the SharePoint system is secure which was considered to be paramount and is maintained by the company as part of the contract, for example, software updates provided. It was felt that there is a considerable risk to the organisation if officers and site managers continue to maintain personal data on their domestic systems.

4.6.3 KJ advised that he had arranged to take over the payments from previous Acting Secretary and notified the company, using his personal banking card. PP confirmed that the software had been paid for up to the 9th September. The issue of how future payments were made would be discussed outside the meeting. The system would cost in the region of £4 per user per month.

4.6.4 Populating SharePoint software with additional information now needed to be addressed. Other users would need to be added and this was complex. When resolved and a format has been set up, site managers would be able to add to the system.

4.6.5 RG offered the services of a Sarisbury Green plot holder to help with Sharepoint. This plot holder will be an applicant for the role of Hon. Secretary at the next AGM and had informed RG of previous use of SharePoint.

Action – RG to put plot holder in contact with KJ to advance the population of SharePoint

4.7 Action – PP to make an enquiry with WWAA brokers re liability insurance

- 4.7.1 PP advised that he had contacted the brokers but was unable to advance the enquiry because he was not able to speak to anyone with sufficient knowledge. He was waiting for a reply from someone at the company who did.

Action – PP to report with an outcome when contact made

4.8 Action - Budgets for submission at 1st September meeting

- 4.8.1 HPR managers reported submission of their budget for 20/21 and would support the administration of Lodge Road.
- 4.8.2 Sarisbury managers reported almost completing their budget document subject to the following issues:-
- Uncertainty about carry over sums for 18/19 and 19/20 for major project purposes. PP confirmed that it was in order to show these amounts in the budget document,
 - The Southern Water Board inspection requirements and the costs – it was agreed that these would be paid for centrally and need not be shown on the budget document, and,
 - The need to take account of water bill increases during 2020.
- 4.8.3 Warsash managers were dealing with their document.
- 4.8.4 Posbrook had dealt with their budget.

Action – Finalised budget documents to be forwarded to PP

5 Acting Chairman's update

- 5.1 A response has been sent to a plot holder following correspondence regarding a dispute between the plot holder and another allotment plot neighbour.
- 5.2 There is currently just one application for the role of Hon Secretary from a Sarisbury plot holder, who is an experienced user of SharePoint.

6 Treasurer's update

- 6.1 The Treasurer had circulated his financial report to members for their information.
- 6.2 PP highlighted the following issues:-
- The Sharepoint fee for the period 9th August to 8th September has been sent to the previous Acting Secretary to settle. However, KJ had advised that he had now taken over the account;
 - There are a couple of water bills to pay which he will advise the site managers of and show on the next report;
 - PP had contacted the Water Board inspector to explore the correct person to deal with two meters at HPR which are no longer required. PP had previously written but had no response.

7 Site managers updates

The Secretary advised that he had not invited written submissions from Site Managers but this was an opportunity for an update.

7.1 Sarisbury

7.1.1 100% plot occupation and 17 on the waiting list. The perimeter hedge had been cut (at last) by the Fareham Borough Council. The standard of the work and clearing up afterwards was very good. Martin Wheeler had started as the new site manager. Concern was expressed about progress with the requirements of the Southern Water Board – hoping to ‘piggy back’ with the HPR arrangements.

7.2 HPR

7.2.1 KJ updated the meeting regarding the Water Board’s inspection under the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 - Inspection Of Water Installations and, in doing so, was seeking committee approval for the expenditure to deal with rectification. At HPR, work was needed to bring 31 stand pipes of 50 up to the required standards.

7.2.2 KJ had sought estimates for the work from two sources, one of which was in excess of £11,000. That had been immediately discounted.

7.2.3 As an alternative, the work would be completed in three stages by separate contractors at reasonable and affordable rates – firstly to dismantle the existing wooden surrounds and angle iron and digging down 2 feet in depth to replace them with a substantial post to which the pipe and tap could be secured. An estimate for the work on 31 stand pipes was £970. This included £340 for the 31 posts, concrete post mix and screws required as well as 2 days’ labour. This was very cost effective and it was recommended that the costs be accepted.

