

Raglan Community Council
Minutes of the Special Meeting with Allotment tenants held on
Wednesday 19 October 2016 at
Fellowship Centre, Usk Road, Raglan
at 7.00pm

Present

CLr Dennis Brown
CLr Sylvia Price (Chairman)
CLr Peter Williams

4143 In attendance:

Adrian Edwards, Clerk to the Council.
12 Allotment tenants

4144 Agenda 1:- Apologies for absence.

CLr's Vivienne Compton, Ray Parry, Ewen Brierley, Richard Moorby, Helen Williams and Trevor Phillips
Mrs Susan Danziger, Mr E Bassett and Mr S Thomas

4145 Agenda 2:- Overview of the previous year

The chairman gave an overview of the previous year which has been very interesting in relation to the allotments. In 2015/16 the council have received an estimated £390 in income from the allotments and the council have spent an estimated £2,943 on different types of improvements to both sites. The council have replaced the timber fencing on the Eastern Site.

In last year's meeting it was brought to everyone's attention the concern over the width on the paths between some allotments. It was pointed out if any tenant had encroached on to the paths they were asked if the paths could be reinstated to a width of a minimum of 600 mm or in old money '2 FEET'. The council asked if this could be done by the end of December last year.

- A question was asked about the amount of money spent on the allotments and what work has been undertaken for the amount shown above.
- A question was asked about the procurement of the works.
- There was some debate over the skip hire from last year. It was explained that everyone had notice of the day the skip was going to be delivered. It was also explained the skip was filled to its maximum.

The clerk gave a response to the works undertaken

4146 Agenda 3:- Allotment management and cultivation.

The chairman explained over the last couple of years and since the start of this year some of the allotments have been well maintained and tenants have grown a lot of produce, but on the down side it has

been noted that some allotments have not been cultivated to their full potential.

- A question was asked how this can be dealt with. It was explained the agreement sets out the maintenance of the allotment. No further questions were raised from the floor

4147 Agenda 4:- Subletting or dividing allotment plots

The chairman explained it has come to the attention of the council again that it would seem that some tenants may have been subletting or dividing allotments between other individuals. In the existing agreement it sets out the tenant should not underlet without consent. The chairman asked are there any tenants who have any views on this section of the agreement?

- A number of questions were asked relating to subletting.
- A question was asked about spouses working on the allotment plot as they are not the tenants. It was explained that a spouse would not be a subtenant and a spouse would have the same cover as the named tenant.
- A question was asked should current tenants include a spouse or close family member on the agreement.
- A tenant stated that some allotmentees help different and current allotmentees. It was explained that an allotmentee has signed an agreement.

It was explained that it has been noted that a couple of allotments have been divided into small plots but with only one person name on the agreement. It was explained that some allotments have dual tenure.

4148 Agenda 5:- Consider the insurance implication relating to subletting, and non-payment.

The chairman explained that tenants subletting are increasing the risk to the community council. It was explained this will increase the community council risk, when allotmentees sublet or continue to use an allotment after receiving Notice to Vacate. Everyone must be made aware of the risk and the consequence to the community council and individuals.

No further questions

4149 Agenda 6:- Update on the management of the allotment sites.

This question has been asked on a number of occasions - would any allotmentees consider setting up a management group or setting up a management committee to run the allotments on a sub-tenancy basis with a formal lease?

No one in attendance agreed to put themselves forward.

4150 Agenda 7:- Consider a working group.

Consider appointments onto a working group with the Community Council subcommittee.

A question was asked about the formal remit of a working group; this group would work and meet with members of the committee council.

- One person stated that all allotmentees are independent individuals, and most people would not like to get involved in any such group.
- One person asked about community councillors being current tenants, and can those councillors raise any concerns etc.

It was explained that elected members must comply with the members Code of Conduct, and members who are tenants of the allotment, must declare an interest. There was some debate over this matter and it was:

Proposed: that the community council would agree to meet every quarter dates to be confirmed.
(April, June, September and December).

Action point to take to the next council meeting.

4151 Agenda 8:- Amendment to the statutory tenancy agreement

Last year the community council made a number of amendments to the agreement. The council and allotmentees will need to comply with the 1922 Allotments Act. It was necessary to extend the tenancy agreement by three months to April, again the renewal forms will need to be returned by the 1st day in January. This will give tenants a three month grace period

The clerk explained that last year a number of complaints had been received.

- It was stated they thought that it was agreed last year.

Everyone in attendance agreed with the process and the agreement will be from April to March in any one year. It was agreed if a current tenant is prepared to allow the new tenant to continue with the cultivation for the forthcoming year, it would not be an issue.

4152 Agenda 9:- Improvements proposed by current allotment tenants. Any proposals must be returned to clerk by the Monday 10 October 2016.

No proposals returned to clerk by Monday 10 October

4153 Agenda 9:- Consider the tenancy rent from April 2017.

Last year the community council drew everyone's attention to the current financial climate we all find ourselves in and would it be prudent to consider an increase in the tenancy rent.

(Some amounts are considered: a 20% increase - increasing the rent from April 2018 to £18 or a straight increase to £20, this would be an increase of around £0.09 per week or in real terms £0.38 per week for

each allotmentee)

No increase will cover the cost of further improvements.

- A question was asked about the income from the allotment tenants.
- It was also asked if the income is ring-fenced.
- Does the community council have any surplus from income over the last number of years
- A question was asked about the rent over the years. it was stated that the rent used to be £5 and its increased to £15 last year, now the community council are looking to increase the rent again to £18 or £20.
- One person stated that no finances have been spent on the allotments only cutting the hedge.

It was explained that all income is banked in the community council's accounts. It was also explained that all expenditure is recorded in the council minutes or accounts and are in the public domain.

It was explained that any increase will be effective in twelve month's time. So any increase will be from April 2018. After some debate it was:

Agreed that rent should be increased to £18.00

Action point to take increase to the next council meeting.

There was some debate over the access from the allotment site to the Main Road; the clerk explained that no-one can just start working on the side of the highway.

A question was asked about the compulsory purchase the allotments. There was some debate over this.

No further Action.

4154 **Agenda 10:-** Agree date of next meeting 18 October 2017.

4155 The Chairman thanked everyone for attending. The meeting closed at 8.05pm. The date of the next meeting 27 October 2016

Signed by _____
Chairman Cllr Peter Williams
Date 27 October 2016