7.2.4 The second stage would be to carry out the plumbing work needed to bring the standpipes up to the standard required by ensuring that the correct tap was fitted, replacement as necessary, and an independent means of turning the water supply off to the tap.

7.2.5 The third step would be to lag and box in the pipes and separate arrangements would be made.

7.2.6 RG indicated that he would meet with KJ to scope the requirements of Sarisbury and ‘piggy back’ on the arrangements. Warsash was next to be visited by Lee Roberts Southern Water on Wednesday 2nd September and PR indicated that he would host that visit. .

7.2.7 The committee in general terms confirmed that the estimate provided for stage 1, in para 7.2.3 above, would be acceptable and payment made.

7.2.8 The sudden interest by the Southern Water Board in enforcing the 1999 regulations probably resulted from government criticism about the management of water which is why we are being visited 21 years after the regulations were imposed. This was now resulting in a great deal of expense for the WWAA.

7.2.9 It was highlighted that, as owners of the land, the Fareham Borough Council might bear some responsibility for the costs of the water services repairs. The matter would be referred to the WWAA Chairman of Trustees who held the lease document to research any liability on the part of the Council.

- 7.2.10 Council liability for any costs would depend on:-
- the extent of the standards expected by Southern Water Board in 1999, the date of the commencement of the regulations,
 - the terms of the lease when the sites were handed over to the WWAA,
 - any upgrade of standards expected during the recent inspections.

7.3 Posbrook and Shop

- 7.3.1 JP indicated that there was 100% occupation of plots at the Posbrook site.
- 7.3.2 As regards the shop, the supplier Warwicks would close on 30th September. As an alternative, Kings would be supplying big seeds like beans, peas and KG Loach supplying 95% of other stock in the shop.
- 7.3.3 Arrangements for the shop would be altered. The table would be moved to a position inside the shop. There will be a requirement for visiting customers to wear 'face masks' and a maximum of 3 persons admitted at one time.
- 7.3.4 Usual autumn products would be available for purchase including shallots peas, beans, onions etc. Orders placed for next year.

7.4 **Other Issues raised by Site Managers**

Proposal for the appointment of a WWAA Membership Secretary

- 7.4.1 JP felt that the appointment of a Membership Secretary would be a helpful way forward to manage a central database, plot holders' personal data and waiting lists. All enquiries could be channelled through one person. The scheme would prevent multiple applications for plots and save wasted time.
- 7.4.2 The Membership Secretary could also act as the WWAA Data Protection Officer as set out in a draft policy which the former Chairman had requested. (Draft document circulated by the Secretary to members)
- 7.4.3 The committee members felt that the proposal was interesting but there were other priorities to be settled before giving further consideration to benefits of the role. The issue would be raised again at a future date.

Amendments to the Constitution for consideration.

- 7.5.1 JP had reviewed the document, recommended amendments and forwarded it to the Chair to consider.
- 7.5.2 However, the Constitution document made reference to WWAA policies and it is clear that there are none at the current time. It was suggested that the committee should indeed consider publishing policies on WWAA Health and Safety, Data Protection, Complaints Handling and other matters.

Draft Data Protection Policy

- 7.6.1 The draft Data Protection policy had been circulated for consideration. This had been requested by the then Chairman but held over for other initiatives to be implemented.
- 7.6.2 PR had experience of implementing GDPR initiatives in his former employment role and welcomed an opportunity to review the contents.

Action – PR to comment on DPA arrangements for the WWAA

Outcome of the Water Inspection at HPR
7.7 Issues already dealt with at paragraph 7.2

8 Any other business
None

9 Date next meeting

9.1 The next Zoom meeting will be held at 7pm on Tuesday 6th October 2020 but limited to a discussion concerning the water board requirements and progress.

9.2 The date of the next full management committee meeting would be Tuesday 3rd November 2020 although confirmation of the date will be circulated.